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The king of musical instruments and
The Spirit of the Liturgy: the pipe organ
and its liturgical repertoire analyzed in
light of Ratzinger's theology of liturgical music

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS

Dissertation

**THE KING OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS
AND THE SPIRIT OF THE LITURGY:
THE PIPE ORGAN AND ITS LITURGICAL REPERTOIRE ANALYZED
IN LIGHT OF RATZINGER'S THEOLOGY OF LITURGICAL MUSIC**

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
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Doctor of Musical Arts

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DEDICATION

To the greater glory of God
in thanksgiving for the pontificate of Benedict XVI
and for Father George E. Harrison, a humble worker in the vineyard of the Lord

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I could not have completed this work without the support of many. In a special way, I thank my family. From an early age, my parents, James and Karen, have encouraged a love for God and the Catholic Church as well as a true appreciation for sacred music. My siblings, each in their own way, have provided a network of support. Thank you, Paul, for your pride in my work and uplifting sense of humor, Mairead, for your motivation through mockery, Catherine, for your interest and willingness to listen, and Grace, for everything! I also acknowledge my grandfather, Kevin Murray, who taught me Biblical Greek and Ecclesiastical Latin over the phone. Translating the Bible with him gave me a deeper appreciation for this source and origin of liturgical music. Though he died almost ten years ago, the lessons I learned from him make me who I am today. To Chandler Gregg, my first music teacher, Peter Sykes, my present teacher, and all in between, I express sincere thanks and abiding gratitude. All of my teachers have inspired me to excellence and provided a model for me to follow. To the priests, deacons, and all the faithful, especially the people of Corpus Christi Parish, who have prayerfully supported me, I am eternally grateful. I especially thank my pastor, Fr. George Harrison, who recently celebrated fifty years of priesthood. He is a good shepherd and a self-sacrificing example for his flock. Deo gratias!

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ABSTRACT

Joseph Ratzinger, who led the Catholic Church as Pope Benedict XVI from 2005 to 2013, is a well-respected and published theologian. Much of his writing centers on the liturgy, and he has addressed the topic of music several times. His theological understanding of liturgical music and its application to the pipe organ together with its repertoire is the focus of this dissertation.

The first two chapters deal with Ratzinger's theological writings on the liturgy and sacred music as well as their significance for the pipe organ. Several themes emerge in his writings. These reveal Ratzinger's understanding of the liturgy and are identified as characteristics of true liturgical music. Though he rarely speaks directly about the organ, these characteristics, namely, cosmos, logos, mystery, and history can be connected with both the instrument and its repertoire. In chapters three through five, select pieces from the masterworks of the Catholic organ tradition, Frescobaldi's *Fiori Musicali*, Tournemire's *L'Orgue Mystique*, and Langlais' *Livre Oecumenique*, are analyzed and interpreted in light of Ratzinger's theology. The organ has also been used

as an accompanimental instrument and for improvisation in the liturgy. This is considered in chapters six and seven. In chapter eight, attention is given to the pipe organ itself, and the instrument is found to be a symbol of the same theological concepts Ratzinger associates with the liturgy. The last chapter provides a summary and indicates the implications of Ratzinger's theology for the liturgical role of the pipe organ today.

This comprehensive examination of Ratzinger's theology of liturgical music and the pipe organ with its liturgical repertoire, which includes written compositions, accompaniment, and improvisation, reveals the relationship between them. The organ itself embodies Ratzinger's themes of cosmos, logos, mystery, and history and is therefore the ideal liturgical instrument, indeed, the king of musical instruments. Through analysis, certain musical characteristics are discovered that can be said to exemplify elements of liturgical theology. Ultimately, Ratzinger's liturgical theology assigns value to the historic role of the organ in the liturgy and illuminates the worth and relevance of the Church's treasury of sacred organ music.

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CHAPTER ONE

Ratzinger's Writings on the Liturgy and Sacred Music

Joseph Ratzinger was born on April 16, 1927 in Marktl am Inn in Bavaria. Just a century before, Bavaria was the center of a movement to reform Catholic church music known as the Cecilian Movement. “Reacting to the liberalization of the Enlightenment, the Cecilians sought to restore traditional religious feeling and the authority of the church. They regarded ‘true, genuine church music’ as being subservient to the liturgy, and intelligibility of words and music as more important than artistic individuality.”¹ Ratzinger’s own understanding of liturgical music parallels some of the ideals of this movement, and the area of Bavaria, especially Regensburg, where Ratzinger’s brother would become director of the Regensburger Domspatzen, benefited from the attention of those dedicated to sacred music.

Ratzinger was born on Holy Saturday and has thus had an intimate connection with the Church’s liturgy and liturgical year from infancy. “I have always been filled with thanksgiving for having had my life immersed in this way in the Easter mystery, since this could only be a sign of blessing. To be sure, it was not Easter Sunday but Holy Saturday, but, the more I reflect on it, the more this seems to be fitting for the nature of our human life: We are still awaiting Easter; we are still not standing in the full light, but

¹ Siegfried Gmeinwieser, “Cecilian Movement,” *Grove Music Online*, accessed August 9, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000005245>.

walking toward it in full trust.”² In 1951, Ratzinger was ordained a priest, in 1953, he obtained a doctorate in theology from the University of Munich, and in 1977, he was ordained bishop of Munich and Freising. He became a distinguished and respected theologian, taught as a professor at various universities, and was ultimately named Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith by Pope John Paul II in 1981. He served in this capacity until 2005 when he was elected pope, taking the name Benedict XVI. In 2013, he resigned from the papacy and now lives a monastic life in Mater Ecclesiae Monastery.

Ratzinger has been influential in a number of ways, from his presence at the Second Vatican Council to his involvement with the publication of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. His role as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and later pope gave him the opportunity to guide the Catholic Church. He has written many theological works, and chief among them are those which concern the liturgy. In particular, *The Spirit of the Liturgy* stands out as one of his greatest works. When Ignatius Press began a series of Ratzinger’s collected works, the first publication was his collected works on the liturgy. He explains in the preface to this collection, “The liturgy of the Church has been for me since my childhood the central reality of my life, and in the theological school of teachers like Schmaus, Sohngen, Pascher, and Guardini it became the center of my theological efforts, also.”³ His writings on music include a

² Joseph Ratzinger, *Milestones: Memoirs 1927–1977*, trans. Erasmo Leiva-Merikakis (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1998), 8.

³ Joseph Ratzinger, *Joseph Ratzinger Collected Works*, vol. xi, *Theology of the Liturgy*, ed. Michael Miller, trans. John Saward, Kenneth Baker, Henry Taylor, et al. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2014), xvi.

chapter in *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, a chapter in *The Feast of Faith: Approaches to a Theology of the Liturgy*, a chapter in a book written in honor of Johannes Overath, *Crux et Cithara*, and several articles in the book *A New Song for the Lord*.

Music, along with the liturgy, has an important place in Ratzinger's understanding of theology. He is a pianist himself and is known to have a special love for Mozart's music. Indeed, both music and liturgy are cited in his explanation for why he remains in the Church:

the beauty that has sprung up in response to her message and is still manifest to us today in incomparable works of art becomes for him [any person] a witness to the truth: something that could express itself in that way cannot be mere darkness. The beauty of the great cathedrals, the beauty of the music that has developed within the context of faith, the dignity of the Church's liturgy, and in general the reality of the festival which one cannot make for oneself but can only receive, the elaboration of the seasons in the liturgical year, in which then and now, time and eternity interpenetrate—all that is in my view no insignificant accident.⁴

Hidden in this statement is the core of Ratzinger's view of the liturgy; he believes that liturgy is not something one can “make for oneself but can only receive.” This simple idea summarizes his theology of the liturgy and has implications for how the liturgy is celebrated, including its music.

At the center of Christianity is the belief that God became man and offered himself on the cross as priest and victim to atone for the sins of mankind and offer salvation. In particular, Catholics believe “the sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice: ‘The victim is one and the same: the same now offers through the ministry of priests, who then offered himself on the cross; only the manner of

⁴ Joseph Ratzinger, *Credo for Today: What Christians Believe*, trans. Michael Miller (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2009), 198.

offering is different.’ ‘In this divine sacrifice which is celebrated in the Mass, the same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and is offered in an unbloody manner.’”⁵ The Mass, which for ages has been the source and inspiration for sacred organ music, has its roots in the Last Supper of Jesus; the Catholic Church’s liturgy began with Jesus’ command to repeat his actions and words.⁶ “The Eucharist is the memorial of Christ’s Passover, the making present and the sacramental offering of his unique sacrifice, in the liturgy of the Church which is his Body.”⁷

In Ratzinger’s book, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, his theme, entirely consistent with the teaching of the Church, becomes apparent in the very first chapter. He writes, “Man himself cannot simply ‘make’ worship. If God does not reveal himself, man is clutching empty space.”⁸ The Catholic Church has inherited much from the Jewish faith, including scripture and the form of worship itself. Fittingly, Ratzinger looks to the story of Israel’s flight from Egypt for a proper understanding of worship. He draws the conclusion that the entire goal of the Exodus is worship, “which can only take place according to God’s measure and therefore eludes the rules of the game of political compromise.”⁹ He elaborates,

In its wanderings, Israel discovers the kind of sacrifice God wants, not after three days (as suggested in the conversation with Pharaoh), but after three months, on the day they come “into the wilderness of Sinai” (Ex 19:1). On the third day God comes down onto the top of

⁵ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed. (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 2000), 1367.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 1341.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 1362.

⁸ Joseph Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, trans. John Saward (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000), 21.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 16.

the mountain (cf. 19:16, 20). Now he speaks to the people. He makes known his will to them in the Ten Commandments (cf. 20:1–17) and, through the mediation of Moses, makes a covenant with them (cf. Ex 24), a covenant concretized in a minutely regulated form of worship. In this way, the purpose of the wandering in the wilderness, as explained to Pharaoh, is fulfilled. Israel learns how to worship God in the way he himself desires.¹⁰

Again, Ratzinger writes,

But real liturgy implies that God responds and reveals how we can worship him. In any form, liturgy includes some kind of ‘institution.’ It cannot spring from imagination, our own creativity—then it would remain just a cry in the dark or mere self-affirmation. Liturgy implies a real relationship with Another, who reveals himself to us and gives our existence a new direction.¹¹

Naturally, liturgy involves people, but “Christian liturgy is never just an event organized by a particular group or set of people or even by a particular local Church.”¹² Continuing this theme in an article on the theological basis of church music, Ratzinger writes in regard to the liturgy, “No one is its one and only creator, for each of us it is participation in something greater that transcends us all, yet just in this way each of us is also an agent precisely because each is a recipient.”¹³ If liturgy is not created by us, then how does it come about? The Catholic liturgy is based on scripture and tradition. Many of the words of the Mass come directly from the Bible; the Liturgy of the Word is based on the texts of the Bible, and the words of Institution of the Eucharist themselves are taken from the biblical accounts of the Last Supper. Tradition literally refers to something that is handed down; it involves receiving and giving. Liturgy, therefore, is at once ancient and new. It is contemporary, yet respects what has come before. In the Catholic Church, there is

¹⁰ Ibid., 17.

¹¹ Ibid., 22.

¹² Ibid., 49.

¹³ Joseph Ratzinger, “The Image of the World and of Human Beings in the Liturgy and Its Expression in Church Music,” in *A New Song for the Lord: Faith in Christ and Liturgy Today*, trans. Martha Matesich (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1996), 150.

another dimension. Catholics believe that Jesus gave authority to Peter as pope, the spiritual leader of the Church, and to his disciples as bishops and priests. This authority is passed on through ordination and extends to this day. A special type of authority, the official and authoritative teaching of the Church, is known as the Magisterium. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states, “‘The task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition, has been entrusted to the living teaching office of the Church alone. Its authority in this matter is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ.’ This means that the task of interpretation has been entrusted to the bishops in communion with the successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome.”¹⁴ This is significant in a general sense as it indicates that it is necessary for faithful Catholics to heed the teachings of the Church, such as documents from popes or councils that concern the liturgy and sacred music. It also shows the importance of what became Joseph Ratzinger’s role as Pope Benedict XVI.

Aside from Ratzinger’s central theme that the liturgy is Christ’s own action and not our own creation, several additional themes emerge from his writings about liturgical music. In particular, he connects the concepts of cosmos, logos, mystery, and history to sacred music. In Christianity, cosmos refers to the universe created by God and, following ancient Greek thought, implies order as opposed to chaos. Ratzinger uses the word cosmos to suggest the totality of the created world. In reference to music, he especially highlights opposite yet complementary concepts within the cosmos such as glory and distress, depths and heights, heaven and earth, eternity and history, words and

¹⁴ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 85.

the unspeakable, silence and song. Ratzinger writes, “Judaism has always maintained, even after the destruction of the Temple, that God’s glory dwells only in the Temple of Jerusalem. Christians in contrast, believe that during Christ’s crucifixion, when the veil of the Temple was torn, God’s glory departed from the Temple and now dwells where Jesus Christ is, namely, in heaven and in the Church that gathers with Jesus.”¹⁵ He explains the implications of this for the liturgy:

The Church, as Church, accepts with Christ the heritage of the Temple in a modified way. This is expressed liturgically in the fact that the Church assembles not only for readings and prayers, but also to offer the Eucharistic Sacrifice. But then this also means that in the external form of her celebration she can and must lay claim to the heritage of the Temple. This means that the Church’s liturgy, which now regards the whole cosmos as a temple, must itself have a cosmic character, must make the whole cosmos resound.¹⁶

He states further that the Church “must arouse the voice of the cosmos and, by glorifying the Creator, elicit the glory of the cosmos itself, making it also glorious, beautiful, habitable, and beloved.”¹⁷ He so closely connects the cosmos to the liturgy that he identifies it as a characteristic of true worship. “One recognizes right liturgy by the fact that it liberates us from ordinary, everyday activity and returns to us once more the depths and the heights, silence and song. One recognizes right liturgy in that it has a cosmic, not just a group, character. It sings with the angels. It is silent with the expectant depths of the universe. And that is how it redeems the earth.”¹⁸ According to Ratzinger, it is the cosmic character of the liturgy that joins heaven to earth and lifts earthly time to heavenly

¹⁵ Joseph Ratzinger, “The Artistic Transposition of the Faith: Theological Problems of Church Music,” in *Joseph Ratzinger Collected Works*, vol. xi, *Theology of the Liturgy*, ed. Michael Miller, trans. John Saward, Kenneth Baker, Henry Taylor, et al. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2014), 489.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ Joseph Ratzinger, “On the Theological Basis of Church Music,” in *Feast of Faith: Approaches to a Theology of the Liturgy*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986), 124.

¹⁸ Ratzinger, “The Image of the World,” 160.

eternity. “In its participation in the Paschal Mystery of Christ, liturgy transcends the boundaries of places and times in order to gather all into the hour of Christ that is anticipated in the liturgy and hence opens history to its goal.”¹⁹ However, the goal of liturgy is not to bring all of the cosmos together or to represent the cosmos; “this cosmic character is grounded ultimately in the ordering of all Christian worship to *logos*.”²⁰

The Gospel of John starts with the words, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”²¹ Logos is the Greek term for “Word.” By using this language, John hearkens back to the book of Genesis when the universe (cosmos) was created. In this way, he, like Ratzinger, grounds the cosmos in the logos. The Logos is understood to be the person of Jesus Christ and is also associated with Scripture as the Word of God. Furthermore, the early Church appropriated the Greek philosophical understanding of logos. “Now, through the word logos, the whole philosophy of logos in the Greek world is incorporated into the concept. The Greek mind elevates it eventually to the idea of a mystical union with the Logos, the very meaning of all things.”²² In speaking about church music, Ratzinger links both logos and cosmos:

Faith comes from listening to God’s word. But wherever God’s word is translated into human words there remains a surplus of the unspoken and unspeakable that calls us to silence—into a silence that in the end lets the unspeakable become song and also calls on the voices of the cosmos for help so that the unspoken may become audible. This means that church music, coming from the Word and the silence perceived in it, always presupposes a new listening to the whole richness of the Logos.²³

¹⁹ Joseph Ratzinger, “In the Presence of the Angels I Will Sing Your Praise: The Regensburg Tradition and the Reform of the Liturgy,” in *A New Song for the Lord: Faith in Christ and Liturgy Today*, trans. Martha Matesich (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1996), 173.

²⁰ Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 155.

²¹ John 1:1 RSVCE.

²² Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 45–6.

²³ Ratzinger, “In the Presence of the Angels,” 175.

In clear terms, he states, “We must surely admit that the liturgy of the incarnate Word is necessarily and specifically word-oriented.”²⁴ This provides structure and guidance for church music. In the case of vocal music, the text, the literal logos, is generally scriptural or comes from the Church’s tradition of liturgical prayer. For instrumental music, existing texts can indicate what should be expressed or communicated in the music.

Ratzinger writes,

As a matter of fact, music that is supposed to serve the Christian liturgy must correspond to the Logos, concretely. It must stand in a meaningful relation to the words in which the Logos has expressed himself. It cannot free itself, not even as instrumental music, from the inner orientation of these words, which open up endless space, but also draw distinctions. By its nature such music must be different from music that is supposed to lead to rhythmic ecstasy, stupefying anesthetization, sensual excitement, or dissolution of the ego in Nirvana, to name just a few possibilities.²⁵

It becomes apparent in Ratzinger’s writings that the themes which he as theologian associates with the liturgy are not merely associated with music as well but are actually the origin of church music.

Two final themes can be identified in Ratzinger’s theological writings on the liturgy and music. These are mystery and history. Ratzinger writes, “In the Christian faith the concept of mystery is inseparable from that of Logos.”²⁶ In particular, he considers Gregorian chant and sacred polyphony, which have been identified in the documents of the Catholic Church as proper to the liturgy, especially suited to the expression of mystery. He explains, for example, that Pope Pius X’s *motu proprio, Tra le Sollecitudini*, which was written in 1903 to counter increasing secularization in church

²⁴ Ratzinger, “On the Theological Basis of Church Music,” 120.

²⁵ Ratzinger, “In the Presence of the Angels,” 175–6.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

music, sought to restore music's role in the liturgy in service to the liturgical word and worship. He writes, "Thus, it was supposed to become transparent that liturgical music leads the faithful straight to the glorification of God, into the sober intoxication of the faith. The emphasis on Gregorian chant and classical polyphonic music was therefore ordered to both the character of the liturgy as mystery and its character as Logos, as well as to its bond to the historical word."²⁷ Catholic liturgy and its music is by nature historical. It is tied to Christ's words and actions in the Last Supper as well as the tradition of the Church following Christ. For this reason, church music should not develop in a way that is divorced from historical tradition, and it should not simply be the product of a certain era. "In this respect, at the beginning of great sacred music there is of necessity awe, receptivity, and a humility that is prepared to serve by participating in the greatness that has already gone forth."²⁸

Cosmos, logos, mystery, and history consistently appear in Ratzinger's writings on the liturgy and especially liturgical music. The Fota International Liturgy Conference, which in 2010 focused on Ratzinger's writings on sacred music, produced a book containing lectures from the conference. In one lecture, the author isolates Ratzinger among theologians who have taken music into consideration in their work, writing, "He always structures and formulates his reflections not so much by speaking of music in the abstract as by situating the discussion on sacred music within the context of the theology of the liturgy and in light of the very nature of the liturgy, of which chant and music are

²⁷ Ibid., 174.

²⁸ Ratzinger, "The Image of the World," 158.

an integral part.”²⁹ Indeed, Ratzinger does not consider music as an external or disconnected aspect of worship. He does not see it as an element of human life that has been superimposed or added to the liturgy. Instead, he understands music as intrinsic and even necessary for worship. “Wherever people praise God, words alone do not suffice. Conversation with God transcends the boundaries of human speech; everywhere it has, according to its nature, called on music for help, on singing and on the voices of creation in the sound of the instruments.”³⁰ In the preface to *A New Song for the Lord*, a book by Ratzinger that collects articles he had presented on the liturgy and music, he writes,

I have been invited several times to give talks on liturgy and church music. Of course I was not able to comment on the issues involved from a musicological point of view, since I am by no means an authority on the subject; I could try to examine the complex of questions only from a theological perspective. Even when seen in this way, the topic seems to be rather distant from the center of our theological and liturgical inquiries and somewhat marginal. But the more I thought about it, the clearer it became that the nature of liturgy itself was at stake here. Thus, my contributions to liturgy and church music became all by themselves investigations into the nature of Christian worship.³¹

While initially appearing strictly theological or liturgical, the themes of cosmos, logos, mystery, and history have implications for music, including music for the pipe organ. These implications will be explored in greater depth in the following chapter, which will focus on the significance of Ratzinger’s writings on liturgy and music for the pipe organ.

²⁹ Alberto Donini, “Gregorian Chant in the Liturgy according to Joseph Ratzinger,” in *Benedict XVI and Beauty in Sacred Music*, ed. Janet Elain Rutherford (New York: Scepter Publishers, 2012), 80.

³⁰ Ratzinger, “The Image of the World,” 141.

³¹ Joseph Ratzinger, *A New Song for the Lord: Faith in Christ and Liturgy Today*, trans. Martha Matesich (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1996), ix.

CHAPTER TWO

Significance of Ratzinger's Writings on the Liturgy and Sacred Music for the Pipe Organ

What do Ratzinger's writings indicate for liturgical organ music? In the first place, Ratzinger's ratification of history and identification of history as a core element of liturgy signify its importance. He states, "above all the three ontological dimensions in which the liturgy lives follow from this: cosmos, history, and mystery. The reference to history involves development, that is, belonging to a living entity that has a beginning that continues to have an effect and stays present but is not completed and lives only by being developed further."³² Therefore, study of the historical use of the organ and its repertoire is valuable for understanding its role today.

The pipe organ has become the quintessential church instrument, yet, for centuries, no instruments were allowed in church worship. "The early church was subject to two particular influences against any instrument in church, and especially in the liturgy: the liturgy's origins in the Jewish synagogue, and Patristic resistance to anything of profane or luxurious associations."³³ The Church Fathers clearly discouraged the use of instruments: "there are many passing references to music scattered throughout the writings of the Fathers. Most of the passages deal with psalmody and vocal music, but a few are concerned with musical instruments. The authors of these passages were almost

³² Ratzinger, "The Image of the World," 149–50.

³³ Peter Williams and Barbara Owen, *Organ*, New Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments, ed. Stanley Sadie (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1988), 54.

unanimous in rejecting the use of instruments.”³⁴ In a sense, it was necessary for the early Church to define itself in the negative. That is, in order to describe and develop a Christian culture, prohibitions had to be made, especially ones that distinguished the Christian culture from Jewish or pagan culture. However, it is not simply the case that the Church was motivated by being not-Jewish or not-pagan. Christians bear the name of Christ, whom St. John the Evangelist describes and Ratzinger affirms as the Word (logos). Ratzinger explains, “The Church Fathers accordingly described the entire path from the Old Testament Temple cult to Christian worship, and the path from Old to New Testament in general, as a process of spiritualization. From this point of view they were devoted to a liturgy that was as purely logocentric as possible, and, at first generally opposed to liturgical splendor at all levels.”³⁵

A liturgy that is dedicated to Jesus as the Incarnate Word symbolically and literally will need vocal music. “Thus the relation of liturgical music to logos means, first of all, simply its relation to words. That is why singing in the liturgy has priority over instrumental music, though it does not in any way exclude it.”³⁶ Only the human voice can carry text. For this reason, it is logical that instrumental music was initially prohibited in the Church’s worship. Theologically, there is another aspect which gives precedence to vocal music. Ratzinger writes, “The idea of the sacrifice of the Logos becomes a full reality only in the *Logos incarnatus*, the Word who is made flesh and draws all flesh into the glorification of God. When that happens, the Logos is more than

³⁴ David Music, *Instruments in Church: A Collection of Source Documents* (Lanham, Maryland: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1998), 27.

³⁵ Ratzinger, “The Artistic Transposition of the Faith,” 487.

³⁶ Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 149.

just the ‘Meaning’ behind and above things. Now he himself has entered into flesh, has become bodily.”³⁷ The belief that the Logos became flesh, that God became man, affords a special dignity to humanity. In this sense, vocal music has priority in worship because in singing, the instrument used to offer worship is the human body itself. The human person is able to offer himself musically in worship in the most intimate way when singing is involved. Vocal music, therefore, sets the standard for worship, and instrumental music is considered secondary. Nevertheless, the pipe organ gradually gained not only acceptance in worship but an honored place in the Catholic Church. In 1963, the Second Vatican Council addressed the pipe organ in the document *Sacrosanctum Concilium*: “In the Latin Church the pipe organ is to be held in high esteem, for it is the traditional musical instrument which adds a wonderful splendor to the Church’s ceremonies and powerfully lifts up man’s mind to God and to higher things.”³⁸ No other instrument is given such an honor.

It is not necessarily clear how after a centuries-old tradition of purely vocal music, the pipe organ came to be an acceptable and esteemed instrument in the Church’s liturgy. According to *The New Grove Dictionary of Musical Instruments*, “One of the great unsolved puzzles of music history is how and why the organ came to be almost exclusively a church instrument in western Europe from about 900 to about 1200.”³⁹ Perhaps it was the organ’s range of tones and similarities with the human body that led to

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 47.

³⁸ Second Vatican Council, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, (December 4, 1963), The Holy See, accessed August 2, 2018, http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html, 120.

³⁹ Williams and Owen, “Organ,” 54.

its acceptance, or maybe it was the ability of the organ to create a sound that surpasses human voices that gave it its esteemed place. As Peter Williams writes, “an element in the Christian adoption of organs must have been the awesome nature of all mechanically produced sound, a sound louder than anything directly produced by the ordinary breath of men. To this day, a grand concluding organ voluntary in a reverberant church can still convey that awe.”⁴⁰ In any case, as the Catholic Encyclopedia describes, “from the twelfth century on, the organ became the privileged church instrument, the majesty and unimpassioned character of its tone making it a particularly suitable means for adding solemnity to Divine worship.”⁴¹ The earliest written repertoire dates from the 1300s and 1400s.

Naturally, given the priority of vocal music in the Church’s liturgy, much of the liturgical repertoire for the organ can be related to vocal music. For example, early organ music has many similarities with vocal polyphony. Ranges, intervals, and style mimic music for human voices. However, in the Catholic liturgy, the organ’s repertoire is particularly connected with vocal music when it is based on Gregorian chant.

Gregorian chant, also known as plainchant, is the music proper to the Roman Catholic liturgy. It has its roots in Jewish worship and developed in the context of the Church’s liturgy.⁴² Gregorian chant is monophonic and modal. The church modes

⁴⁰ Peter Williams, *The King of Instruments: How Churches Came to Have Organs* (London: SPCK, 1993), 5.

⁴¹ Henry Bewerunge, “Organ,” in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. 11 (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1911), New Advent, accessed August 2, 2018, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11297a.htm>.

⁴² Kenneth Levy, John A. Emerson, Jane Bellingham, David Hiley, and Bennett Mitchell Zon, “Plainchant,” *Grove Music Online*, accessed August 9, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo->

themselves were codified based on centuries of existing repertoire. Gregorian chant has unifying properties. Many voices are brought into one by its monophonic nature, and its use in liturgies throughout Europe and beyond set a universal standard for music in the Roman Catholic Church. By the medieval era, Gregorian chant was sung in churches across almost the entirety of western and central Europe.⁴³ In 1963, following a tradition spanning over one thousand years and periods of revival for chant prompted by the work of the monks of Solesmes in the nineteenth century and the *motu proprio, Tra le Sollecitudini*, of Pope Pius X in the twentieth century, the Second Vatican Council stated through the document, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, “The Church acknowledges Gregorian chant as specially suited to the Roman liturgy: therefore, other things being equal, it should be given pride of place in liturgical services.”⁴⁴ One way Gregorian chant is given pride of place is when it is used as inspiration for organ music.

Gregorian chant is a vocal genre, so organ music that uses Gregorian themes alludes to singing automatically. Moreover, Gregorian chant is like elevated speech; it expresses and adorns a text. The word is the driving force behind Gregorian chant. This is different from more modern forms of vocal music in which musical expression or virtuosity is the goal. In some way, instrumental music poses a challenge in a word-oriented religion. As Ratzinger explains,

A relation to the word, then, is fundamental all the same. Perhaps it should be said that, where an instrument is concerned, there is a greater possibility of alienation from the spirit than in the case of the voice; music can slip away from or turn against the spirit, the more

9781561592630-e-0000040099.

⁴³ James W. McKinnon, “Gregorian Chant,” *Grove Music Online*, accessed August 9, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000011726>.

⁴⁴ Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, para. 116.

remote it is from the human being. Conversely this would mean that, with instruments, the process of purification, of elevation to the spirit, must be considered with special care. But here again it is this essential purification which has resulted in the development of the instruments of Western music, endowing mankind with its most precious gifts.⁴⁵

However, chant-based music retains an association with the text. Furthermore, chant-based music places itself in the well-established tradition of Catholic sacred music.

Ratzinger writes, “In the West, in the form of Gregorian chant, the inherited tradition of psalm-singing was developed to a new sublimity and purity, which set a permanent standard for sacred music, music for the liturgy of the Church.”⁴⁶ Chant-based organ music respects this standard, has a close association with the word, and expresses the text in ways that the voice cannot.

The role of the pipe organ in the liturgy developed in tandem with Gregorian chant. Ultimately, the music of the pipe organ rose to such prominence that short organ pieces, called versets, would alternate with Gregorian chant during the liturgy. This practice is known as *alternatim* and can be traced back to antiphonal singing of psalms. In the chapter about organ music and the liturgy in *The Cambridge Companion to the Organ*, Edward Higginbottom states about *alternatim*, “to our certain knowledge it was employed as early as the fourteenth century, and continued until the early years of the twentieth.”⁴⁷ The practice, therefore, gave rise to the core of the Catholic liturgical organ repertoire. It is an intriguing practice because the organ versets did not function merely as interludes to break up the chant. Rather, the original chant with its text was divided

⁴⁵ Ratzinger, “On the Theological Basis of Church Music,” 121.

⁴⁶ Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 145.

⁴⁷ Edward Higginbottom, “Organ Music and the Liturgy,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Organ*, ed. Nicholas Thistlethwaite and Geoffrey Webber (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 132.

into sections, with the organ taking up entire sections of text. For example, the *Kyrie eleison*, part of the Ordinary of the Mass, traditionally had a total of nine sections consisting of three *Kyrie eleison* petitions, three *Christe eleison*, and ending with three *Kyrie eleison*. The organ could play for the first section, with the voices taking up the second *Kyrie*, and so on; this would result in five sections for the organ and four for the singers. On a superficial level, this meant that some of the text was lost. This is perhaps more dramatic in the case of a non-repeating text such as the *Gloria*. However, Higginbottom, addressing the concern of the missing text, explains that to the medieval and early renaissance mind, which developed the *alternatim* practice, the text “was there, and profoundly there, even when not heard.”⁴⁸

This paradox of the word is addressed by Ratzinger. He cites the expression Paul coined in his Letter to the Romans, namely, *logiké latreia*. This is a Greek expression which Ratzinger argues is hard to translate into English.

One could, however, translate it “divine worship shaped by the word”, but would then of course have to add that “word” in the biblical sense (and also the Greek sense) is more than language and speech, namely, creative reality. It is also certainly more than mere thought and mere spirit. It is self-interpreting, self-communicating spirit. At all times the word-orientation, the rationality, the intelligibility, and the sobriety of the Christian liturgy have been derived from this spirit and given to liturgical music as its basic law. It would, however, be a narrow and false interpretation if one understood by this that all liturgical music should be referred to the text in a strict way, and if one would then exaggerate the intelligibility of the text so much that there would be no more room for what is proper to music. For “word” in the sense of the Bible is more than “text”, and understanding reaches farther than the banal understandability of what is immediately clear to everyone and can be accommodated to the most superficial rationality. But it is correct that music that serves worship “in spirit and truth” cannot be rhythmic ecstasy, sensual intimation or anesthetization, subjective sentimentality, or superficial entertainment; instead it is ordered to a message, to a comprehensive, spiritual, and in the fullest sense rational statement. In other words, it is correct to say that music in a comprehensive sense and deep down inside must correspond to this “word”, indeed must serve it.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Ibid., 140.

⁴⁹ Ratzinger, “The Image of the World,” 152.

It would seem, then, that the Christian understanding of the importance of the Word (logos) does not preclude instrumental music. Indeed, as has already been indicated, Ratzinger affirms the use of instruments in the liturgy. Nevertheless, there will always be a difficulty in assuring that instrumental music is word-oriented, given the inability of an instrument to proclaim text in a literal way. After concern for lack of text gradually grew in response to the *alternatim* practice, it was banned in 1903 in Pope Pius X's *motu proprio, Tra le Sollecitudini*, with the pronouncement: "It is not permitted to have the chant preceded by long preludes or to interrupt it with intermezzo pieces."⁵⁰ This may be seen not so much as an indictment against the organ as a reinforcement of the primacy of vocal music. Even so, the prohibition of the *alternatim* practice does result in a challenge to modern organ music. The pipe organ simply cannot be used in the same manner as it had been used for centuries. However, this does not mean that the repertoire from this tradition is invalid or that nothing can be learned from it. If, as Ratzinger indicates, a core value of liturgical music is its connection to history, then the music of previous eras can provide insight and have value in the present age.

What can be learned from the practice of *alternatim* and its repertoire? First, it is clear from the extensive liturgical repertoire that the organ was a revered instrument in worship. Through *alternatim*, the organ essentially achieved equal status with the human voice. That is, organ versets were considered to be a legitimate form of communication and expression of the word. In retrospect, perhaps, the organ took on a role greater than

⁵⁰ Pope Pius X, *Motu Proprio* on Sacred Music *Tra le Sollecitudini*, November 22, 1903, Adoremus, accessed August 2, 2018, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11297a.htm>.

appropriate and, at times, organ music eclipsed vocal music, but the historical use and repertoire of the organ demonstrate an awareness that the organ is in some way capable of creating logos-like music. To some degree, the organ can convey the word.

As might be expected, the *alternatim* repertoire, connected as it is with Gregorian chant, can be distinguished from other types of music. Higginbottom identifies several characteristics:

When organ music is used in alternation with plainchant (in passing it is worth noting that references are to be found of *alternatim* practices involving various forms of vocal polyphony) it has to conform to a number of specific requirements. In the early days of the practice it was normal, indeed *de rigueur*, that the organ verset incorporated the plain chant itself, as a cantus firmus in textures of various degrees of polyphonic elaboration. As polyphonic styles yielded to freer concertante idioms, the cantus-firmus technique was retained (sometimes in response to ecclesiastical prescription) for the initial versets, or for versets of particular solemnity. At all times the organist had to respect the mode of the chant in use, a discipline which led to a codification of “tones” appropriate to this or that mode, and to cadences which provided endings analogous to those of the replaced section of chant.⁵¹

It is evident that pieces from the *alternatim* repertoire are not meant to exist on their own. They arose from a dynamic relationship with Gregorian chant. They are dependent on an existing chant, whether it is used openly as a cantus firmus or alluded to in cadences that match the mode of the chant. Gregorian chant-based organ music might therefore be seen as symbolic of Ratzinger’s description of what happens in true liturgy. Ratzinger maintains that liturgy is not something one can make for oneself but can only receive. He has stated, “Liturgy implies a real relationship with Another, who reveals himself to us and gives our existence a new direction.” This can be likened to the composition of chant-based music. In this process, the composer is given pre-existing music (it adds to the mysterious symbolism that Gregorian chant itself is not attributed to a particular

⁵¹ Higginbottom, “Organ Music and the Liturgy,” 139.

person, though as a genre it is named in honor of Pope Gregory). The composer must “receive” the chant; it must be internalized before being offered back in the form of an organ piece. To use language similar to Ratzinger’s, chant-based organ music implies a real relationship with a pre-existing chant that is revealed to the composer and gives the composition a new direction. For this reason, Gregorian chant-based music holds a preeminent place in the liturgical repertoire of the organ.

The organ may be said to add beauty and splendor to the liturgy. In the practice of *alternatim*, the organ not only fulfilled the practical function of giving the singers a moment of rest but the artistic one of adding decoration and interpretation. Higginbottom explains that the practice of singing psalms antiphonally responded to the need to relieve vocal fatigue: “the organ followed suit, displaying its capacity for musical elaboration: the Faenza Codex shows the organ pouring out an intricate right-hand discantus above a left-hand cantus firmus. In the same way as gothic architecture, stained glass, vestments and ceremony elaborated liturgy the organ added its decorative voice.”⁵² The decorative voice of the organ complements the voices of the singers very well. Higginbottom continues, “It was a voice which set up a dynamic spatial and stylistic relationship with the singers. It was also a partner which offered an economy of means compared with *alternatim* practices contrasting various vocal dispositions (such as polyphony against plainchant).”⁵³

The organ’s relationship to the word is apparent in the *alternatim* practice and its

⁵² Ibid., 133.

⁵³ Ibid.

repertoire. It is also evident that the organ is capable of adding splendor to the liturgy through artistic elaboration and decoration. Undeniably, the organ can add depth and height to music; the different ranks and lengths of pipes assure this possibility. Like many instruments, the organ can communicate glory or express distress. Indeed, the organ is such a powerful instrument by nature that its music can be said to engender as well as communicate glory and to evoke as well as express distress. When words seem inadequate, the sound of the organ serves to represent the unspeakable. These concepts, depth and height, glory and distress, words and the unspeakable, have all appeared in Ratzinger's theological writings on the liturgy. In particular, Ratzinger identifies these concepts with the cosmological nature of the liturgy. The music of the organ, then, can be related to the cosmos in addition to its relationship with the logos. Ratzinger explains:

The organ is a theological instrument that originally had its place in the cult of the emperor. When the Emperor of Byzantium spoke, an organ played. The organ in turn was supposed to be the unison of all the voices of the cosmos. Accordingly, the organ music at an imperial speech meant that when the divine emperor spoke, the entire universe resounded. As a divine utterance, his statement is the resounding of all the voices in the cosmos. The "organon" is the cosmic instrument and as such the voice of the world's ruler, the *imperator*. In contrast to this Byzantine custom, Rome stresses cosmic Christology and on that basis the cosmic function of the Vicar of Christ on earth: what was good enough for the emperor was quite good enough for the pope.⁵⁴

In part, it was the cosmic character of the organ that made it a suitable instrument for worship. It can be challenging to incorporate instruments into the Catholic liturgy. The organ rises to the challenge because it can express both the logos and the cosmos. In taking up Gregorian themes, the music of the organ remains oriented to the logos; through its variety of sounds and range of dynamics, the organ can symbolize the cosmos.

⁵⁴ Ratzinger, "The Artistic Transposition of the Faith," 490.

The themes of Ratzinger's theological writings on liturgical music, namely, the liturgy as something that is received not created, cosmos, logos, mystery, and history are significant for the pipe organ. In the first place, respect for the history of the pipe organ implies that something can be learned from its historical use and repertoire. More specifically, the importance of history in the liturgy suggests that the liturgical music from past ages can offer guidance for compositions today. It is through study of repertoire that various characteristics of sacred liturgical music can be identified. These characteristics, in turn, help to define sacred liturgical music. Gregorian chant-based organ music forms the core of the Catholic liturgical repertoire. Examination of this repertoire reveals that it exhibits the traits Ratzinger links with the liturgy. Moreover, the best examples of this repertoire serve as models for future compositions. The following chapters will therefore focus on the music of three famous Catholic composers: Frescobaldi, Tournemire, and Langlais. A musical analysis of these composers' liturgical works for the organ should yield the characteristics of sacred music on a more practical and technical level. Subsequent chapters will examine the accompanimental role of the organ, the practice of improvisation, and the instrument itself.

CHAPTER THREE

Frescobaldi's *Fiori Musicali*

Girolamo Frescobaldi is a well-respected composer from the Renaissance period and is especially known for his keyboard works. Frescobaldi was born in 1583 and died in 1643. He served as organist at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome with the Capella Giulia. He was originally from Ferrara, where there was a thriving musical culture.⁵⁵ At St. Peter's, the musical repertory he would have been exposed to and taken part in was "essentially conservative in character in the tradition of Palestrina."⁵⁶ Palestrina's music, which was central to the repertoire of St. Peter's during Frescobaldi's time, is revered in the Catholic Church. Palestrina has been mentioned by name in church documents. For example, Pope Pius X, in discussing qualities of true sacred music, wrote in *Tra le Sollecitudini*, "The above-mentioned qualities are also possessed in an excellent degree by Classic Polyphony, especially of the Roman School, which reached its greatest perfection in the sixteenth century, owing to the works of Pierluigi da Palestrina, and continued subsequently to produce compositions of excellent quality from a liturgical and musical standpoint."⁵⁷ Frescobaldi's works for keyboard form part of the heritage of the Roman School mentioned by Pope Pius X. Indeed, Frescobaldi's works were influential for composers who followed him. The Grove Dictionary states, "the most enduring

⁵⁵ Frederick Hammond and Alexander Silbiger, "Frescobaldi, Girolamo [Gerolamo, Girolimo] Alessandro," *Grove Music Online*, accessed June 12, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000010219>.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Pope Pius X, *Tra le Sollecitudini*, November 22, 1903, Adoremus, accessed August 2, 2018, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/11297a.htm>.

impact may have come from his works in the ‘learned style’, which assumed a role in the study of instrumental counterpoint comparable to that of Palestrina’s music in the study of vocal counterpoint.”⁵⁸ Froberger, a student of Frescobaldi, carried on and expanded the musical development his teacher had initiated. Johann Sebastian Bach possessed a copy of Frescobaldi’s *Fiori Musicali*, and aspects of Frescobaldi’s style have been traced in Bach’s compositions.⁵⁹ Peter Williams maintains, “It is true that the special qualities of Frescobaldi’s idiom—harmonic tension, innate melodiousness and contrapuntal ease—had clearly been recognized not only by Froberger but by many composers in Central Europe who continued to create liturgical versets for organ.”⁶⁰

Fiori Musicali is a set of pieces for the organ published in 1635 by Frescobaldi. The set is organized into three mass settings based on three different Gregorian chant masses: *Orbis Factor*, *Cunctipotens Genitor Deus*, and *Cum Jubilo*, which were associated respectively with Sundays throughout the year, double feasts, and feasts of the Blessed Virgin. Typically, the term organ mass is used to denote a set of pieces (versets) used in alternation with Gregorian chant. This would include music of the Ordinary and Proper of the Mass. *Fiori Musicali* is atypical in that it only includes versets for the Kyrie. The other pieces are to be played at specific times during the Mass. Furthermore, the number of versets for the Kyrie is inconsistent. Usually, five would be used in an *alternatim* setting of the Kyrie, but Frescobaldi includes a total of twelve in the *Messa*

⁵⁸ Hammond and Silbiger, “Frescobaldi, Girolamo [Gerolamo, Girolimo] Alessandro,” *Grove Music Online*.

⁵⁹ Peter Williams, “Frescobaldi’s ‘Fiori Musicali’ and Bach,” *Recercare* 24, no. 1/2 (2012), <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24430182>.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 94.

della Domenica. This could be for didactic purposes as it provides even more models for improvisation and composition. It also simply provides variety as the *Messa della Domenica* is the mass that would generally be used throughout the year.

Since *Fiori Musicali* is an early keyboard collection that laid the foundation for future compositions, a musical analysis that focuses on how the music is composed will reveal what elements are essential for liturgical organ composition. This analysis will center on the versets for the Kyrie from the *Messa della Domenica* but also take note of the toccata for the elevation. Following the established custom, Frescobaldi's versets for the Kyrie are based on Gregorian chant. The style of these versets is rooted in the tradition of sacred vocal polyphony, which is itself rooted in the practice of embellishing Gregorian chant. The earliest type of vocal polyphony involved singing the chant with a drone, or having another voice parallel the chant at the fifth. In the Renaissance era, more elaborate polyphony evolved by slowing down the note values of the original chant and adding one or more voices with florid, faster-moving counterpoint. This technique was used for mass settings, which are now known as cantus firmus masses. Frescobaldi's cantus firmus style versets in *Fiori Musicali*, though written for the organ, share many of the qualities of this kind of vocal polyphony. He thus honors the well-established tradition of vocal music in the Catholic Church as well as the style of the composers who preceded him. "The techniques employed by Frescobaldi are just those used by Renaissance composers of similar pieces. Most versets are either a short point of imitation with a theme derived from the appropriate chant or a setting of the chant in long-note *cantus firmus* style. Frescobaldi adheres to a contrapuntal style that is

essentially sixteenth-century.”⁶¹ Additionally, the harmonic language Frescobaldi uses in the versets is called “conservative.”⁶² These qualities are important for Catholic sacred music. To be sure, it is not the case that the Church is opposed to innovation or creative development. However, as Ratzinger affirms, these things must originate from the tradition that has been established. As Ratzinger has written, “at the beginning of great sacred music there is of necessity awe, receptivity, and a humility that is prepared to serve by participating in the greatness that has already gone forth.”⁶³

The cantus firmus for the Kyrie versets in the *Messa della Domenica* is taken from the Gregorian chant mass *Missa Orbis Factor*. The chant is in the first mode, which sounds similar to a modern natural minor scale and is also known as the Dorian mode. In Frescobaldi’s time, the first section would have been sung three times, the second section would have been sung three times, and in the last section, the first Kyrie eleison would have been sung twice before ending with the final Kyrie eleison, which is varied musically. When the organ performed *alternatim*, it would take the place of five of these nine statements.

All of the versets for the *Messa della Domenica* in *Fiori Musicali* are written in four voices and have similarities with vocal polyphony. In the first verset, the cantus firmus is in long notes in the soprano while the other voices provide rhythmic variety with shorter note values. At the opening, the alto line forms what could be called a countersubject that appears with regularity throughout the verset. It always begins with

⁶¹ John R. Shannon, *Organ Literature of the Seventeenth Century: A Study of Its Styles* (Raleigh: The Sunbury, 1978), 78.

⁶² *Ibid.*

⁶³ Ratzinger, “The Image of the World,” 158.

two repeated notes followed by two steps up before moving back down. The countersubject fits well underneath the cantus firmus and complements it. It is traded among the voices and, after being stated again in the alto, it volleys between tenor and alto before its final appearance in the bass. This kind of imitation is common in vocal music. Indeed, any one of the lines of music in this verset and many of the others in this collection could be sung by the corresponding voice part and be effective. Nothing that is particularly idiomatic to the keyboard such as virtuosic scales or arpeggios appears in the versets. This strengthens their connection and affiliation with vocal polyphony. In this verset, the range of the soprano is confined to the range predetermined by the chant, but the range of the alto, tenor, and bass covers an octave. Again, these ranges correspond to actual voice parts. The original chant is obviously declaimed in the cantus firmus, but it also provides inspiration for a motif in the bass line. When the bass enters, its notes comprise the three first notes of the chant. This short motif is repeated and can be found again near the conclusion of the verset.

Figure 1: Girolamo Frescobaldi, First Verset, *Kyrie della Domenica* from *Fiori*

*Musicali*⁶⁴

KYRIE
della Domenica⁶⁴

cantus firmus in soprano

countersubject

5

9

note: range of each line spans an octave

The second verset is beautifully crafted. The cantus firmus is in the soprano, but it is incorporated into the fabric of the music. It does not appear in long notes like the first verset. Instead, its rhythm is similar to that of the other voices. The cantus firmus only appears in full at the end but is hinted at by the tenor at the opening of the verset and also by the soprano. At the beginning, the alto has a chant-like motif. It follows the same general shape of a Gregorian chant phrase in that it rises to its highest note, which is in the middle of the line, and falls back down, creating a musical shape similar to an arch. This motif, which spans two measures, is central to the verset. It can be found six times, sometimes with entrances overlapping each other, as in mm. 7–8. Although the rhythm is sometimes varied, the intervallic structure remains constant. Furthermore, the motif starts on “A” every time except the final time, when it starts on “D” and forms part of the

⁶⁴ Girolamo Frescobaldi, *Organ and Keyboard Works*, vol. V, *Fiori Musicali*, ed. Pierre Pidoux (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1954), 4–5.

cantus firmus. It is at this moment that it becomes clear that what seemed to be a chant-like motif was indeed taken directly from the original chant. The repetition and cascading entrances serve to heighten the clarity of this motif when it becomes part of the full statement of the cantus firmus.

The next four versets are designed to alternate with the second section of the chant, that is, the *Christe eleison*. As expected, the chant from this section forms the basis for the music. In the third verset, the cantus firmus is in long notes in the tenor. There is a countersubject that first appears in the bass and is subsequently taken up by the soprano and alto at different pitches. Interestingly, the rhythm of the countersubject stays the same and it retains its overall shape, but about halfway through the verset, the first interval of the countersubject changes from a minor third to a minor second. This small alteration creates a phrase that is reminiscent of the Kyrie from the first section of the chant and ties the music ever more closely to the chant. Only one *Christe* verset is needed for an *alternatim* setting, but Frescobaldi includes three others. In the fourth verset, the cantus firmus is a somewhat decorated version of the *Christe* chant which passes from the alto to the tenor in m. 3 and from the tenor to the bass in m. 6. The texture of this verset is more intimate and for the most part, it is a three-voice setting. The cantus firmus sounds in long notes amidst a faster moving duet. The duet is initially between the tenor and soprano, then between alto and bass, and returns to tenor and soprano. There are a few passing moments when all four voices sound as a coincidental result of the counterpoint, but the only place there is true four-part harmony is at the cadence. This effects a crescendo and emphasizes the cadence.

This time, the “D” pedal is in the soprano. Additionally, the bass forms a kind of pedal point; in five out of twelve measures, the bass also holds “D.” The cantus firmus can be found in the alto and repeats almost completely three times. In m. 4, the tenor also states the cantus firmus, which creates the effect of a canon within the drone. In the eighth verset, the long-note cantus firmus style returns in the alto with two different countersubjects in the other voices. The first consists of leaps and stepwise motion whereas the second consists of repeated notes and stepwise motion. The ninth verset has the cantus firmus in the bass for the first time. In this verset, the soprano and alto lines have a special relationship. The motif that first appears in the alto appears sequentially in the soprano a step lower. After this, it is taken by the alto at the same pitch. The motif is only found at these pitches (either starting on “A” or “G”) and is traded between the soprano and alto throughout the verset, unifying it.

Figure 3: Girolamo Frescobaldi, Ninth Verset, *Kyrie* from *Fiori Musicali*⁶⁶

KYRIE
alio modo⁽³⁾

countersubject appears only in alto and soprano and only at two pitch levels

cantus firmus in bass

5

9

14

In the tenth verset, the cantus firmus would appear to be in the bass in long notes only to be transferred up and restated at a different pitch level in the soprano. At the end, in mm. 16–17, the tenor imitates the phrase found in the soprano part immediately preceding it (mm. 10–16) but at half and then quarter note values. The style of the eleventh verset can be likened to that of a paraphrase mass. The paraphrase mass is a vocal genre which is based on an existing chant but does not state it openly and completely as a cantus firmus mass would. Rather, little bits or motives from the chant are taken and developed among all the voices. All of the voices in this verset share a similar shape and rhythm and are based on the original chant, albeit an elaborated form of it. For the twelfth and final

⁶⁶ Ibid., 10.

verset, Frescobaldi returns to the pedal point technique with an “A” pedal in the tenor. The other voices loosely paraphrase the Kyrie eleison. This and the fifth verset are the only to be in triple meter. The quarter note is the smallest note value and only occurs in the soprano voice as decoration. Otherwise, the motion is by half note, which makes this verset seem solemn. Also, the use of suspensions is prevalent.

Given the centrality of Gregorian chant in the Church’s liturgy and history, an analysis of chant-based work is beneficial for understanding the liturgical repertoire of the organ. However, this understanding can be broadened by study of free works. Chief among these kinds of works is the toccata, which is a genre associated specifically with the keyboard. Frescobaldi is known as the “first important European composer to concentrate on instrumental music,” and “in bulk alone his surviving keyboard works surpass those of any predecessor or contemporary and they encompass virtually every type of keyboard composition known to the period.”⁶⁷ Frescobaldi especially cultivated the genre of toccata and included several in *Fiori Musicali*. These are of a special type. “Frescobaldi also wrote short pieces which are now called liturgical toccatas in a slow, dignified style. These stately toccatas were rather chromatic and were performed at designated places in the Mass such as before the Mass (*Toccata avanti la Messa delli Apostoli*) and for the elevation (*Toccata per l’Elevatione*).”⁶⁸

The elevation toccata provides instrumental music for the most solemn and mysterious moment in the Mass. After the Consecration, bread and wine are elevated and

⁶⁷ Hammond and Silbiger, “Frescobaldi, Girolamo [Gerolamo, Girolimo] Alessandro,” *Grove Music Online*.

⁶⁸ Corliss Richard Arnold, *Organ Literature: A Comprehensive Survey*, vol. I, *Historical Survey* (Lanham, Md: Scarecrow Press, 2003), Locations 591–3, Kindle.

adored as the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ. For Catholics, this moment represents the source and summit of their lives. Certainly, the music Frescobaldi wrote intentionally for this very moment is worthy of study. His liturgical toccatas have been called “meditative compositions,”⁶⁹ and his counterpoint “expressive to the point of mysticism.”⁷⁰ In particular, Frescobaldi’s elevation toccatas in *Fiori Musicali* have been identified as surpassing his own previous compositions “for their sustained moods of passionate mysticism.”⁷¹

The “Toccatà Cromatica per l’Elevatione” for the *Messa della Domenica* is an excellent example of the elevation toccata. Many of its characteristics typify the genre. It is slow, written in four parts, and is in the third mode (modes three and four were traditionally associated with the elevation toccata).⁷² It is in the *durezza e ligature* style, that is, in addition to slow-moving sustained four-part writing, there are long-held dissonances.⁷³ These suspensions are prevalent throughout the piece and occur right from the start in the first measures. Whereas the Kyrie versets were based on Gregorian chant and the lines were similar to vocal polyphony, the elevation toccata seems more chordal. The emphasis is not so much on the horizontal plane of contrapuntal lines as the vertical plane with chord changes occurring on the half-note pulse. The slow tempo and chordal

⁶⁹ Ibid., Locations 636–7, Kindle.

⁷⁰ Gerald Stares Bedbrook, *Keyboard Music from the Middle Ages to the Beginnings of the Baroque* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1973), 133.

⁷¹ Hammond and Silbiger, “Frescobaldi, Girolamo [Gerolamo, Girolimo] Alessandro,” *Grove Music Online*.

⁷² Christopher Stenbridge, “Italian Organ Music to Frescobaldi,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Organ*, ed. Nicholas Thistlethwaite and Geoffrey Webber (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 156.

⁷³ Ibid., 162.

nature give this music a time-suspending quality. However, a subject does emerge in m. 7 which consists of an ascending major third followed by a descending chromatic scale. This subject appears repeatedly, and, as the title of the toccata suggests, chromaticism is an essential quality of the elevation toccata.

Figure 4: Girolamo Frescobaldi, “Tocatta Cromatica per l’Elevatione,” from *Fiori Musicali*, mm. 1–13⁷⁴

Richard Taruskin describes this toccata in the following way:

The Elevation toccata from Frescobaldi’s *Messa della Domenica*, the Mass for Sundays throughout the year, is both his most chromatic composition and the one most poignantly riddled with suspensions. Its obsessive contemplation of an “irrational” idea, in which an apparent leading tone turns tail and descends dissonantly through semitones (an effect later classified by German theorists, among other “unnatural progressions,” as the *passus duriusculus*, “the hard way down”), makes the toccata an epitome of the Counter Reformation ideal, long since associated with St. Theresa, that envisaged “religious experience” as deeply felt emotion on the very threshold of pain.⁷⁵

A final attribute of this toccata is the avoidance of cadences. This, combined with the suspensions and slow tempo, gives the toccata a character that is well-suited to the elevation. Taruskin also addresses the elevation: “It is the most mysterious moment of

⁷⁴ Frescobaldi, *Fiori Musicali*, 18.

⁷⁵ Richard Taruskin, “Fat Times and Lean,” in *Music in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), accessed August 4, 2018, <http://www.oxfordwesternmusic.com/view/Volume2/actrade-9780195384826-chapter-02.xml>.

the Mass, a moment of sublime contemplation, and it is that mood of self-abasement before a truth that passes human understanding that the elevation toccata, in its unearthly harmony, is designed to capture, or induce.”⁷⁶

The musical characteristics of Frescobaldi’s versets for the Kyrie and the elevation toccata for the *Messa della Domenica* may be considered in theological terms. In particular, Ratzinger’s themes of cosmos, logos, mystery, and history find a place in Frescobaldi’s music. In the Kyrie versets especially, many voices are brought together into a harmonious whole. Each voice operates on its own and is confined to its own range, but all work simultaneously to produce a harmony. This is similar to the ancient understanding of the cosmos as the order of the celestial spheres. In the elevation toccata, timelessness is evoked through a slow tempo and suspensions. Even the avoidance of cadences expresses the eternal. Yet, this expression of eternity is confined to the time during which the music is played or heard. In Ratzinger’s theology, time and eternity are both cosmological concepts. The Kyrie versets have an intrinsic connection to the logos because they are based on a texted chant. When the cantus firmus, the melody of the chant, is played on an instrument such as the organ, one who is familiar with the chant cannot help but to hear the text. These versets are themselves allegories for Ratzinger’s understanding of what happens in the liturgy. They are not created by themselves but are dependent on something outside of themselves, namely, the cantus firmus. The cantus firmus is the inspiration for the music, and, though the source is one, the pieces inspired by it are many. In the versets for the *Messa della Domenica* alone,

⁷⁶ Ibid.

there is a tremendous variety of musical settings. The cantus firmus is present in some way but treated differently in each. In the elevation toccata, chromaticism is used to accompany the central mystery of the faith and to express this sense of mystery. The church modes, which provided the foundation for sacred vocal and instrumental music of Frescobaldi's time, are made of different patterns of half and whole steps. Chromaticism, a series exclusively made of half steps, or the use of notes outside of the scale, therefore implies something foreign or "other." This is fitting for music that expresses mystery. Finally, Frescobaldi acknowledges and respects history simply by using a cantus firmus, but also by incorporating elements of the music which he inherited, especially the tradition of vocal music at St. Peter's Basilica.

CHAPTER FOUR

Tournemire's *L'Orgue Mystique*

Charles Tournemire was a French composer and organist. He was born in 1870 and died in 1939. He was a student at the esteemed Paris Conservatoire; his teachers included César Franck and Charles-Marie Widor. Tournemire was especially devoted to Franck, from whom he inherited “a spiritual, mystical motivation for composition and for organ improvisation.”⁷⁷ Tournemire has been identified as “one of Franck’s most gifted and esteemed pupils at the Conservatory.”⁷⁸ In 1898, Tournemire became organist at Ste. Clotilde, where he carried on the tradition of Franck, who had been organist there from 1858 until his death in 1890. At Ste. Clotilde, Tournemire both inherited and became part of a musical tradition. This tradition, known as the French Ste. Clotilde tradition, “emerges as the most representative of liturgical music whose atmospheric tendencies were exemplified by colorful sonorities and a generally vertical, homophonic, thick texture.”⁷⁹ Ste. Clotilde was also part of a broader tradition associated with its instrument, the Cavallé-Coll organ. Organs built by Cavallé-Coll are known for their size and range of expression. They have been called symphonic organs because of these qualities and for the new orchestral sounds they included. At the same time, the repertoire for the organ in Tournemire’s time was influenced by and itself promoted the

⁷⁷ Nicholas Kaye, “Tournemire, Charles,” *Grove Music Online*, accessed June 16, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000028225>.

⁷⁸ Ann Labounsky, *Jean Langlais: The Man and His Music* (Paris: Bornemann, 1968), 130.

⁷⁹ Benjamin Kolodziej, “Twentieth-Century Organ Music in the Christian Liturgy,” in *Twentieth-Century Organ Music*, ed. Christopher Anderson (New York: Routledge, 2012), 311.

symphonic organ. Additionally, the symphony and orchestral music in general was idealized in the Romantic era. Much of the music written for the organ thus had secular connotations. Tournemire, on the other hand, “considered himself first and foremost a liturgical organist whose task it was to comment on the Gregorian melodies of the sacred liturgy.”⁸⁰

Tournemire’s duty as organist at Ste. Clotilde was to provide music for the liturgy. Improvisation was central to his organ playing. Maurice Duruflé, who was a student of Tournemire for a short time, describes Tournemire’s playing during the liturgy:

Tournemire never played from written music at Sunday Mass. With the book of Gregorian chant always on the music rack, opened to the liturgical office of the day, he improvised throughout the entire Mass, with an interruption only for the reading of the gospel and the sermon. That amounted to a half-hour of music. I hasten to add that this half-hour of music was always inspired by the Gregorian themes of the day and reflected the different portions of the service. It was not a concert, but a genuine musical commentary on the liturgy.⁸¹

This description reveals a key element of Tournemire’s style, that is, his incorporation of Gregorian chant. Tournemire was personally devoted to the liturgy and Gregorian chant, and this corresponded to a broader movement in church music:

The Roman Catholic Church hosted various nineteenth-century reform movements which had striven to revitalize church music in general. From the Caecilian movement’s attempt in the German-speaking lands to engage in musicological study and the revival of polyphonic liturgical music, to the French school developed around the Abbey of Solesmes solely to study and promote the use of Gregorian chant, such endeavors mirrored the general growth of musical scholarship and historical awareness, no doubt partly a result of latent nineteenth-century Romantic nostalgia.⁸²

⁸⁰ Hermann Busch and Martin Herchenroeder, “France,” in *Twentieth-Century Organ Music*, ed. Christopher Anderson (New York: Routledge, 2012), 149.

⁸¹ Edward Schaefer, “Tournemire’s *L’Orgue Mystique* and Its Place in the Legacy of the Organ Mass,” in *Mystic Modern: The Music, Thought, and Legacy of Charles Tournemire*, ed. Jennifer Donelson and Stephen Schloesser (Richmond, Virginia: Church Music Association of America, 2014), 37.

⁸² Kolodziej “Twentieth-Century Organ Music in the Christian Liturgy,” 323–4.

The work of the monks of Solesmes was profoundly influential for church music and musicians. This influence extended beyond the boundaries of the faithful as “many musicians and artists visited Solesmes solely for a ‘spiritual experience’ whether or not they were practicing Catholics, or had any interest in restoring Gregorian melodies to use in the Mass throughout Europe.”⁸³ Tournemire, too, visited Solesmes, and the work of the monks had a direct impact on him as a Catholic musician.

On a practical level, the monks of Solesmes made Gregorian chant more accessible. Solesmes was “the centre of the revival of Gregorian chant in the 19th and 20th centuries.”⁸⁴ The monks were dedicated to the study of chant manuscripts and, with the support of Pope Pius X, they produced the official chant books of the Roman Catholic Church. They were known for going against contemporary practice in which chant was sung in a ponderous manner with heavy stresses, and they “succeeded in giving a totally unsuspected suppleness to the performance of Gregorian melodies.”⁸⁵ Dom Prosper Guéranger (1805–75), who served as abbot, is credited with reviving Benedictine life at the monastery. This, in turn, helped to revive the liturgical life of France. Dom Guéranger wrote a substantial commentary on the liturgical year that is divided into fifteen volumes. Dom Guéranger’s work “The Liturgical Year” is centered on the texts of the liturgy and is contemplative in style. Tournemire received this work as a gift from

⁸³ Sarah Lottie Duffy, “A Theological Interpretation of Four Pièces Terminales from Charles Tournemire’s *L’Orgue Mystique*” (DMA diss., University of Washington, Seattle, 2015), 14, accessed August 6, 2018, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

⁸⁴ Eugène Cardine, David Hiley, and Richard Sherr, “Solesmes,” *Grove Music Online*, accessed August 9, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000026139>.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

his student Joseph Bonnet. Bonnet made clear his desire that a composer write a similar “liturgical year” for the organ, basing the music on the chants of the liturgy in a spirit of contemplation.⁸⁶ Bonnet’s desire would be fulfilled in Tournemire’s monumental work, *L’Orgue Mystique*, which was composed between 1927 and 1932. This work represents a culmination of influences: “Tournemire’s composition of *L’Orgue Mystique* came at a high point in the history of French Catholic music. He was influenced by the papal reforms of sacred music in the early twentieth century, the chant research of the monks of Solesmes, and the increasing use of chant in organ works by recent composers. The significance of *L’Orgue Mystique* is tied to the history of Church music in France.”⁸⁷

L’Orgue Mystique consists of fifty-one suites, called offices. Each office corresponds to a particular Sunday or feast day and contains five movements (except for Holy Saturday, which is liturgically different from every other day). *L’Orgue Mystique* provides music for every season of the liturgical year except Advent and Lent, during which the organ was not played. Four movements are intended to accompany parts of the Mass as indicated by their titles, *Prélude à l’Introït*, *Offertoire*, *Élévation*, and *Communion*. The final movement, *Pièce Terminale*, is played just after the conclusion of Mass. All are based on Gregorian themes, showing the influence of the work of the monks at Solesmes. Tournemire used the Solesmes editions of *Paroissien Romain* and *Liber Antiphonarius* as sources for his chant melodies, and, at the beginning of *L’Orgue*

⁸⁶ Stephen Schloesser, *Jazz Age Catholicism: Mystic Modernism in Postwar Paris* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 301.

⁸⁷ Elizabeth Anne Gotlund, “A Guide to Chant in Charles Tournemire’s *L’Orgue Mystique*” (DMA diss., University of Iowa, Iowa City, 2015), 13, accessed August 6, 2018, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.

Mystique, he acknowledges the choirmaster and organist at Solesmes.⁸⁸ Indeed, *L'Orgue Mystique* has been described as the product of “Tournemire’s fascination with the Gregorian reforms instituted by the Benedictine monks of Solesmes together with his zeal for reinstating the liturgical role of the organ.”⁸⁹ *L'Orgue Mystique* has also been described as “an apotheosis of Gregorian chant, a poetic evocation of the musical beauty that Tournemire experienced in its flowing lines.”⁹⁰ Tournemire greatly valued Gregorian chant, writing in the preface to *L'Orgue Mystique*, “Plain-chant which really is an inexhaustible source of mysterious and splendid lines— plain-chant, triumph of modal art—is freely paraphrased for each piece in the course of the works forming this complete set. Endeavors have been made to maintain the infinite suppleness of its phrasing, its unmatched suavity, its mystical depth.”⁹¹

As a result of the historic *alternatim* practice, Gregorian chant had been used in the liturgical repertoire for the organ for centuries. Frescobaldi’s *Fiori Musicali* provides several early examples of chant-inspired music. This practice was not confined to Italy, and through composers like Titelouze and de Grigny, it was a confirmed tradition in France. Tournemire was familiar with the music of these composers. In regard to Frescobaldi, Tournemire stated, “the profound study of this master (the Fra Angelico of sound) will communicate to the science of improvisation suppleness, liberty, and a

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 35–6.

⁸⁹ Labounsky, *Jean Langlais: The Man and His Music*, 130.

⁹⁰ Robert Sutherland Lord, “Liturgy and Gregorian Chant in *L'Orgue Mystique* of Charles Tournemire,” in *Mystic Modern: The Music, Thought, and Legacy of Charles Tournemire*, ed. Jennifer Donelson and Stephen Schloesser (Richmond, Virginia: Church Music Association of America, 2014), 60.

⁹¹ Gotlund “A Guide to Chant in Charles Tournemire’s *L'Orgue Mystique*,” 35.

‘modal’ practice, destroyed in great part by the works [...] of modern tonality that followed.”⁹² Tournemire’s music is thus connected to history. At the same time, he sought to modernize chant-inspired music by using contemporary techniques. His *L’Orgue Mystique* used Gregorian chant, but “in a new way combining symphonic and liturgical traditions.”⁹³ Reviewers were fascinated by the ability of *L’Orgue Mystique* to “hybridize antique modes with ultramodern harmonies.”⁹⁴

Though he composed other works, including eight symphonies, *L’Orgue Mystique* is Tournemire’s best known work. In 2012, the Catholic Music Association of America held a conference on Tournemire and in 2014 produced a book, *Mystic Modern: The Music, Thought, and Legacy of Charles Tournemire*, composed of essays from the conference. A dissertation written in 2015 which focuses on the use of Gregorian chant in *L’Orgue Mystique* states, “Scholarly interest in *L’Orgue Mystique* has increased in recent years, especially since the publication of Pope Benedict XVI’s Summorum Pontificum (2007), which allows for the use of the pre-Vatican II Mass by any priest.”⁹⁵ Tournemire’s *L’Orgue Mystique* has thus far proven to have enduring qualities and may be related to Ratzinger’s liturgical theology.

All of the offices in *L’Orgue Mystique* are based on the Gregorian chants of the day and any may be used to exemplify Tournemire’s compositional style. This analysis

⁹² Ronald Prowse, “The Twentieth-Century Franco-Belgian Art of Improvisation: Marcel Dupré, Charles Tournemire, and Flor Peeters,” in *Mystic Modern: The Music, Thought, and Legacy of Charles Tournemire*, ed. Jennifer Donelson and Stephen Schloesser (Richmond, Virginia: Church Music Association of America, 2014), 100.

⁹³ Kaye, “Tournemire, Charles,” *Grove Music Online*.

⁹⁴ Schloesser, *Jazz Age Catholicism*, 299.

⁹⁵ Gotlund, “A Guide to Chant in Charles Tournemire’s *L’Orgue Mystique*,” 3.

will focus Office No. 27 from the Cycle après la Pentecôte, Op. 57. This Office provides music for the feast of Corpus Christi, that is, the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ. This feast, like Holy Thursday, celebrates the institution of the Holy Eucharist, which is the center of the Catholic liturgy and life. It is a special feast and was traditionally celebrated on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday. Whereas the Last Supper is commemorated in a more somber way on Holy Thursday in the context of Christ's Passion, it is remembered with great joy on Corpus Christi, following Easter and during the season after Pentecost. Indeed, Ratzinger associates joy, triumph, and victory with the feast of Corpus Christi.⁹⁶ In "The Liturgical Year," which provided inspiration for *L'Orgue Mystique*, Dom Prosper Guéranger, describes the feast of Corpus Christi: "A great solemnity has this day risen upon our earth: a feast both to God and to men: for it is the feast of Christ the Mediator, who is present in the sacred Host, that God may be given to man, and man to God. Divine union—such is the dignity to which man is permitted to aspire; and to this aspiration God has responded, even here below, by an invention which is all of heaven. It is today that man celebrates this marvel of God's goodness."⁹⁷

Tournemire would have been familiar with Guéranger's words and included them in his planning for *L'Orgue Mystique*. Sarah Duffy, an organist who researched and reviewed Tournemire's plan for *L'Orgue Mystique*, describes it as a written outline "complete with chant texts and melodies for each movement, as well as additional quotations of antiphons and psalms and commentary on the feast, quoted directly from Guéranger's

⁹⁶ Ratzinger, *Collected Works: Theology of the Liturgy*, 410–13.

⁹⁷ Prosper Guéranger, *The Liturgical Year*, vol. X, *Time after Pentecost: Book I*, trans. Laurence Shepherd (Fitzwilliam, New Hampshire: Loreto Publications, 2000), 184.

L'Année Liturgique.”⁹⁸ She continues, “Reading through the quotations and commentary that Tournemire included with each feast gives an impression of his piety and the depth of his preparation for this composition.”⁹⁹

The *Prélude à l'Introït* from Office No. 27 for the feast of Corpus Christi is short but effective. One of Tournemire's traits can be noticed immediately. The tempo marking indicates that the piece is to be played *senza rigore*. This marking appears in many of the movements in *L'Orgue Mystique* and is key to Tournemire's compositional and improvisational style. It is rooted in the practice of singing Gregorian chant, which is unmetered and reflects the suppleness of phrasing that the monks of Solesmes promoted. Also, Tournemire marks *a piacere* in one measure, indicates *a tempo* in two places, and suggests a *rallentando* in two others. There is a total of six markings which ensure the rhythmic freedom of the music. This is remarkable for a piece that is only eleven measures long.

The *Prélude à l'Introït* is based on the introit chant, *Cibavit eos*. Tournemire takes three phrases from the chant: “Cibavit eos,” “ex adipe frumenti,” and the final “alleluia.” These can be found in the soprano voice and are almost exact paraphrases.

⁹⁸ Duffy, “A Theological Interpretation of Four Pièces Terminales from Charles Tournemire's *L'Orgue Mystique*,” 15.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

Figure 5: Charles Tournemire, *Prélude* from Office No. 27 from *L'Orgue Mystique*,

mm. 1–3¹⁰⁰

XXVII
In Festo Corporis Christi "Cibavit eos"
(Le Très-Saint Sacrement)
Op. 57

①

Les Gambes de 8 II. III. aux claviers

I. II. III.

1 [♩ = 42 *senza rigore*]

Boîtes ouvertes

Octave grave I sur II

"Alleluia"

a piacere

Tournemire typically keeps the notes from the original chant but changes the rhythm. Specifically, repeated notes are often removed; this can be seen in m. 5, which deletes three repeated notes found on the word “adipe.” The three quotations from the chant are separated by one measure of music which, at the beginning, functions as an introduction; it reappears in m. 4 and m. 8 functioning as an interlude. This particular measure of music features a motif that is based on the first of a group of three alleluias found in the chant. Using this motif three times grounds the movement; basing the recurring motif on the word “alleluia” adds joy, reflecting the character of the liturgical day. The motif divides the movement into three small sections. It seems fitting that for the solemnity of Corpus Christi, the first feast after Trinity Sunday, the first movement is divided into three sections.

Tournemire’s *L’Orgue Mystique* is impressive in its synthesis of ancient and modern musical techniques. This is apparent in the *Prélude*. First, as with all of the

¹⁰⁰ Charles Tournemire, *L’Orgue Mystique*, no. 27: *In festo Corporis Christi* (Paris: Heugel, 1928), 1.

movements in *L'Orgue Mystique*, Tournemire bases his music on Gregorian chant, the ancient liturgical music of the Church. He thus places his music in a well-established tradition of chant-based organ music that extends back to Frescobaldi and beyond. In the *Prélude*, like Frescobaldi, Tournemire makes use of a drone, one of the most primitive ways to harmonize a chant melody. The harmonies Tournemire uses make his music recognizably contemporary. There are chords, but not triadic tonal harmony. The music is based on the mode of the chant, but Tournemire does not avoid chromaticism. Tournemire also uses a great variety of textures, even the most basic. Sometimes, the chant will appear as a solo without accompaniment of any kind. In the last two measures of the *Prélude*, the chant emerges in simple parallel octaves.

The *Offertoire* is based on the offertory chant, *Sacerdotes Domini*. The chant is stated in its entirety through the course of the piece. The text of the chant is beautifully conveyed in the way Tournemire sets the music. The chant alternates in the solo pedal line, then the soprano with accompaniment.

Figure 6: Charles Tournemire, *Offertoire* from Office No. 27 from *L'Orgue*

Mystique, mm. 1–3¹⁰¹

II

III. } Fonds 8
II. } Hautbois
I. }

♩ = 40 *senza rigore*

"Sacerdotes Do..."

Boites mi-ouvertes

I. II. III.

"...omini"

Péd: Fonds 8.16.
Tirasses I.II.III.

3

rall.

This expresses the text at the beginning very well. In the sections “Sacerdotes Domini” and “incensum et panes offerunt Deo,” the words that are particularly worthy of reverence are “Domini” and “Deo.” These are the words “Lord” and “God.” In both cases, they fall at the end of the section. These words are emphasized through Tournemire’s technique of setting the first part of the chant as a solo pedal line then setting the next part of the chant in the soprano with accompaniment. The change in texture of the music and change in register of the chant heighten the expression of the

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 2.

text. “Lord” and “God” are musically underlined as the texture opens to many voices and the chant is heard clearly in the soprano. The next phrase, beginning in m. 8, paraphrases “et ideo sancti erunt.” There is still an alternation in musical texture going on, and the chant is still in the soprano in the second half, but variety is achieved through a slower tempo and a four-part texture almost reminiscent of a chorale. M. 13 is climactic as there is a registration change that adds higher stops (specifically, Tournemire calls for mixtures and four-foot stops); the register is also higher than that of the previous section, which was more in the range of human voices. Given Tournemire’s sensitive setting of “Domini” and “Deo,” it is not surprising that this section correlates to the words “Deo suo” (“their God”). Except for the chorale-like section, the music has been increasingly including parallel intervals. Starting in m. 13, there are parallel octaves, parallel fifths and a few parallel thirds. These parallelisms contribute to the static atmospheric quality of the music and also pay homage to the earliest kind of vocal polyphony.

Figure 7: Charles Tournemire, *Offertoire* from Office No. 7 from *L'Orgue Mystique*,

mm. 10–15¹⁰²

The image shows two systems of musical notation. The first system, measures 10-15, is marked 'Meno' and 'Boîtes mi-ouvertes'. The vocal line (top staff) features a melodic phrase 'sancti erunt' circled in red. The organ accompaniment consists of a right hand (middle staff) and a left hand (bottom staff). The second system, starting at measure 13, is marked 'a Tempo' and 'Boîtes ouvertes'. It includes a registration change indicated by a red circle and the text 'registration change'. The vocal line continues with the phrase 'Deo suo' circled in red. The organ accompaniment continues with a more rhythmic texture.

The phrase “et non pollut” is stated in m. 16 in the style of the alternating textures like the opening of the movement and repeated in m. 19 in the chorale-like style. The last phrase “nomen ejus alleluia” receives a special setting in m. 26. The registration changes to a distinctive sound and the chant is in the soprano as a solo without accompaniment. At this point, the entire chant has been paraphrased, but Tournemire does not end here. There is a final registration change that employs the pure sound of eight-foot flutes.

¹⁰² Ibid., 2–3.

Accompanied by many parallelisms, the phrase “offerunt Deo suo” reappears and is repeated.

Figure 8: Charles Tournemire, *Offertoire* from Office No. 27 from *L’Orgue*

Mystique, mm. 27–29¹⁰³

a Tempo (poco più vivo)
 Au II: Bourdon 8, Flûte harm. 8, seulement.

27

II. III.

Boites ouvertes

“offerunt Deo”

Between the high register, the soft registration, and the static harmony, “offerunt Deo” is set in a highly contemplative and meditative way. This connects the music ever more deeply to the liturgical action. Just as the offertory is taking place, the music closes with a meditation on the words “they offer to their God.”

The *Élévation* is based on the antiphon for the Magnificat of Vespers on the Vigil of the feast of Corpus Christi, *O quam suavis*. Like the *Offertoire*, the chant appears alternatively as an unaccompanied solo line, then in the context of other voices. In the *Élévation*, two manuals with separate sounds are used. The manual which calls for an eight-foot gamba has the chant unaccompanied in m. 1, and in m. 2, when the chant is transferred to another manual which calls for an eight-foot bourdon, the first manual provides the accompaniment.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 4.

Figure 9: Charles Tournemire, *Élévation* from Office No. 27 from *L'Orgue Mystique*,
mm. 1–2¹⁰⁴

This registration creates a sound that could be called sweet and is reflective of the text, “O how sweet.” Tournemire also uses the distinctive capabilities of the organ to create a special effect which can be observed in mm. 2–3 and mm. 5–6. In these measures, the chant melody is in one manual, played on a flute stop and accompanied on another manual on a string stop. However, the accompaniment does not consistently lie below the chant melody. Instead, at the beginning and end of the phrase, the notes in the accompanying line are both above and below the chant melody. It is almost as if there is a halo around the chant in the accompanying part. This reflects the sanctity of the accompanying liturgical action—the Elevation. Tournemire uses this effect for the first half of the movement, but in m. 7, there is a registrational and textural change. The céleste is added to the gamba, and both hands play on the manual that has thus far provided the accompaniment. The chant is initially in the soprano, then travels down to the lowest voice. This change does more than provide variety to this short piece. The

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 5.

text of the chant in this line is “pane suavissimo,” that is, “sweetest bread.” The addition of the céleste, whose name comes from the word for heavenly, helps to highlight the text and connect it to the liturgical action.

Figure 10: Charles Tournemire, *Élévation* from Office No. 27 from *L’Orgue*

Mystique, mm. 7–10¹⁰⁵

The image shows a musical score for Charles Tournemire's *Élévation* from Office No. 27 from *L'Orgue*. The score is in G major and 4/4 time. It consists of two systems of staves. The first system (measures 7-10) is marked "ad libitum" and features a red oval around the upper staff with the text "pane suavissimo" above it. The lower staff is marked "+ Céleste III Boîte ouverte". The second system (measures 8-10) is marked "Environ ♩ = 58 Boîte ouverte" and features a red oval around the upper staff with the text "de caelo praestito" above it. The lower staff is marked "Boîte mi-ouverte" and "Toujours III". The score includes dynamic markings "pp" and "rall." and the instruction "senza rigore".

In m. 8, the registration returns to that of the opening and the chant is similarly accompanied. There is one difference, however. Whereas before the accompaniment lay above and below the chant melody, in m. 8 until the end it is completely below. The chant melody corresponds to the text “de caelo praestito” (given from heaven). In the last line, when the chant refers to heaven, the melody is accordingly above the accompaniment, as heaven is above earth.

The *Communion* is based on the communion chant, *Quotiescumque*. It is in a

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

clear ternary form. The A section ends in m. 9, the B section runs from m. 10 to m. 22, and the A section returns in m. 23. The A section is based on the opening motif of the chant, an ascending and descending perfect fifth. This motif pervades the section. It is first found in the left hand in m. 1, taken by the right hand in m. 2 as a kind of pre-imitation, then it appears again in the right hand at a higher register and this time is part of the actual statement of the chant. For the entire A section, except for m. 7, the pitches in the pedal are taken exclusively from the perfect fifth.

Figure 11: Charles Tournemire, *Communion* from Office No. 27 from *L'Orgue*

Mystique, mm. 1–6¹⁰⁶

III. Gambe 8 Hautbois 8
 II. Gambe 8 Octave grave II sur III.
 Péd: Fonds de 8.16 Tirasses II.III.

♩ = 48
 I oct. grave seulement II sur III.
 II. III.
 Boîtes mi-ouvertes

ascending and descending 5th of incipit used as motif in mm. 1-5
 "Quotiescumque"
 "manducabit panem hunc"
 notes in pedal taken exclusively from perfect 5th at opening

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 6.

The superabundance of perfect fifths creates an atmospheric and mysterious sound. It seems like time is being suspended with all the open harmonies. In the B section, the chant is in the soprano. The perfect fifth motif vanishes, and the accompaniment has more modal harmonies and more movement. At the end of the B section, the accompaniment disappears, and the chant is left as a solo line. The A section starting in m. 23 is exactly the same as mm. 1–9 except the registration is a little softer without the oboe. The ternary structure is interesting because it is a compositional decision Tournemire made on his own; the original chant is not in three parts. The exact restatement of the first section at the end follows a common musical form, but it also recalls Christ's saying in Revelation, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end."¹⁰⁷ Interestingly, the text of the communion chant and Revelation mirror each other. Immediately following the statement "I am the Alpha and the Omega" is a warning, "But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the polluted, as for murderers, fornicators, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their lot shall be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."¹⁰⁸ At the end of the communion chant is the warning, "therefore, whoever will have eaten the bread or will have drunk the chalice of the Lord unworthily, will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." The chant also references the coming of the Lord, which is the subject of Revelation. Not only is the music based on the communion chant, but by using ternary form, the *Communion* musically suggests a corresponding passage from scripture. This shows the profound

¹⁰⁷ Rev. 21:6 RSVCE.

¹⁰⁸ Rev. 21:8 RSVCE.

connection between instrumental music and the word (logos).

The *Pièce Terminale*, in this case a *Fantaisie Paraphrase*, is based on five different chants associated with the feast of Corpus Christi: *Cibavit illos*, *Pange Lingua*, *Aeterne Rex*, *Lauda Sion Salvatorem*, and *Te Deum Laudamus*. The *Pièce Terminale* does not accompany a liturgical action; it is played as the priest leaves the altar following the end of Mass. Therefore, these movements are the longest in *L'Orgue Mystique* and there is a sense of freedom. Certainly, the genre of *Fantaisie Paraphrase* is one that is rooted in freedom, and the Gregorian paraphrase was central to Tournemire's improvisational practice.

The *Fantaisie Paraphrase* for Corpus Christi begins almost like a fugue. A subject based on the responsory *Cibavit illos* enters alternatively on what seems to be the tonic and dominant. However, once the subject is stated, the voice becomes a drone until all voices have entered. Also, the music is modal, so the entrances are not truly on the tonic and dominant, though that is the modern association. By m. 9, all voices have entered, and *Pange Lingua* appears in the pedal as a cantus firmus in long notes. In m. 14, *Pange Lingua* is transferred to the soprano. Meanwhile, a sixteenth-note figuration based on *Cibavit illos* livens the texture.

Figure 12: Charles Tournemire, *Fantaisie Paraphrase* from Office No. 27 from
L'Orgue Mystique, mm. 11–16¹⁰⁹

11

"Cibavit eos"

m.g. m.d.

cactus firmus (Pange lingua)

cactus firmus (Pange lingua) transferred from pedal to soprano

13

dim.

+ Oct. grave II sur III.

Boîtes fermées

15

In m. 21, *Pange Lingua* returns to the pedal, and the end of the chant marks the end of the first section. In m. 28, a new section begins which uses the chant *Aeterne Rex*.

¹⁰⁹ Tournemire, *L'Orgue Mystique*, no. 27: *In festo Corporis Christi*, 10.

Figure 13: Charles Tournemire, *Fantaisie Paraphrase* from Office No. 27 from
L'Orgue Mystique, mm. 28–31¹¹⁰

The sixteenth-note figuration ceases momentarily, though it threatens to come back, intensifying the music leading into m. 41. At this point, the beginning of the chant *Lauda Sion Salvatorem* enters in the pedal, grounding the music and acting as an ostinato. It is notable that whenever this particular chant appears, the modality of the chant contrasts sharply with increased chromaticism in the manuals. In m. 60, *Pange Lingua* reemerges in the soprano.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 12.

Figure 14: Charles Tournemire, *Fantaisie Paraphrase* from Office No. 27 from *L'Orgue Mystique*, mm. 59–62¹¹¹

♩ = 54 *senza rigore*

"Pange lingua" in soprano in 8th notes
with brilliant accompaniment

59

+ 2 plects I.
+ Anches I.

+ Anches

61

When *Pange Lingua* first appeared, it was as half notes in the pedal and quarter notes in the soprano. Now it is in eighth notes accompanied by sixteenth-note triplets. The sixteenth-note triplets add a brilliance to the music. At this point, the registration is fuller as well, which heightens the drama of this section. After this section, the various chants along with their particular musical settings appear successively, and as the music progresses, the quotations grow shorter, giving the music an unsettled and indecisive

¹¹¹ Ibid., 14.

quality. This culminates around m. 106 with a series of extremely dissonant harmonies. In m. 106 and m. 110, almost all twelve chromatic pitches are present in the space of four beats in the manuals. It is almost as if a suffering world in need of a savior screams out. The pedal, which has been repeating *Lauda Sion Salvatorem*, interjects with the last part of *Pange Lingua*.

Figure 15: Charles Tournemire, *Fantaisie Paraphrase* from Office No. 27 from *L'Orgue Mystique*, mm. 106–109¹¹²

The image shows a musical score for three staves: two manuals (treble and bass) and a pedal (bass). The tempo is marked "allargando". The score is in 2/4 time. Red annotations highlight specific features: "almost complete chromatic saturation" in the manuals and "end of 'Pange lingua' - modality contrasts with chromaticism in manuals" in the pedal.

This yields to the sudden outburst of *Te Deum Laudamus* in the soprano accompanied by pure modal harmony and parallel intervals. This ending well expresses the victorious joy Ratzinger attributes to the feast.

Some of Tournemire's musical techniques are inherited from older styles of music and others are contemporary. His fusion of the two is innovative. By basing every movement of *L'Orgue Mystique* in Gregorian chant, Tournemire roots his music in the tradition of Catholic liturgical instrumental music. Organ music in the liturgy has had a

¹¹² Ibid., 21.

close association with Gregorian chant from the start. One only has to look at the repertoire of the alternatim practice to find a number of pieces that incorporate chant. For example, the Kyrie versets from Frescobaldi's *Fiori Musicali* either state the chant in a clear way through use of a cantus firmus in long notes or build the music from motives based on the original chant. In the *Pièce Terminale* for Corpus Christi, the chant hymn, *Pange Lingua*, can be found in long notes in the pedal. In the *Communion*, the perfect fifth of the incipit from *Quotiescumque*, is the basic cell of the entire first section. Tournemire thus uses chant in the same ways that Frescobaldi did three hundred years earlier. Tournemire also uses the chant in an astonishingly straightforward way. As a rule, the chant melody is generally distinguishable. It is often found in the soprano or is singled out through registration. However, the chant is regularly found as an unaccompanied solo line. In these cases, there is great metric freedom, and the rhythms reflect the natural flexible rhythms that the Solesmes monks promoted. This novel practice of presenting the chant as an unaccompanied solo respects the origins of chant as unaccompanied vocal music sung in unison.

Frescobaldi's music was modal; Tournemire called Frescobaldi a great master of modality and a pioneer of ancient modality.¹¹³ Nevertheless, Frescobaldi's music could also be described as pre-tonal. Certainly, in the years following Frescobaldi, tonality overcame modality, and church music was dominated by tonally oriented pieces. Gregorian chant was eclipsed by works in a secular operatic style. Tournemire, who was influenced by the restoration of Gregorian chant by the monks of Solesmes, desired to

¹¹³ Schloesser, *Jazz Age Catholicism*, 305.

restore modality to liturgical works for the organ. He noted that J. S. Bach composed an exquisite collection of music for the Lutheran liturgy, based on chorales in the tonal system. In regard to *L'Orgue Mystique*, he stated, "As for myself, I offered commentary on Gregorian chant in the modal system which, furthermore, did not know how to exclude *chromaticism*."¹¹⁴ Chromaticism is highly controlled in the tonal system, and in the Romantic era had become associated with human passions and emotions. The pieces in *L'Orgue Mystique* are unquestionably modal, as the original chant is central to each piece and its mode defines the music. For example, the introit for Corpus Christi is in the second church mode, which corresponds to the modern Aeolian mode. In *Prélude à l'Introït*, this is specifically D Aeolian. The offertory chant is in the fourth church mode, which corresponds to the modern Locrian mode. The *Offertoire* is accordingly based on the modern F-sharp Locrian scale. The modes of the remaining movements are similarly related to the original chant on which they are based. At the same time, Tournemire does not hesitate to use notes outside of the scale, that is, chromatic notes. Bogusław Raba, a Polish organist and musicologist, described the use of modality and chromaticism in *L'Orgue Mystique* at the 2012 CMAA conference on Tournemire:

On the one hand, a contemplative atmosphere is created by modal material derived from Gregorian chants. On the other hand, chromaticism's mainly dynamic force produces contrasting textures with implied symbolic meaning. Beside such contrasts, *L'Orgue Mystique* utilizes a strong degree of dialectic which produces a unique, new, and subtle quality. In the "Final Pieces" ("Pièces Terminales") of each office—as well as in numerous "Offertory" and "Communion" movements—the blending of diatonic and chromatic after development-variation sections create higher degrees of pandiatonicism, including chromatic textures in new kinds of sonorous, euphonic textures. Although the dialectic of this extended diatonic-chromaticism enlarges the sense of euphony, this new euphony never becomes merely free atonality. Rather it creates a new stylistic idiom marking Tournemire's "mystical" music—a "musical eschatology."¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 304.

¹¹⁵ Bogusław Raba, "Creating a Mystical Musical Eschatology: Diatonic and Chromatic Dialectic in

Chromaticism can be used in a symbolic way. It has been identified in Tournemire's music as representing humanity, whereas modality represents God.¹¹⁶ Although chromaticism had associations with human passions in the Romantic era, and advocates of the purity of the mode could find fault with Tournemire's use of chromaticism,¹¹⁷ it does have a place in the historical tradition of liturgical music. Frescobaldi's elevation toccatas, such as the "Toccata Cromatica" from the *Messa della Domenica*, serve as excellent examples. In the case of Frescobaldi's elevation toccatas, chromaticism was employed at the most mysterious and sacred point of the Mass. It is not surprising, then, that Tournemire's *L'Orgue Mystique*, which is intended to be a deeply liturgical work, incorporates chromaticism.

Tournemire's *L'Orgue Mystique* makes full use of the capabilities of the Cavallé-Coll organ. There is a great variety of registrations used in the Office for Corpus Christi alone. Not only does each movement have a different registration, but the registration often changes in the course of a movement. Registrational changes are one way of expressing the text of the original chant, and the Cavallé-Coll organ provides a great range of sounds and colors. Dynamic levels, which are related to registration, can also be used to depict the text or reflect the liturgical action. The *Élévation*, for instance, is written for two manuals, each with a soft stop. This produces a sweet meditative sound that reflects the text, "O quam suavis," and creates an intimate contemplative atmosphere

Charles Tournemire's *L'Orgue Mystique*," in *Mystic Modern: The Music, Thought, and Legacy of Charles Tournemire*, ed. Jennifer Donelson and Stephen Schloesser (Richmond, Virginia: Church Music Association of America, 2014), 186.

¹¹⁶ Duffy, "A Theological Interpretation of Four Pièces Terminales from Charles Tournemire's *L'Orgue Mystique*," 27.

¹¹⁷ Gotlund "A Guide to Chant in Charles Tournemire's *L'Orgue Mystique*," 43–5.

that accompanies the liturgical action. On the other hand, the *Pièce Terminale*, which follows the end of Mass, has a full and ebullient sound that reflects the victorious joy of the feast day.

The harmonies that Tournemire uses throughout *L'Orgue Mystique* are an interesting blend of ancient and modern. Ancient techniques that consistently appear include a drone or pedal point and the use of parallel fifths or octaves to accompany a chant melody. Several versets in Frescobaldi's *Fiori Musicali* employ pedal points, so the practice was clearly established in instrumental music. Pedal points are very effective on the organ because they can be held without interruption or decay. Even the terminology is taken from the organ; long notes are often assigned to the pedal while faster counterpoint happens in the manuals. The practice of accompanying chant with parallel fifths or octaves, on the other hand, is not rooted in the instrumental tradition but the vocal tradition. In a way, Tournemire's use of parallel fifths and octaves pays homage to the ancient vocal harmonization of Gregorian chant through parallel organum. Using such parallel intervals also frees Tournemire's music even more from tonality. Finally, the chromaticism of Tournemire's *L'Orgue Mystique* gives the work a distinctively modern sound. There are some moments, as in the *Fantaisie Paraphrase*, where there is almost a chromatic saturation with ten of twelve pitches present in one measure. This level of chromaticism may have a symbolic meaning, but it is also representative of Tournemire's contemporary musical environment.

L'Orgue Mystique exhibits all the traits that are central to Ratzinger's liturgical theology. The cosmos is expressed through a wide range of dynamics and variety of

registrations. Modality and chromaticism, too, can be analyzed as symbols of the cosmos. Chromaticism, which in the Romantic era was already associated with human passions, might be seen as the created human order which springs from and is governed by modality, a symbol of the divine. The range of human expression can also be traced in *L'Orgue Mystique*, as in the *Pièce Terminale* for Corpus Christi which in the last measure of the piece transforms human suffering, represented by chromaticism, into praise of God, signified by the chant *Te Deum Laudamus* and represented by modality. Historian Stephen Schloesser writes about Tournemire's *L'Orgue Mystique*, "By 'paraphrasing' eternal melodies with fashionable 'passionate' clothing, his work was the intersection of incongruities—eternity and history, divinity and humanity, form and matter."¹¹⁸ Interestingly, this language is similar to Ratzinger's use of incongruities like depths and heights or silence and song to describe the cosmos.¹¹⁹ In these ways, Tournemire's music is a symbol of the cosmos.

Ratzinger's theme of the logos is intimately connected with Tournemire and his music. For Tournemire, music is oriented to God just as liturgy is oriented to the logos. He wrote that all music, if it does not praise God or have its basis in the glorification of God, is useless.¹²⁰ Tournemire found his place in a broader twentieth-century movement that idealized text-oriented music. This did not mean that music had to be vocal, but that its meaning was dependent on a text, which the music sought to express. Schloesser writes, "Tournemire's symbolist identity was both personal and theoretical, and he

¹¹⁸ Schloesser, *Jazz Age Catholicism*, 306–7.

¹¹⁹ Ratzinger, "The Image of the World," 160.

¹²⁰ Labounsky, *Jean Langlais: The Man and His Music*, 107.

thought of musical composition in a symbolist way, that is, as the exposition of (or commentary on) a text, whether a formal libretto or not.”¹²¹ Schloesser adds, “No matter what instruments Tournemire composed for, his primary interest lay in exegeting a text via musical material.”¹²² Benjamin Kolodziej, in an essay on twentieth-century organ music in the liturgy, observes:

Liturgical organ music in the twentieth century, whether improvised or composed, whether in the service of sacramental mystagogy or didactic evangelicalism, maintained its continuity with prior centuries in its concern for communicating the divine *logos*. Like all music in service to something other than itself, its parameters were necessarily conservative, bounded by doctrinal concerns as well as by the need to move people to a spiritual and moral goal.¹²³

Tournemire’s *L’Orgue Mystique* is a model of twentieth century liturgical organ music.

Not only did Tournemire consider the texts, the logos in the literal sense, but he also considered the meditative commentary on them offered by the Abbot of Solesmes in “The Liturgical Year.” Tournemire’s music therefore reflects the logos in the literal sense of being based on texted chant but in the figurative sense of being inspired by the reason and meaning behind it.

Like Frescobaldi, Tournemire uses chromaticism for the music of the Mass. He thus associates chromaticism with the Liturgy of the Eucharist, which contains the Mystery of Faith. Schloesser put forth the idea that Tournemire’s “conscious combination of chromaticism (a wandering from home) and plainchant (a nostalgic homesickness for that eternal home) produced something akin to Freud’s ‘uncanny’: familiarity haunted by an eerie sense of the unexpected.”¹²⁴ Furthermore, just by using

¹²¹ Schloesser, *Jazz Age Catholicism*, 290.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 289–90.

¹²³ Kolodziej, “Twentieth-Century Organ Music in the Christian Liturgy,” 333.

¹²⁴ Schloesser, *Jazz Age Catholicism*, 308.

Gregorian chant, Tournemire evokes mystery. In Frescobaldi's time, using Gregorian chant was simply how music was composed. The Gregorian chant cantus firmus was part of the natural development of polyphonic vocal then instrumental music, and Frescobaldi was using techniques that were part of contemporary developments. For Tournemire, the use of Gregorian chant was a deliberate use of something "other." Gregorian chant, because of its age and a certain degree of foreignness, suggests Ratzinger's theological sense of mystery.

Tournemire's genius was in making the ancient new. Schloesser writes that in reviews of *L'Orgue Mystique*, "critics repeatedly lauded his creative 'novelty' and radical 'innovation' by renewing the past in service of the future."¹²⁵ Part of Tournemire's renewal of the past involves honoring history by using ancient techniques like drones and parallel fifths and octaves in the context of modern harmonies and chromaticism. However, the use of Gregorian chant is essential to the task of renewing the past. This is even more pronounced because Tournemire purposefully composed *L'Orgue Mystique* in the context of the restoration of Gregorian chant in France. Interestingly, in describing chant-based organ music of the twentieth century, Kolodziej quotes Ratzinger:

In grounding itself to the texts and tunes of the Roman rite, such music still maintains an objectivity which mitigates against spiritual narcissism, echoing Pope Benedict XVI's eventual observation that "the life of the liturgy does not come from what dawns upon the minds of individuals and planning groups. On the contrary, it is God's descent upon our world, the source of real liberation. Yes, the liturgy becomes personal, true, and new, not through tomfoolery and banal experiments with the words, but through a courageous entry into the great reality that through the rite is always ahead of us and can never quite be overtaken."¹²⁶

¹²⁵ Ibid., 311.

¹²⁶ Kolodziej, "Twentieth-Century Organ Music in the Christian Liturgy," 311–12.

Tournemire's *L'Orgue Mystique*, an exemplar among the twentieth century chant-based repertoire, reflects the principle Ratzinger highlights, namely, that liturgy is not made or created; it depends on what has come before. Furthermore, *L'Orgue Mystique* musically embodies Ratzinger's themes of cosmos, logos, mystery, and history.

CHAPTER FIVE

Langlais' Livre Oecumenique

Jean Langlais was a French composer and organist of the twentieth century; he was born in 1907 and died in 1991. When he was just two years old, he lost his sight. At age ten, he entered the Institut National des Jeunes Aveugles. This school for the blind had a strong music program, and Langlais became a skilled organist and composer. He went on to study at the Paris Conservatoire where he was a member of Marcel Dupré's organ class and Paul Dukas' composition class. He also had the opportunity to study privately with Tournemire. From Tournemire he inherited a high regard for Gregorian chant and learned how to incorporate chant into music for the organ. His lessons with Tournemire mainly focused on improvisation, but he did study some of Tournemire's own compositions, including the Advent, Epiphany, and Assumption offices of *L'Orgue Mystique*.¹²⁷ Langlais became a professor at the school for the blind where he was once a student, and in 1945, he was appointed organist at Ste. Clotilde. At Ste. Clotilde, Langlais "followed in the line of Franck and Tournemire."¹²⁸ He was thus joined to the great Ste. Clotilde tradition known for mystic music and transcendent harmonies.

Tournemire was greatly influenced by papal attempts to reform the liturgy, for example, through Pope Pius X's *motu proprio, Tra le Sollecitudini*, and by the Benedictine monks' attempts to restore Gregorian chant, for example, through the work

¹²⁷ Labounsky, *Jean Langlais: The Man and His Music*, 68.

¹²⁸ Xavier Darasse and Marie-Louise Jaquet-Langlais, "Langlais, Jean," *Grove Music Online*, accessed June 27, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000015987>.

of the monks at Solesmes. Langlais, on the other hand, lived in tumultuous times. The Second Vatican Council, which was called by Pope John XXIII and held from 1962 to 1965, resulted in many changes to the liturgy. The documents and directives of the Council should not have posed any threat to Langlais and his role as organist, but he lamented the changes. This is, in part, because the ones implementing the changes often put forth their own ideas or their own interpretations of the Council's directives. Ratzinger, who attended the Council as a *peritus*, that is, a theological advisor, to Cardinal Frings of Cologne, has said in clear terms that the liturgical reform called for by the Council was not well implemented and has spoken of the necessity of a "reform of the reform."¹²⁹ At the same time, though Langlais would have agreed with the Council's decrees that Gregorian chant have pride of place and the pipe organ be held in high esteem, his works, even with their incorporation of Gregorian themes, tend to be more focused on musical expression and technique. Their connection with the word (*logos*) is mainly found in their quotation of chant, but not necessarily its expression. In a way, Langlais' regard for high art compromised his understanding of liturgical music, which led to his feeling betrayed by the changes of the Council. To be fair, Langlais was not diametrically opposed to the Second Vatican Council or the ideals of liturgical music. Langlais once explained, "I believe that the organ has a precisely liturgical purpose, as a vehicle for prayer, in order to carry prayer beyond words, as high as possible."¹³⁰

¹²⁹ Joseph Ratzinger, "Interview with Cardinal Ratzinger," interview by Raymond Arroyo, September 5, 2003, *EWTN*, transcript by Catholic News Agency, accessed August 6, 2018, <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/resources/benedict-xvi/life-and-ministry/interview-with-cardinal-ratzinger>.

¹³⁰ Labounsky, *Jean Langlais: The Man and His Music*, 223.

According to Langlais, “The organist should create an appropriate atmosphere, by incorporating the chant propers and their associated Sundays and feast days. To this end, the organist should know both the Gregorian melodies and the text of the liturgical year and be a skilled improviser.”¹³¹

Langlais was a prolific composer for the organ. The influence of Tournemire can be traced in the many works that are based on Gregorian chant. In fact, “a quarter of his works are based on Gregorian melodies, treated with great inventiveness and enhanced by rich polymodal harmonies.”¹³² His organ works have been summarized in the following way:

Langlais’ work for the organ comprises about 300 independent pieces. Titles and dedications as well as manifold thematic and stylistic connections document a thoughtful preoccupation with his surroundings and with the music history of the thirteenth through the twentieth centuries. Accordingly, one is met with a marked stylistic eclecticism in Langlais’ music. Impressionistic and neoclassical elements as well as characteristic modal archaisms are joined to modernist tendencies from the 1960s onward.¹³³

Langlais was influenced by factors in his environment, from his own blindness to the World Wars to the radical developments in harmony and abandonment of tonality in the broader twentieth century musical culture. His music is a product of all of these influences. Furthermore, Langlais was unsettled by liturgical changes that seemed to encroach on what he understood to be the role of the organist. Nevertheless, Langlais did not leave the Church or commit himself exclusively to secular music, as many composers of the Romantic era had.

Langlais composed many chant-based organ works, but *Livre Oecumenique* is

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Darasse and Jacquet-Langlais, “Langlais, Jean,” *Grove Music Online*.

¹³³ Busch and Herchenroeder, “France,” 151.

particularly intriguing. Six of the twelve pieces are based on Gregorian chants, and the other six are based on Lutheran chorales. Vincent Rone, whose dissertation examines the reactions of musicians of the French Organ School to the Second Vatican Council, explains that Langlais' *Livre Oecumenique* aligns with the wishes of the Council, writing that the work, "illustrates Langlais' contribution to the ecumenical vision the Council Fathers expressed in the documents of Vatican II; he contributed to ecumenism by incorporating both Gregorian chant and Lutheran Chorale melodies in a collection of solo-organ pieces intended for general Christian liturgical worship."¹³⁴ The six chant-based pieces are based on six well-known chants: *Sacris Solemniis*, *Verbum Supernum*, *Ave Maris Stella*, *Pater Noster*, *Kyrie (orbis factor)*, and *Gloria (orbis factor)*. Each chant-based piece is followed by one based on a chorale tune that complements the subject of the chant-based piece. For example, after the piece based on *Kyrie (orbis factor)*, there is one based on *Kyrie, Dieu, Pere Eternel (Kyrie, Gott Vater in Ewigkeit)*. In the Gregorian chant-based pieces, Rone identifies features of the French Organ School's chant-based paraphrase techniques, namely, "freedom of rhythm, meter, and phrasing; and often the 'transcendent' harmonic language."¹³⁵

In the preface to *Livre Oecumenique*, Langlais explains that he had a twofold aim in composing the collection. First, he wanted to "write a work with a pedagogical purpose."¹³⁶ Second, he wished "to offer Roman Catholic organists and their protestant

¹³⁴ Vincent E. Rone, "A Voice Cries Out in the Wilderness: The French Organ School Responds to the Second Vatican Council of the Catholic Church" (PhD diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, September 2014), 102, accessed August 6, 2018, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

¹³⁵ Rone, "A Voice Cries Out in the Wilderness," 196.

¹³⁶ Jean Langlais, *Livre Oecumenique: pour orgue* (Paris: Bornemann, 1968), Preface.

colleagues as well, a group of short pieces, of average difficulty which can be played during masses as during services.”¹³⁷ Langlais wrote many chant-based works, but, according to Langlais himself, the ones in *Livre Oecumenique* have an explicitly liturgical function. Given that Langlais also intended these pieces to serve as models for other organists, a musical analysis will be particularly useful.

Like Tournemire and Frescobaldi, Langlais bases the “Catholic” pieces in *Livre Oecumenique* on Gregorian chant. Whereas Tournemire composed an entire set for the liturgical year based on the propers for each Sunday and feast, Langlais tends to incorporate more popular well-known chants into his music. This analysis will focus on two contrasting pieces from *Livre Oecumenique*: No. 3, *Verbum Supernum* and No. 9, *Kyrie (orbis factor)*.

Verbum Supernum is based on the chant hymn for Lauds (Morning Prayer from the Divine Office) on the feast of Corpus Christi. The text of the final two verses “O salutaris” is well known as the hymn for the Rite of Exposition of the Holy Eucharist. Langlais’ piece is highly organized, and the sections are determined by the phrasing of the original chant. There are four phrases altogether, and Langlais adds the “Amen.” Each phrase is set in the time-honored way, that is, as a cantus firmus in long notes. Langlais also employs canon beginning with the second phrase. Mm. 5–9 form an introduction before the entrance of the first chant phrase in the pedal. This introductory material returns as an interlude between each successive chant phrase. There is also a kind of pre-introduction in the first four measures that returns in the last four.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

Figure 16: Jean Langlais, *Verbum Supernum* from *Livre Oecumenique*, mm. 1–14¹³⁸

3. Verbum Supernum

| | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| R: Salicional 8 | Sw: Salicional 8 | R: - Salicional | Sw: - Salicional |
| G: Principal doux 8 | Gr: Soft principal 8 | + Bourdon 8, Octavin 2 | + Bourdon 8, Octavin 2 |
| Ped: Bourdons 16, 8 | Ped: Bourdons 16, 8 | Ped: - Bourdons 16, 8 | Ped: - Bourdons 16, 8 |
| | | + GO/ Pedale | + Gr. to Pedal |

Adagio $\text{♩} = 44$ Rall. long Allegro $\text{♩} = 96$

7

11

entrance of cantus firmus,
"Verbum supernum"

These measures are set apart from the rest as they are in a different tempo (the allegro starts at m. 5, whereas the first four measures are adagio with a rallentando in the last two). They also contain much longer note values than the rest of the piece. The first two measures only consist of two half notes and a whole note as a solo in the left hand, and the range is extremely limited—only three chromatic pitches are used. The chord in m. 3 could be described as a tone cluster and contains four chromatic pitches. This leads to an

¹³⁸ Ibid., 7.

F major triad, which provides a moment of consonance before the allegro begins. The first two notes of the allegro, which can be found in m. 5 in the right hand, form a tritone. In m. 6, these same notes are taken by the left hand while a tritone is outlined in the right hand as well. As the piece progresses, it becomes apparent that the tritone is a central unifying feature. The third and fourth phrases of the chant (which start in m. 40 and m. 60 respectively) are both canons at the tritone (augmented fourth).

Figure 17: Jean Langlais, *Verbum Supernum* from *Livre Oecumenique*, mm. 40–44¹³⁹

The image shows a musical score for measures 40-44 of Jean Langlais's *Verbum Supernum*. The score is in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It features a canon at the tritone between the right and left hands. A red line connects the first notes of the canon in both hands, and a red box highlights the tritone interval between the first and last notes of the canon in the right hand. The right hand has a treble clef and the left hand has a bass clef. The score is labeled '40' at the beginning and 'G (Gr)' above the first measure of the canon.

For the third phrase, the first and last notes of the canon are a tritone. There is a tritone in the left hand three measures from the end, and it appears in many other places throughout the piece.

Chromaticism, rather than modality, defines *Verbum Supernum*. One central motif, for example, consists of an upward whole step followed by two half steps down. This can be heard in the bass line at the opening and is obsessively repeated, as in the left hand from mm. 7–9. When this exact motif is not heard, there is usually some variation of it that includes chromatic movement. Chromaticism is so prevalent that by m. 12, all twelve chromatic pitches have sounded in the left hand. Shortly after, by m. 14, all

¹³⁹ Ibid., 9.

chromatic pitches have sounded in the right hand. At this point, the first phrase of the chant has entered in the pedal. The chant, *Verbum Supernum* is in the eighth church mode, and Langlais sets it in B-flat Dorian. However, the chant, so clearly defined by and confined to its mode, sounds out of place against the chromaticism in the manuals.

Langlais employs several musical techniques that connect his music to that of ages past. First, like so many composers of Catholic liturgical music, he bases the music on a Gregorian chant. The cantus firmus is in long notes, a technique that Frescobaldi used in *Fiori Musicali* in 1635. He also sets the chant canonically between the pedal and manual (right hand). The second phrase is a canon at the octave, the third and fourth phrases are at the tritone (augmented fourth), and the “Amen” is at the fifth. However, though canons had been used in music for hundreds of years, a canon at the tritone is harshly dissonant and unconventional. Furthermore, tritones appear throughout the piece. This is a curious interval to highlight as it is notoriously dissonant and has famously been termed “diabolus in musica” (the devil in music). Given that the text of the chant is a prayer which centers on Christ in the Eucharist, it is hard to connect the text to the musical setting Langlais provides. Furthermore, the chant melody itself seems incongruent with the chromaticism that pervades the accompaniment. Although Langlais uses traditional musical techniques, the music itself seems to undermine tradition. The use of the tritone and the fast-moving chromaticism divorce the music from the stability of tonality or modality, which was a musical trend in the twentieth century, but it also makes Langlais’ setting untraditional.

The modern techniques Langlais uses are apparent from the start of *Verbum*

Supernum. A persistent chromaticism dominates the piece. Even the registration can be related to chromaticism. The chant, which appears in the pedal and in one manual, is played on an eight-foot principal, but the accompaniment and the sections that do not contain the cantus firmus are played on a combination of eight and two-foot flute stops. This combination produced a sparkly and colorful tone. Remembering that the root of the word “chromatic” is color highlights the appropriateness of this sound for the music. The first chord in m. 3 is highly dissonant, and the unsettled harmony in general is reflected in the driving rhythm (there is an almost constant eighth-note motion, and the tempo starting at m. 5 is allegro). Intellectually and artistically, the piece is tightly composed. Many different aspects of the piece derive from the tritone that begins the allegro section; the tritone provides unity. Chromaticism pervades the music and is alluded to in the registration. Though it is difficult to connect the music in general to the meaning of the chant or even the chant itself, the setting is artistically expressive, that is, certain musical ideals are upheld and developed. These ideals, which include chromaticism, the destabilization of harmony, and the appropriation of older musical forms, are characteristic of developments in the twentieth century academic musical culture. Ratzinger explains that during the twentieth century, music developed into two distinct camps:

On the one hand, there is the music of the masses, which, with the label “pop” or popular music, would like to portray itself as the music of the people. Here music has become a product that can be industrially manufactured and is evaluated by how well it sells. On the other hand, there is a rationally construed, artificial music with the highest technical requirements that is hardly capable of reaching out beyond a small, elite circle. In the middle between the two extremes we find the recourse to history, a staying at home in the familiar music that preceded such divisions, touched the person as a whole, and is still capable of doing this even today. It is understandable that church music mostly settles in this middle ground. But since the Church, after all, is living in this age it was inevitable that she also try

her hand at the two opposing spheres of today's cultural schizophrenia. When people rightly call for a new dialogue between Church and culture today, they must not forget in the process that this dialogue must necessarily be bilateral. It cannot consist in the Church finally subjecting herself to modern culture, which has been caught up to a large extent in a process of self-doubt since it lost its religious base. Just as the Church must expose herself to the problems of our age in a radically new way, so too must culture be questioned anew about its groundlessness and its ground and, in the process, be opened to a painful cure, that is, to a new reconciliation with religion since it can get its lifeblood only from there.¹⁴⁰

Langlais' music, therefore, would seem to fall into the category of elitist rational music.

It expresses well the ideals of twentieth century classical music but is less connected to the sacred music upon which it is based. Tournemire used chromaticism, but his works were more based in modality. Chromaticism is used, for example, in *L'Orgue Mystique* to express deeper realities, but chromaticism itself does not conquer the music. In Langlais' *Verbum Supernum*, the chromaticism and dissonance are at variance with the modality of the chant. Indeed, Gregorian chant is present, but is it being fittingly expressed?

The ninth piece in *Livre Oecumenique* is *Kyrie (orbis factor)*. It is based on the same Kyrie chant that Frescobaldi sets in the *Messa della Domenica* from *Fiori Musicali*. However, Frescobaldi composed versets which were designed to be used in the *alternatim* practice. By Langlais' time, the *alternatim* practice was forbidden in the liturgy. Langlais' *Kyrie* is a solo organ piece based on the original chant. Although Langlais indicates in the preface of *Livre Oecumenique* that the pieces in the collection are intended for practical use in the liturgy, it is hard to envision how the *Kyrie* would be used. The *Kyrie* is a short petition that is part of the Ordinary of the Mass and is always

¹⁴⁰ Joseph Ratzinger, "Sing Artistically for God: Biblical Directives for Church Music," in *A New Song for the Lord: Faith in Christ and Liturgy Today*, trans. Martha Matesich (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1996), 121.

either spoken or sung. Outside of the *alternatim* practice, therefore, it is difficult to fit organ music into this part of the liturgy. Nevertheless, Langlais joins a line of composers going back to Frescobaldi who have taken the Kyrie chant from *Missa Orbis Factor* as inspiration for organ music.

Langlais' *Kyrie* has three sections; this reflects the overall division of the Kyrie text (Kyrie eleison/Christe eleison/Kyrie eleison). In the first section, which corresponds to the first Kyrie, the cantus firmus is in the pedal. This section ends in m. 22 and can be divided into four parts.

Figure 18: Jean Langlais, *Kyrie (orbis factor)* from *Livre Oecumenique*, mm. 1–15¹⁴¹

à Marie-Madeleine DURUFLÉ-CHEVALIER

9. Kyrie (orbis factor)

Tutti (Full organ)
Allegro vivo $\text{♩} = 88$

repetition of piercing dissonance

cantus firmus

motif based on Kyrie with parallel fourths

The opening features pounding dissonant chords in the manuals. The registration calls for full organ, and these dissonant chords are in a high register, which gives them a piercing quality. They yield to an A Major triad before the chant appears as a solo in the

¹⁴¹ Langlais, *Livre Oecumenique*, 31.

pedal in m. 6. This part ends with a kind of chromatic variation of a triadic fanfare in the manuals. In m. 12, the texture changes back to manuals only, and this part begins softly. A motif based on the Kyrie chant is developed and accompanied by parallel fourths. After a crescendo, the chant appears again in the pedal in m. 17. In the second section, which corresponds to the *Christe* and runs from m. 23 to m. 34, the cantus firmus is in the soprano with an accompaniment built from parallel fourths.

Figure 19: Jean Langlais, *Kyrie (orbis factor)* from *Livre Oecumenique*, mm. 24–32¹⁴²

The image shows a musical score for Jean Langlais' *Kyrie (orbis factor)* from *Livre Oecumenique*, measures 24-32. The score is in G major and 4/4 time. It features a cantus firmus in the soprano voice and an accompaniment of parallel fourths in the manuals. The cantus firmus is marked 'G (Gr)' and is circled in red. The accompaniment is marked 'accompaniment based on parallel fourths' and is also circled in red. The score is divided into two systems: measures 24-28 and measures 29-32.

Before the cantus firmus enters, it is anticipated by the motif in the manuals in m. 23. In the third section, which is similar to the first section, the cantus firmus is taken from the final Kyrie petition and is found in the pedal. Since the cantus firmus is not divided by

¹⁴² Ibid., 32.

an interlude like it was in the first section, this final section can be divided into three parts. Mm. 35–40 correspond to mm.1–6, but there is a greater intensity with an even higher register and greater dissonance.

Figure 20: Jean Langlais, *Kyrie (orbis factor)* from *Livre Oecumenique*, mm. 35–41¹⁴³

The musical score for measures 35-41 of Jean Langlais's *Kyrie (orbis factor)* from *Livre Oecumenique* is presented in two systems. The first system covers measures 35-37, and the second system covers measures 38-41. The organ part is marked 'Tutti organ' and 'fff', featuring triplets in measures 35, 36, and 37. The cantus firmus part is marked '8va' and features triplets in measures 38, 39, and 40. A red bracket labeled 'return of A section' spans measures 35-37. A red box labeled 'cantus firmus' highlights a specific note in measure 40.

This part does not end with a consonant major triad; between both manuals, the final chord contains the pitches of both E major and E minor. In m. 40, the chant enters in the pedal as before, but it itself is dissonant with the already established E major/minor chord. The cantus firmus continues, and the second half of the chant phrase is set for

¹⁴³ Ibid., 32–3.

double pedal, which brings definitiveness to this final section. In the meantime, the dissonance that characterizes this piece is maintained in the manuals. At any point, it appears that the left hand and right hand are in different keys. For example, with any of the vertical sonorities in mm. 44–47, the right hand is playing an open fifth, but the left hand plays an unrelated major triad. Even the final chord is dissonant. Seven of the notes belong to the D major triad (the cantus firmus is set in D Dorian, so the key of D does align with the chant), but there is a “B” hidden in the middle of the chord adding a hint of dissonance.

Like *Verbum Supernum*, dissonance and chromaticism define the *Kyrie*. For much of the piece, it is difficult to establish a key or mode. The chant stands out because it is strictly modal. It almost seems as if Langlais’ goal is to express dissonance. Just as *Verbum Supernum* expressed chromaticism even in its registration, dissonance dominates the *Kyrie*. The first and last sections are for full organ and it is almost as if the dissonance screams. Additionally, Langlais frequently uses simple repetition to highlight and emphasize the dissonances in this piece.

Ann Labounsky, a student of Langlais who wrote the biography *Jean Langlais: The Man and His Music*, explains that Langlais felt betrayed by the liturgical and musical changes that took place after the Second Vatican Council.¹⁴⁴ She writes, “Two works for organ reflect the agony these conflicts provoked in Langlais. In one of his *Trois implorations* (1970), ‘Pour le croyance,’ the first phrase of the chant creed is followed by crashing tone clusters on the full organ, which represents his anguish over the clergy’s

¹⁴⁴ Labounsky, *Jean Langlais: The Man and His Music*, 231.

lack of faith and the demise of the patrimony of the Church.”¹⁴⁵ This style is reminiscent of the *Kyrie* in *Livre Oecumenique*, which was written only two years before *Trois implorations*. Perhaps, then, Langlais’ setting of the *Kyrie* is less an expression of the original chant and more an expression of his own time and his discontentment with the state of liturgical music.

Purely in terms of musical expression, *Verbum Supernum* and *Kyrie* are well constructed pieces. They are highly organized and built from basic concepts. The thoughtful registration reflects the musical characteristics of both pieces. However, the connections to Ratzinger’s themes of cosmos, logos, mystery, and history are tenuous. The cosmos is generally expressed through harmony of different elements. In Frescobaldi’s music, the different contrapuntal lines of music produce a harmonious whole, as a vocal polyphonic mass setting would. In Tournemire’s music, chromaticism and modality are used to complement each other. In Langlais’ music, however, the chromaticism of the music and modality of the chant seem to work against each other in overall dissonance. It is not clear how the text inspires the music as in Tournemire’s *L’Orgue Mystique* or how the music can be related to the human voice as in Frescobaldi’s *Fiori Musicali*. In fact, it almost seems as if the dissonance and general style of the music negate the meaning of the original chant. This makes it difficult to attribute a sense of the logos to Langlais’ music. Granted, Langlais incorporates Gregorian chant, but the music is in such an avant-garde style that it seems that outside of the direct quotation of chant, the history of liturgical music is eschewed. The liturgical music of

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 232.

both Frescobaldi and Tournemire can be described as conservative. While Tournemire's music was undoubtedly a product of the musical culture of the time, it was deeply rooted in the chant and in the meaning behind the chant. Langlais' music is more wedded to a certain moment in time, one that was defined by the high art culture in Paris and affected by the Romantic ideal of art existing for its own sake, which Ratzinger has condemned as "incompatible with the directives of the Bible."¹⁴⁶ A contemporary review of one of Langlais' other works for organ, *Première symphonie*, stated, "All this is firm, well-considered, and cerebral. But should not music address itself as much to feelings as to the intellect? And if the composer writes a work of pure music for organ, should he forget to move us and to ignore the possibilities that pipes offer him in this domain?"¹⁴⁷ This review is reminiscent of Ratzinger's words, "there is a rationally construed, artificial music with the highest technical requirements that is hardly capable of reaching out beyond a small, elite circle."¹⁴⁸ Indeed, Langlais' music is generally appreciated and recognized specifically by other talented musicians. Moreover, Langlais received a letter from twelve young people at Ste. Clotilde who criticized his music: "We come to the mass *for the mass*, to pray, to sing, not to listen to a concert. Enough noise!"¹⁴⁹ The young people clarified, "We like beautiful music and the organ in particular; but there are enough concert halls in Paris."¹⁵⁰

Is Langlais' music to be dismissed? It is not a model of the theological traits that

¹⁴⁶ Ratzinger, "Sing Artistically for God," 133.

¹⁴⁷ Labounsky, *Jean Langlais: The Man and His Music*, 111–12.

¹⁴⁸ Ratzinger, "Sing Artistically for God," 121.

¹⁴⁹ Labounsky, *Jean Langlais: The Man and His Music*, 224.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

Ratzinger emphasizes. It does not have universal qualities but is representative of a particular time and place and must be understood that way. There are several factors that influenced Langlais and his musical style. First, because of his blindness, sound was central to Langlais' life. In an interesting account of his experience at the school for the blind, he explains:

Someone who sees is easily distracted by what he sees, but those who do not see are very interested by what they hear. When they say that blind people are less distracted than other people, that is not at all true—because in a school of sighted people, for example, the students look at what is happening elsewhere in the hall. But the blind students *listen* to what is happening in the hall, and they are equally distracted...So when I first entered the Institute, I was very interested in the sounds of the tramway. Here is a remembrance from my mother. She said that I must not listen to the tramways. It was her only advice to me. And I never forgot that. She meant that she had confidence that I would work. And she was right because I worked very, very hard for thirteen years.¹⁵¹

Labounsky describes the blind school as “a noisy school because the students used their voices to signal their whereabouts.”¹⁵² Considering the primacy of sound for Langlais, his use of chromaticism and dissonance seems less harsh. Perhaps this was simply a natural consequence of a heightened sense of hearing. Furthermore, he inherited the Ste. Clotilde tradition, which already relied on colorful registration and use of the organ as well as chromaticism and dissonance. To Langlais, part of carrying on this tradition meant extending this development, which ultimately leads to an abandonment of tonality and modality, even while incorporating Gregorian chants.

The time after the Second Vatican Council in the Catholic Church was marked by confusion. Different movements arose before and after the council that sought to implement their own changes. Many times, the documents of the Church have been

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 33.

¹⁵² Ibid., 36.

ignored. Langlais was discouraged by the changes, some of which were legitimate, and some of which actually were not in accordance with the instruction of the Church. As mentioned previously, this discontentment has been traced in his music.

Finally, the effects of the Second World War cannot be ignored and affected Langlais directly. One day, Langlais arrived to teach his class and was told that “the school was closed, and the Germans were gaining control of Paris—he was to get out as fast as possible.”¹⁵³ Labounsky reports that Langlais never forgot the fear he experienced during the war. She writes that during a premiere of Langlais’ *Suite concertante*, the performance continued through deafening explosions.¹⁵⁴ She adds, “The terror Langlais experienced during the frequent bombings never left him; he was dependent on sleeping pills for the rest of his life.”¹⁵⁵ Not surprisingly, the war influenced Langlais’ musical style. Labounsky writes about Langlais’ *Première symphonie* for organ which was written between 1941 and 1942:

a work he later described as “a cruel piece—it is the war itself.” In it he found a musical vehicle in which to express the anger, fear, and deprivation that the Parisians experienced during the Occupation. He uses a new and more piercingly dissonant harmonic language than ever before. [...] An unrelenting rhythmic force marks the opening and closing movements, poignantly embodying his sense of outrage.¹⁵⁶

Langlais struggled with terrible challenges—from his blindness to liturgical confusion in the Church and conflict in the world. Listening to *Verbum Supernum* and *Kyrie* from *Livre Oecumenique*, one might question, given the character of the pieces, whether the chant, which seems so out of place, is being mocked or scorned. But, other factors

¹⁵³ Ibid., 109.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 116.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 111.

should be considered. Certainly, the ugliness of the Second World War would have an effect on and be reflected in music of the twentieth century. On a personal level, Langlais also had to deal with blindness in his own life and instability in the liturgical life of the Church. Ratzinger's description of the Babylonian Exile seems applicable:

There was no Temple any more, no public and communal form of divine worship as decreed in the law. Deprived as she was of worship, Israel was bound to feel immeasurably poor and pathetic. She stood before God with empty hands. There was no expiation any more, no "holocausts" ascending to God. In this crisis the conviction became ever clearer that Israel's sufferings, through God and for God, the cry of her broken heart, her persistent pleading before the silent God, had to count in his sight as "fatted sacrifices" and whole burnt offerings. It was the very emptiness of Israel's hands, the heaviness of her heart, that was now to be worship, to serve as a spiritual equivalent of the missing Temple oblations.¹⁵⁷

Verbum Supernum and *Kyrie*, though not possessing the universal qualities of liturgical music, might be understood as works of a severely trying time in history. Perhaps, then, chromaticism and dissonance do not actually dominate the pieces, as the ear would indicate, but the mere presence of the chant alone signifies the perseverance and victory of faith against a world that had been pushed to the extremes of conflict.

¹⁵⁷ Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 45.

CHAPTER SIX

The Accompanimental Role of the Organ

The core of the liturgical repertoire for the organ in the Catholic Church is either directly based on Gregorian chant or related to it in the practice of *alternatim*. However, especially in recent times, the organ has not only been used as a solo instrument but has taken on an accompanimental role. Gregorian chant, of course, is originally an unaccompanied genre. However, at various times in the Church's musical history, and especially with the restoration of chant by the monks of Solesmes, church musicians found it beneficial to accompany the chants. This is distinctly different from the practice of *alternatim* in which the organ replaced, not accompanied, a section of chant. Though the accompaniment role of the organ is a relatively new development, the organ is indeed well-suited to accompaniment.

By the seventeenth century, chant accompaniment by the organ was apparently common: "A veritable deluge of practical manuals were published from the 17th century instructing the organist on the problems of rhythm, the choice and placement of chords, the use of homophonic and contrapuntal accompaniments, the rules for harmonizing each mode, the roles of intonation and cadential formulae, the use of embellishments and how to transpose."¹⁵⁸ After Louis Niedermeyer published a highly influential treatise on Gregorian accompaniment in 1857, a similar deluge of manuals appeared in the early twentieth century that corresponded to the work of the monks at Solesmes.

¹⁵⁸ Levy, Emerson, Bellingham, Hiley, and Zon, "Plainchant," *Grove Music Online*.

Organ accompaniment can be helpful in restoring Gregorian chant to the liturgy. While certainly not limiting true liturgical music to the genre of Gregorian chant, Ratzinger agrees that it is particularly suited to the liturgy. He acknowledges that the Church's emphasis on Gregorian chant and classical polyphonic music is ordered to "both the character of the liturgy as mystery and its character as Logos, as well as to its bond to the historical word."¹⁵⁹ In the course of his papacy, the repertoire at St. Peter's Basilica underwent a change. An article in the Catholic journal, *Sacred Music*, describes the situation:

Benedict's decision to appoint Massimo Palombella to the directorship of the *Capella Sistina* certainly seems to have been a careful one. At the start of Palombella's tenure he found the choir using the *Graduale Simplex*, a volume intended for use in churches which could not muster the standard of singer required to use the more complicated Gregorian melodies of the *Graduale Romanum*...Now, the *Capella Sistina* always sings the introit, offertory and communion chants that the *Graduale Romanum* assigns for each Mass.¹⁶⁰

Pope Benedict is therefore attributed with introducing the traditional Gregorian Propers back to the liturgies at St. Peter's.¹⁶¹ One notes that the chant, restored by Pope Benedict, is regularly accompanied by the organ at St. Peter's. Given that the choir of the Sistine Chapel was using the *Graduale Simplex*, a highly simplified edition of chants that can be used according to season rather than liturgical day, prior to Pope Benedict's appointment of Palombella, it is not surprising that the choir has sought assistance through organ accompaniment in singing the chants of the *Graduale Romanum*.

It is in the nature of an accompanimental part to support a melody. This can be

¹⁵⁹ Ratzinger, "In the Presence of the Angels," 174.

¹⁶⁰ Wilfrid Jones, "A Change of Panting Heart: An Overview of Music in the Papal Liturgies at St. Peter's Basilica from the Second Vatican Council to 2012," *Sacred Music* 143, no. 4 (Winter 2016): 26, accessed August 6, 2018, *Academic Search Complete*, EBSCOhost.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 27.

done in a variety of ways. In the Romantic era, for example, accompaniments to songs rose to such importance that the accompaniments themselves were as essential as the melody. This is not the case with accompaniment of Gregorian chant. First, on a musical level, chant does not need accompaniment. In fact, the genre developed at a time when instruments in general were prohibited from worship. Second, on a theological level, the human voice has primacy in worship. The accompaniment should not usurp the voice. At all times, the accompaniment should be subservient to the chant melody. Ratzinger has noted, “Perhaps it should be said that, where an instrument is concerned, there is a greater possibility of alienation from the spirit than in the case of the voice; music can slip away from or turn against the spirit, the more remote it is from the human being”¹⁶² Naturally, then, instrumental accompaniment of chant must be rooted in and must respect the chant carried by the voice.

The various treatises and examples of chant accompaniment can be examined to determine what qualities are essential for chant accompaniment. This can inform the practice of chant accompaniment, which can in turn be interpreted in light of Ratzinger’s theology. One of the main themes of the treatises of the early twentieth century is that the chords used to accompany the chant must be based on the mode of the chant. Tonality had overcome church music, especially in the Classical era. Evidently, tonality had even invaded the accompaniment of chant. Niedermeyer lists several rules for chant accompaniment in his foundational treatise. The first and foremost rule is that the accompaniment must use exclusively the notes of the mode of the chant.

¹⁶² Ratzinger, “On the Theological Basis of Church Music,” 121.

This rule, unfortunately, is ignored by a majority of organists and choirmasters, and even by a goodly number of educated musicians. It is certain, however, that a little reflection will make clear the truth of this principle: that a melody written in one of the church modes cannot be accompanied by harmony founded upon an entirely different arrangement of the scale, that is to say, upon the system of modern tonality. Four-part harmony being considered as the combination of four melodies which are heard simultaneously, the principle that one of these melodies may be written in one tonality, while the other three belong to quite another, is wholly absurd.¹⁶³

In particular, treatises advise against using a dominant seventh chord in accompaniment.

This chord is so tied to functional tonal harmony that its presence would draw attention away from the chant melody. Presumably for this reason, some treatises ban all seventh chords,¹⁶⁴ though others allow them if they are created from the notes of the original mode.¹⁶⁵

Taking the famed supple quality of the chant of the monks of Solesmes as a guide, many treatises uphold a legato style of accompaniment. In this way, the accompaniment matches the smoothly connected vocal nature of chant. Typical voice leading principles also find their way into the chant accompaniment treatises. Use of common tones between chords, close spacing of chords, and decorations such as suspensions help to promote a legato style. This provides a clear and unobtrusive cushion of sound underneath the chant melody. Flor Peeters, a Belgian composer and organist who helped to compose many chant accompaniments in the volumes of *Nova Organi Harmonia*, explains in his method of plain chant accompaniment: “In general Plain Chant should be sung *in a smoothly flowing legato* style. The *style* of the accompaniment should be

¹⁶³ Louis Niedermeyer and Joseph D’Ortigue, *Gregorian Accompaniment: A Theoretical and Practical Treatise upon the Accompaniment of Plainsong*, trans. Wallace Goodrich (New York: Novello, Ewer & Co., 1905), 14.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹⁶⁵ Flor Peeters, *A Practical Method of Plain-Chant Accompaniment* (Mechelen: H. Dessain, 1949), 3.

closely interwoven, in order to avoid the occurrence of discords that are harsh and disagreeable to the ear, discords being used merely to obtain a greater unity of rhythm.”¹⁶⁶

The suppleness of chant promoted by the monks of Solesmes is reflected not only in a legato style, but in the rhythm of the chant. Dom Prosper Guéranger, abbot of Solesmes, was instrumental in the restoration work done at the abbey. He is credited with “going against contemporary practice, whereby each note was heavily stressed and the melodies arbitrarily divided into bars.”¹⁶⁷ This practice can actually be observed in the accompaniments of the time. César Franck, composer and organist at Ste. Clotilde from 1858 until his death in 1890, is best known for his setting of “Panis Angelicus” and a number of solo organ works. However, he also collaborated with Louis Lambillotte to create several volumes of chant accompaniment titled “Chant Grégorien: Accompagnements d’Orgue.” The collaboration involved Franck’s accompaniment of Lambillotte’s modern notation transcriptions of plainsong.¹⁶⁸ In discussing “Accompagnements d’Orgue,” one Franck biographer comments,

In Lambillotte’s day, plainchant during Mass was seldom sung unaccompanied; usually it received chor[d]al backing from the organist. It continued to do so long after Lambillotte’s time. A future Franck pupil, Louis Vierne, was rather scathing about it: especially about organists being expected “to accompany each note [of chant] with a chord, an effect about as artistic as if it were applied to the vocal runs of *bel canto*.”¹⁶⁹

With the restoration of chant by the monks of Solesmes came a new style of accompaniment. This style allows for greater flexibility in the rhythm. Like Franck,

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 24.

¹⁶⁷ Cardine, Hiley, and Sherr, “Solesmes,” *Grove Music Online*.

¹⁶⁸ Rollin Smith, *Playing the Organ Works of César Franck* (Stuyvesant, New York: Pendragon Press, 1997), 16.

¹⁶⁹ R. J. Stove, *César Franck: His Life and Times* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2012), 96.

Marcel Dupré was a composer and organist who is best known for his solo organ works. Part of his work, too, involved chant accompaniment. He actually wrote a treatise on Gregorian accompaniment entitled, “Manuel d’Accompagnement du Plain Chant Grégorien.”¹⁷⁰ In this treatise, he provided examples of chant hymn harmonizations for each of the eight modes. Comparing these to Franck’s, the most obvious difference is in the rhythm of the chant and the rate at which the accompanying chords change. In Dupré’s accompaniment, like Franck’s, the chords are based on the notes of the mode in use. However, in Dupré’s setting, the notes of the chant are transcribed as eighth notes, whereas in Franck’s they are transcribed, for the most part, as half notes. Most notably, Dupré will use one chord to accompany several notes of the chant. This highlights the melody and even allows singers flexibility in performance. This kind of chant accompaniment acquires even greater flexibility in *Nova Organi Harmonia*, the collection of chant accompaniment produced by several composers including Flor Peeters. One of the characteristics of these accompaniments is the simplification of rhythmic notation. In the accompaniment, only a black or white note is used. The white note is held “as an indefinite value lasting to the entry of the following note in the same part.”¹⁷¹ The entrance of the next note, in turn, is determined by the chant itself. A shift in harmony could be implied by the melody or could even reflect the text accentuation. Peeters writes, “The characteristics of the Latin text, the natural rhythm of the word, and the relation between primary and secondary accents play a preponderant part in Plain

¹⁷⁰ Marcel Dupré, *Manuel d’Accompagnement du Plain Chant Grégorien* (Paris: Alphonse Leduc, 1937).

¹⁷¹ Peeters, *A Practical Method of Plain-Chant Accompaniment*, vii.

Chant accompaniment.”¹⁷² It could be said that the chant is both the source and goal of the supporting accompaniment starting in the early twentieth century.

The parameters of chant accompaniment should come from the chant itself. For example, the chords that are used in the accompaniment should be governed by the mode of the chant. The flexibility and flowing nature of Gregorian rhythm necessitate a slower moving accompaniment that does not weigh the chant down with a different chord for every note. Furthermore, the accompaniment should not detract from the chant. The voice is the primary instrument of worship, and it is Gregorian chant that is to have pride of place, not its accompaniment. Therefore, dissonances must be treated carefully.

When Gregorian chant is sung unaccompanied, no dissonances are even possible because it is sung in unison. Dissonances demand the ear’s attention. They can be used in chant accompaniment to mirror accentuation in the melody or the text, and they can be used to connect chords, as in the case of a suspension. However, too much dissonance can weaken the integrity of the chant melody and overemphasize the accompaniment. Additionally, certain harmonies, such as the dominant seventh or diminished triad, are so associated with tonality and have such clear direction that they are not considered to be suited to chant accompaniment. In essence, since the goal of chant accompaniment is to support the melody, the accompaniment must be subdued.

There is a unique beauty in chant sung *a capella*. Theologically, monophony is significant. The many voices that converge into one can symbolize the union with God and one another that the liturgy offers. Yet, organ accompaniment is common

¹⁷² Ibid., 6.

occurrence, and there are benefits to this practice. After the great restoration of Gregorian chant, many composers were inspired to write chant accompaniments and chant-inspired organ solo works. However, following the Second Vatican Council, Gregorian chant has inexplicably disappeared from the liturgical repertoire of many churches. Despite the fact that it is called for in the documents and even the rubrics of the liturgy, few churches heed these directives. Even St. Peter's Basilica was not using the *Graduale Romanum* when Ratzinger became pope. For various reasons, Gregorian chant sounds different from other types of music. Certain elements such as modality, unmeasured rhythm, and the text, which is typically in Latin, distinguish Gregorian chant from other genres. However, Gregorian chant has become completely foreign not because it is rooted in another time or place, but because it is so seldom sung. In this context, it can be difficult for a choir to become proficient at singing chant. The organ can provide support for inexperienced singers, establishing the mode and reaffirming the pitches of the chant. The ability of the organ to indefinitely sustain pitches serves chant accompaniment well. The organ is especially suited to accompaniment also because of its assortment of stops. Other instruments have one basic timbre, but the organ can respond to the needs of the choir by using different sounds. The sounds of the organ can even be used as a signal. Some chants are sung antiphonally, for example, between a choir and congregation. Without any verbal instruction, the congregation can be encouraged to sing various sections of the chant simply by using a distinctive (usually louder) registration on the organ. Sometimes, the organ is used to accompany only one side of an antiphonal group, such as the congregational side. This preserves some of the

chant in its original unaccompanied form, provides variety, and signals one group to sing. The organ is the ideal accompanimental instrument in church, therefore, for both musical and practical reasons.

In accompanying Gregorian chant, the organ, which can be described as a cosmic instrument, supports the logos. At all times, the text and the melody that carries it are to be the primary concern. This requires a kind of humility on the part of the organ. The organ is capable of an astonishing range of sounds and dynamic levels. Most of these are not used in accompanying chant. This restraint and discipline, which could even be likened to sacrifice, is symbolic of key elements of Christian life and worship. Furthermore, Ratzinger has linked Gregorian chant with the character of liturgy as mystery.¹⁷³ So, in supporting Gregorian chant, the organ becomes part of the expression of mystery. Finally, though not original to Gregorian chant, accompaniment is by now a long-standing tradition. In recent times, by aiding the singing of chant, the organ has the additional role of helping to recover history.

¹⁷³ Ratzinger, "In the Presence of the Angels," 174.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Improvisation

While organ works like Frescobaldi's *Fiori Musicali*, Tournemire's *L'Orgue Mystique*, Langlais' *Livre Oecumenique*, and various sources of chant accompaniment provide insight into the tradition of Catholic liturgical music for the organ, a great part of the tradition does not exist in written form. Much of the music provided by the organ in the liturgy is improvised. Improvisation is defined as, "The creation of a musical work, or the final form of a musical work, as it is being performed."¹⁷⁴ The definition is broad, as improvisation "may involve the work's immediate composition by its performers, or the elaboration or adjustment of an existing framework, or anything in between."¹⁷⁵ Improvisation does generally require some degree of preparation. At the very least, every improvisation is built on a series of conventions or implicit rules.¹⁷⁶ However, spontaneity is at the core of the practice. Improvisation has been essential to liturgical organ music from its foundation.

Interestingly, while other elements of the liturgy are not subject to improvisation, it has always been intimately connected with the music of the liturgy. The prayers of the liturgy do not change and are prescribed by the Church. Other than perhaps the homily, there is no point at which the priest improvises. Yet, even the genre of Gregorian chant,

¹⁷⁴ Bruno Nettl, Rob C. Wegman, Imogene Horsley, Michael Collins, Stewart A. Carter, Greer Garden, Robert E. Seletsky, Robert D. Levin, Will Crutchfield, John Rink, Paul Griffiths, and Barry Kernfeld, "Improvisation," *Grove Music Online*, accessed July 12, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-0000013738>.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

the music particularly suited to the liturgy, is rooted in improvisation. It was not until the ninth century that neumatic notation was created, and the system was solidified by Guido d'Arezzo in the eleventh century. Before this, "music in western Europe was preserved by rote memory, and new music was presumably worked out in performance or created spontaneously in improvisation."¹⁷⁷ Naturally, without a written record, it is difficult to ascertain how exactly music was improvised. Nevertheless, "improvisatory technique is hinted at in the structure of a number of surviving chant melodies. The chants in a particular mode, such as the Dorian, often use the same, or a similar, vocabulary of melodic motifs. This is taken as indicating an improvisatory practice in which the modes...included thematic materials as well as a roster of notes in their identities."¹⁷⁸ St. Augustine actually provides a clearer idea of the practice of musical improvisation in the early Church.

The most reliable extant evidence relates to the spontaneous improvisation of the *Jubilus*, a melismatic flourish found on the last syllable of certain alleluias preserved in the early Christian liturgy. Clear references to this type of improvisation appear in the writings of the early Christian Fathers. St Augustine (354–430) described this *jubilus* as the musical outpouring of "a certain sense of joy without words...the expression of a mind poured forth in joy." In its melismatic, virtuoso style it is not unlike the vocal cadenza added centuries later at the cadence of a Baroque aria.¹⁷⁹

From this account, it can be determined that improvisation was linked with virtuosity.

Like liturgical vocal music, it is presumed that early organ music was also improvised. "The lack of any written keyboard music from pre-Christian times and the first thirteen hundred years of the Christian era prevents our knowing much about such

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

music. Before 1450, little instrumental music was permanently recorded inasmuch as most of the instrumental music performed was apparently either improvised or played by memory.”¹⁸⁰ When written compositions did appear, they bore witness to the practice of improvisation. “Starting with the Robertsbridge Codex and the Faenza Codex, elaborately ornamented versions of polyphonic motets and secular works appeared as a constant part of the repertory and can doubtless be seen as written-down examples of a common improvisatory procedure.”¹⁸¹ Further evidence of the practice of improvisation can be found in manuscripts:

The fact that a number of 15th-century manuscripts, such as the *Fundamentum organisandi* (1452) of Conrad Paumann, give practical instructions for adding keyboard-style countermelodies to fit with the intervals commonly found in such pre-existing melodies tends to confirm that contrapuntal improvisation on a chant in church or on a popular song in secular music-making was a common practice with the professional keyboard virtuoso.¹⁸²

Improvisation is understood to be so common and widespread that the existence of written organ music itself is considered remarkable. In writing about organ music and the liturgy, Edward Higginbottom explains:

What *is* surprising is the appearance of published (and indeed manuscript) collections of liturgical organ music. What was their purpose? Most likely to provide an exemplar for those wishing to learn the art, as well as a source for those whose inspiration might not be on the highest level. At the same time, the surviving music is but a minute fraction of what was improvised over the centuries in the context of alternatim practice, and in some respects it may be unrepresentative of the practice, inclined to greater complexity (for pedagogical and “artistic” purposes) than the commonplaces of improvisation.¹⁸³

Higginbottom also describes the historical importance of improvisation for the organist:

No organist was appointed to his task without being able to demonstrate fluency in improvisation. In the early years of the sixteenth century at St Mark’s Venice, the tests for candidates comprised improvising a strict four-part fantasia on a given theme, the improvised

¹⁸⁰ Arnold, *Organ Literature: A Comprehensive Survey*, vol. I, *Historical Survey*, Locations 157–160, Kindle.

¹⁸¹ Nettl, et al., “Improvisation,” *Grove Music Online*.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ Higginbottom, “Organ Music and the Liturgy,” 140.

treatment of another theme, passing the cantus prius successively through all four voices of the texture, and responding extempore and alternatim to the choir. Given the number of days when the organist had to attend, the number of services at which he played and the number of versets required at each, it is scarcely surprising that improvisatory skills were a sine qua non.¹⁸⁴

Even with the appearance of written liturgical compositions for the organ, improvisation remained essential; “during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries when manuscript collections and printed music had become commonplace, improvisation was considered an indispensable facet of an organist’s training.”¹⁸⁵ Improvisation was a defining feature of the Ste. Clotilde organ tradition. Tournemire and Langlais were known for their skill in improvisation. The composer and organist Maurice Duruflé valued Tournemire’s improvisations so highly that he transcribed five of them. Organ improvisation in the liturgy has endured to this day. In 2008, Pope Benedict XVI visited the United States and celebrated Solemn Vespers at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. Peter Latona, Music Director at the Basilica and organist, provided organ improvisation at the beginning and end of the liturgy. Through organ improvisation, Latona, who called the pope’s visit a highlight of his tenure at the Basilica, was able to present a unique offering. For this and many other reasons, organ improvisation is at the core of the musical tradition of the Catholic liturgy.

Improvisation demands skill and disciplined knowledge. In order to improvise well on the organ, technical ability and fluency with registration are necessary.

Familiarity with Gregorian chant is essential for a Catholic organist. There are also

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 139–40.

¹⁸⁵ Gerhard Krapf, *Organ Improvisation: A Practical Approach to Chorale Elaborations for the Service* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg, 1967), 17.

broader musical concepts that must be mastered such as harmony, voice leading, form, etc. By its very nature, improvisation is closely related to composition. Organists who were known for their improvisatory ability were generally well-respected composers as well. In a Doctor of Musical Arts document, Haejin Kim presents a survey of improvisation methods from 1900. It is interesting to note that elements of music theory form a common theme among different improvisation method books. It would seem necessary that improvisation be grounded in and arise from a firm knowledge of theory. Dupré, who taught organ at the Paris Conservatoire, wrote the *Complete Course in Organ Improvisation*. Kim summarizes the work:

In his time, Dupré was an internationally well-known improviser and is still considered one of the greatest to this day; his method book is regarded worldwide as the best compendium among organ improvisation methods. The first of the two volumes includes the harmonization of melodic lines, delving deeper to deal with several varieties of phrase structures. The second volume deals with fundamental and practical issues, such as keyboard technique, registration, basic natural harmony, essential elements of theme, and various forms. Together, these two volumes contain knowledge in various areas that are essential for any aspiring improviser. Dupré says that the object of his book is “to help students of improvisation know quickly how to judge and dissect a theme, and to see immediately how best to make use of it so as to draw from it the interest, beauty, and emotion this theme could contain in its fullest form.”¹⁸⁶

Many of the topics in Dupré’s organ improvisation course, such as harmonization of melodic lines, phrase structure, basic harmony, and form, are identical to topics that would be presented in a theory course. In this way, improvising, like composing, involves knowledge of and incorporation of previously established musical conventions. At the same time, this correlation between improvising and composing led to a dichotomy:

¹⁸⁶ Haejin Kim, “Organ Improvisation for Church Services: A Survey of Improvisation Methods from 1900” (DMA diss., University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, August 2011), 2, accessed August 6, 2018, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.

The line between improvising and composing was less clearly drawn in solo improvising because here the player normally had his own repertory, playing from memory, improvising and often changing his compositions and re-using materials from earlier improvisations. The fact that there were so many famous keyboard composers was no doubt due to this practice. The large number of collections of printed works for keyboard, lute and similar instruments in the 16th century, bringing music from the repertory and inventions of the professional performer into the hands of the amateur, led to a great change. The works of the professional virtuoso, whether devised through his own improvisations, worked out on his instrument in playing or first created in written notation, became in published form the repertory for the amateur, and improvisation became associated with the professional virtuoso.¹⁸⁷

Written compositions may allow this dichotomy to exist between amateur and professional musicians, but it must be admitted that virtuosity has been connected with improvisation from its early stages.

Various genres and musical characteristics derive from the practice of improvisation. In particular, toccatas, fantasias, and intonations are associated with improvisation. Toccatas and fantasias are free pieces, and intonations are introductions to Gregorian chant that establish the mode before the chant is sung. Features of these pieces often include virtuosic passagework, scales and arpeggios, and adventuresome harmony. Sometimes, when a work is called “improvisatory,” this refers to free rhythm and structure. However, the term “improvisatory” sometimes actually refers to the virtuosic elements that frequently define the genres inspired by improvisation.

Given that improvisation requires a depth of musical knowledge and virtuosic skill, it is appropriate that it is incorporated into the liturgy. Liturgical music seeks to represent the whole of humanity in worship of God. However, the whole of humanity is universal, not uniform. Therefore, the music of the liturgy, in a sense, has different levels. At the most basic level, there is the singing of the congregation. Since a

¹⁸⁷ Nettl, et al., “Improvisation,” *Grove Music Online*.

congregation generally consists of people who are not professionally trained singers, the music that the congregation sings is by necessity simple and limited in range. It can even be as simple as an “Amen” sung in unison on one pitch. There is profound beauty in this, but this does not adequately represent the capabilities of the members of the congregation who may be musicians. The schola or choir allows talented and dedicated singers the opportunity to develop and share their gifts with God and consequently with the congregation. Finally, there is the organist. The role of the organist is unique because the organ can be used in conjunction with the singing of the congregation or choir, or it can be used by itself. In solo improvisation, music for the liturgy is provided by the organist alone. Skillful organ playing requires great discipline in practice and study. The entire body is involved in making music on the organ, as notes are played not only by the hands but by the feet as well. Careful thought and attentive listening are necessary for proper registration of the organ. Strong coordination is needed for changes in registration and for moving from one manual to another. Improvisation especially demands much of the organist but also provides a way for the organist to offer his or her knowledge and talent in service to the liturgy. In this way, from the singing of the congregation to the improvisation of the organist, liturgical music takes up all that humanity has to offer and presents it to God.

There is, however, a danger with improvisation and with its virtuosity in the liturgy. For any liturgical soloist, and, hence, the organist, there is a risk that the focus will be placed on the individual performer rather than the liturgy. The liturgical musician should serve the music, which in turn should serve the liturgy. Though this is not

necessarily the case, it is indeed possible for virtuosity to become a distraction in the liturgy. Sometimes, virtuosic music such as improvisation can be an expression of offering the best to God. Virtuosic music can also be used to highlight feasts and seasons of the liturgical year. For example, on Christmas or Easter and during their respective seasons, it is not unreasonable to expect that the music will match the solemnity of the occasion. However, at other times, as, for example, during Advent, brilliance and virtuosity are certainly not expected and could actually be considered improper. Furthermore, sometimes virtuosity can be used as a personal statement of superiority. This, while not a serious issue in the case of a performer in a concert, is an impediment to true worship. Worship that is self-seeking or self-glorifying is no longer directed at God and does not correspond to the theological goal of the liturgy. On the other hand, lack of skill can also be a hinderance. Ratzinger illustrates this in regard to singing:

In more concrete terms, there are a good number of people who can sing better “with the heart” than “with the mouth”; but their hearts are really stimulated to sing through the singing of those who have the gift of singing “with their mouths”. It is as if they themselves actually sing in the others; their thankful listening is united with the voices of the singers in the one worship of God. Are we to compel people to sing when they cannot and, by doing so, silence not only their hearts but the hearts of others too? This is not to impugn the singing of the whole faithful people, which has its inalienable place in the Church, but it is opposed to a one-sidedness that is founded neither on tradition nor on the nature of the case.¹⁸⁸

Improvisation requires talent and understanding of many different elements of music theory. If these are lacking, the improvisation will suffer, becoming at best a distraction and at worst a cause for, as Ratzinger might say, a silencing of the hearts of those gathered.

How can organ improvisation stay faithful to the liturgy? Liturgical music in

¹⁸⁸ Ratzinger, “On the Theological Basis of Church Music,” 124.

general is rooted in what has come before; Catholic liturgical music is intrinsically traditional. One way to ground improvisation in the liturgy is to use Gregorian chant themes. This has been the technique of countless organists for centuries. Frescobaldi, Tournemire, and Langlais not only based their compositions on Gregorian themes, but their improvisations as well. The *alternatim* practice provided ample opportunity for improvisation based on Gregorian chant. Improvisation, like composition, can and should be an example of contemporary artistry. At the same time, Catholic liturgical music, though not necessarily seeking to recreate the past, must honor the established tradition. In practical terms, using Gregorian themes in an improvisation ensures to some degree a connection to the liturgical tradition of the Church. Improvisation is also connected to the liturgy in as much as it is connected to liturgical themes such as cosmos, logos, mystery, and history. Just like written compositions, improvisation can express the glory and distress as well as the height and depth of the cosmos. There is nothing that prevents improvisation from being based in the logos. A sense of mystery can be conveyed, and history can be incorporated.

It is not uncommon for a written composition to be more thought-out, structured, and strict than an improvised one. However, liturgically, improvisation has one significant advantage. Organ improvisation in the liturgy is used to accompany the action of the liturgy. In describing the *alternatim* practice, Higginbottom states, “In addition, the organist was expected to observe the timing of the liturgy: he could only elaborate when liturgical circumstances permitted, as (and notably) at the Offertory of the Mass.”¹⁸⁹

¹⁸⁹ Higginbottom, “Organ Music and the Liturgy,” 139.

Improvisation is particularly suited to the liturgy because it is ruled by liturgical time. When playing a written composition, the organist is confined to the timing of the composition itself. A written composition has a firmly set beginning, middle, and end. If a written composition is being played during the liturgy, the best the organist can do is match a piece of the same approximate length to a particular liturgical action. However, there are a number of variables. For example, one priest may speak and complete liturgical actions at a slower rate than others. This would have an effect on the offertory, for example. The time for communion is determined partially by how many people are present and how many people come forward to receive Communion. These variables present a challenge when using written compositions. In some cases, a written composition may not extend long enough to cover the liturgical action. In other cases, if it is too long, the music may force the liturgical action to be suspended. Improvisation, on the other hand, since it is spontaneous, bases its timing on the liturgy itself. Improvisation is both defined by liturgical time and capable of responding to it. When improvising, the organist is able to be highly aware of and deeply attuned to the liturgy.

In many ways, liturgical theology provides guidelines for organ improvisation. In addition to the themes of cosmos, logos, mystery, and history, one may consider the importance of skill. Ratzinger provides an exegesis on a line from Psalm 47 in order to establish the foundation of church music:

As a main connecting theme for my comments I would like to select one verse from the Psalter which appears again and again in the history of theological reflection on the foundations and path of church music, and this with justification since it mirrors something of the basic orientation of the book of Psalms as a whole. I am referring to the seventh verse of Psalm 47 [in some Bibles the eighth verse and/or Psalm 46; RSV-2CE 47:7]. The ecumenical Bible for German-speaking countries translates this verse in a rather vacuous way: Sing a psalm [*Singt ein Psalmenlied*]. It leaves it up to the one reading or praying to imagine what

this—“a psalm”—could be. In contrast M. Buber and F. Rosenzweig had translated it: “Play as an inspiration” [*Eine Eingebungsweise spielt auf*]. They are emphasizing the artistic inspiration that should stand behind the requested song. A more distinctive interpretation of the word in question, “psalm”, is offered by Alfons Deissler, who translates it as “artistic hymn”. In his outstanding commentary on the psalms, Hans-Joachim Kraus comes to a similar decision, for he writes: “Sing an art song.” The [French] translation of the Jerusalem Bible is along the same lines: “Play for God with all your art [with all your skill].” The translation issued by the Italian Bishops’ Conference also speaks of singing “con arte” (artistically). That more or less covers the spectrum of the attempts to approximate the Hebrew expression *maskil* in modern translations. But the old translations that reflect the efforts of the early Church are also important for us. The Septuagint, which became the Old Testament of Christianity, wrote *psalate synetos*, which we might translate as: “Sing in an understandable way; sing with understanding”—in both senses of the word: that you yourselves understand it and that it is understandable. Of course there is more to this expression than our rationalistic idea of understanding and understandability: Sing from and toward the spirit; sing in a way worthy of and appropriate to the spirit, disciplined and pure. The translation that Jerome chose and that was taken up again in the Sixto-Clementine Vulgate is along the same lines: *psallite sapienter*. Singing psalms should have something of the essence of *sapientia* about it and in it. In order to plumb the enigmatic quality of this formulation we should ponder what is meant by *sapientia*: a behavior of man that certainly has the brilliance of understanding about it but also denotes an integration of the entire person who understands and is understandable not only from the perspective of pure thought, but with all the dimensions of his existence. In this respect there is an affinity between wisdom and music, since in it such an integration of humanness occurs and the entire person becomes a being in accordance with *logos* [with “reason”]. Finally we should also note that in the similar context of Psalm 33 [32]:3 the Vulgate is acquainted with the expression “play the psalms well” or “sing well” (*bene cantare*), which Augustine, for example, quite naturally interprets as singing in the way the *ars musicae* teaches. Thus, from the verse of a psalm, the Church became aware of the need for an artistic level of musical expression in the praise of God.¹⁹⁰

Though, in this passage, Ratzinger is focusing on singing, all of these concepts can be applied to organ improvisation. Improvisation is particularly associated with inspiration. In playing a written composition, the organist depends on the inspiration of another, but in improvising, the organist relies directly and personally on his own inspiration. Part of Catholic teaching is that a person who offers himself to God does not lose his individuality; in other words, man is never subsumed into God, losing his personhood. Ratzinger explains this by contrasting Christianity with Asiatic religions: “In a nutshell

¹⁹⁰ Ratzinger, “Sing Artistically for God,” 123–4.

one could say that the goal of Asiatic contemplation is the escape from personality, whereas biblical prayer is essentially a relation between persons and hence ultimately the affirmation of the person.”¹⁹¹ Organ improvisation is a perfect symbol of this.

Improvisation is highly individualistic. Although certain conventions may be followed and similarities can be found in the improvisations of different organists, each organ improvisation is an original art that is the fruit of the talent and knowledge of a particular person. True liturgical improvisation flows from an understanding of the liturgy of the Church, together with its prayers and chants. The freedom that is related to improvisational music, also, is symbolic of the importance of the Christian doctrine of free will. According to this doctrine, though man is given guidelines by God in the Ten Commandments and through the teachings of the Church, there is ultimately the freedom to choose between good and evil. It is a beautiful thing when man freely chooses the good. Similarly, when an organist improvising during the liturgy follows the guidelines of the art of music itself and of the Church, adding his own artistry, the improvisation that results is a beautiful offering.

¹⁹¹ Joseph Ratzinger, *Feast of Faith: Approaches to a Theology of the Liturgy*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986), 24.

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Pipe Organ as an Instrument in the Theology of Ratzinger

The pipe organ is used in the liturgy both as a solo and as an accompanimental instrument. Its liturgical repertoire spans written compositions, accompaniments, and improvisation. In his writings as theologian, Ratzinger rarely addresses the pipe organ directly. Yet, many of the themes which appear in his theology of the liturgy can be related not only to the repertoire of the organ but to the instrument itself.

In his article, “The Artistic Transposition of the Faith: Theological Problems of Church Music,” Ratzinger briefly synthesizes the reason that the organ was accepted into the Church. He first establishes that the liturgy of the Catholic Church has a cosmic character. He writes, “the Church’s liturgy, which now regards the whole cosmos as a temple, must itself have a cosmic character, must make the whole cosmos resound.”¹⁹² For Ratzinger, this is the theological principle behind the organ. In addition to calling the organ a cosmic instrument, he goes so far as to state in clear terms, “The organ is a theological instrument that originally had its place in the cult of the emperor.”¹⁹³ He describes that the sound of the organ accompanied the words of the Emperor of Byzantium. He explains, “Accordingly, the organ music at an imperial speech meant that when the divine emperor spoke, the entire universe resounded.”¹⁹⁴ The organ was thus a symbol of the entire universe, or cosmos. Naturally, then, the organ would find a place in

¹⁹² Ratzinger, “The Artistic Transposition of the Faith,” 489.

¹⁹³ *Ibid.*, 490.

¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.*

the Church and in papal liturgies. Ratzinger clarifies that this was not simply a political adaptation:

In contrast to this Byzantine custom, Rome stresses cosmic Christology and on that basis the cosmic function of the Vicar of Christ on earth: what was good enough for the emperor was quite good enough for the pope. Of course, this is a matter, not of superficial problems of prestige, but rather of the public, political, and cultic representation of the commissions received. Imperial theology increasingly entrusted the Church to the emperor and demoted the bishops to mere imperial officials; Rome countered the exclusivity of that claim with the pope's cosmic claim and thus with the cosmic rank of belief in Christ, which is independent of and indeed superior to politics. Therefore the organ had to resound in the papal liturgy as well.¹⁹⁵

Ratzinger's language is surprisingly strong. So firm is his understanding of the organ's liturgical purpose that almost without apology, he calls the organ a theological instrument and treats its use in papal liturgies as a matter of necessity.

Ratzinger had the chance to speak more directly about the organ when he visited Regensburg as Pope Benedict XVI in 2006. During this visit, he blessed the new organ at Alte Kapelle. The organ, which has been given the name Pope-Benedict-Organ (Papst-Benedikt-Orgel), is the only one that has been personally consecrated by the Pope.¹⁹⁶ In his greeting, the Pope affirmed:

The organ has always been considered, and rightly so, the king of musical instruments, because it takes up all the sounds of creation—as was just said—and gives resonance to the fullness of human sentiments, from joy to sadness, from praise to lamentation. By transcending the merely human sphere, as all music of quality does, it evokes the divine. The organ's great range of timbre, from *piano* through to a thundering *fortissimo*, makes it an instrument superior to all others. It is capable of echoing and expressing all the experiences of human life. The manifold possibilities of the organ in some way remind us of the immensity and the magnificence of God.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁹⁶ Alte Kapella Regensburg, "Papst-Benedikt-Orgel," Alte Kapelle Regensburg Kirchenmusik, accessed August 6, 2018, http://www.alte-kapelle.de/htm/km_orgel.html.

¹⁹⁷ Pope Benedict XVI, Apostolic Journey of His Holiness Benedict XVI to München, Altötting, and Regensburg: Blessing of the New Organ, *Greeting of the Holy Father*, September 13, 2006, The Holy See, accessed August 6, 2018, https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2006/september/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20060913_alte-kapelle-regensburg.html.

This statement provides the guidelines for understanding the organ as a theological and liturgical instrument.

Pope Benedict says that the organ “gives resonance to human sentiments” and both “echoes and expresses all the experiences of human life.” Liturgy, although directed at God, must by definition involve humanity. In Catholic theology, the dignity and value of the human person, together with human sentiments and experiences, is affirmed through the Incarnation. In the book of Deuteronomy, the question is asked, “For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the LORD, our God, is to us, whenever we call upon him?”¹⁹⁸ The closeness of God is expressed not only in action but in words. The core of the faith in the Old Testament is found in the promise of a messiah, the covenant, and the Ten Commandments, all of which were expressed by God in words. The greatest figures of the Old Testament, such as Abraham and Moses, were those who spoke to God directly. This contrasts with the gods of the pagans who were gods of nature or of various passions and seen as distant from people. Even before John proclaimed at the beginning of his Gospel, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God,”¹⁹⁹ God’s Word was central to the faith of the Old Testament. Furthermore, what sets man apart from the rest of creation is his capacity for reason, understanding, and speech. Speech, in turn, is dependent on breath. Therefore, it is noteworthy that in the account of the creation of man in the book of Genesis, the man receives his breath from God: “then the LORD God formed the man of

¹⁹⁸ Deut. 4:7 RSVCE.

¹⁹⁹ John 1:1 RSVCE.

dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.”²⁰⁰ Ratzinger describes the origin of the universe as understood by the ancients and then by Christians:

In the view of the ancients, intelligent actions presupposed an intelligence that caused them. The intelligent, mathematical movements of the heavenly bodies was not explained, therefore, in a purely mechanical way; they could be understood only on the assumption that the heavenly bodies were animated, were themselves “intelligent”. For Christians, there was a spontaneous turn at this point from stellar deities to the choirs of angels that surround God and illuminate the universe. Perceiving the “music of the cosmos” thus becomes listening to the song of the angels, and the reference to Isaiah chapter 6 naturally suggests itself. But a further step was taken with the help of trinitarian faith, faith in the Father, the Logos, and the Pneuma. The mathematics of the universe does not exist by itself, nor, as people now came to see, can it be explained by stellar deities. It has a deeper foundation: the mind of the Creator. It comes from the Logos, in whom, so to speak, the archetypes of the world’s order are contained. The Logos, through the Spirit, fashions the material world according to these archetypes. In virtue of his work in creation, the Logos is, therefore, called the “art of God” (*ars = techne!*). The Logos himself is the great artist, in whom all works of art—the beauty of the universe—have their origin. To sing with the universe means, then, to follow the track of the Logos and to come close to him. All true human art is an assimilation to *the* artist, to Christ, to the mind of the Creator. The idea of the music of the cosmos, of singing with the angels, leads back again to the relation of art to *logos*, but now it is broadened and deepened in the context of the cosmos. Yes, it is the cosmic context that gives art in the liturgy both its measure and its scope. A merely subjective “creativity” is no match for the vast compass of the cosmos and for the message of its beauty. When a man conforms to the measure of the universe, his freedom is not diminished but expanded to a new horizon.²⁰¹

Once again, the themes of cosmos and logos become clear in Ratzinger’s theology of music. He also highlights the importance of a trinitarian faith that acknowledges God as Father, Son (also known as Logos and identified in this passage as the great artist), and Holy Spirit (Pneuma). These titles are full of meaning. The name for the Holy Spirit, Pneuma, is actually an ancient Greek word that means not only spirit but breath. This definition shows the relationship of the three persons of God. God the Father is the one who speaks, his Son is the Word he speaks, and the Holy Spirit is the breath.

²⁰⁰ Gen. 2:7 RSVCE.

²⁰¹ Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 153–4.

These concepts, which at first glance appear to belong strictly to the realm of theology can nevertheless be connected with the pipe organ. The closer something is related to the human person, the closer it is related to the logos. It has already been established that the organ is capable of carrying the word (logos) through chant-inspired music. The concepts denoted by certain words, such as joy, sadness, praise, and lamentation, can also be expressed through the music of the organ. However, the pipe organ itself can be described in remarkably human terms. The organ is defined as, “A keyboard instrument having one or more manual keyboards and usually a pedal-board, the keys of which operate valves that admit air under pressure (supplied by a wind-raising device) to pipes arranged in one or more scale-like rows.”²⁰² There are countless different organs in the world, but all share these elements in common. The sound of any pipe organ is produced by wind, and one of the main parts of an organ is a wind-raising device. Air is just as necessary for the pipes of an organ to sound as it is for the human person to sing. Organ builder Charles Fisk titled his article about the wind system of pipe organs, “The Organ’s Breath of Life.”²⁰³ In the article, he states, “The organ is nothing but a machine, whose machine-made sounds will always be without interest unless they can appear to be coming from a living organism. The organ has to seem to be alive.”²⁰⁴ He ultimately attributes the organ’s source of life to the player. However, it is true that the wind system of the pipe organ can be likened to the human body. Just like the lungs,

²⁰² Barbara Owen, “Organ,” *Grove Music Online*, accessed August 9, 2018, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-1002252098>.

²⁰³ Charles Fisk, “The Organ’s Breath of Life,” *The Diapason* (September 1969), C.B. Fisk, Inc, accessed August 6, 2018, http://www.cbfish.com/sites/default/files/cbf_writings/cbf_writings_03.pdf.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

the bellows of early organs can be said to inhale and exhale. Wind has been used not only to produce sound but to aid in various functions of more modern organs. For example, the Barker-lever, which assists the action of the player's finger, making it easier to play on a large pipe organ, is technically labeled a pneumatic device. This term is reminiscent of the Greek term for the Holy Spirit. Indeed, the pneumatic nature of the pipe organ makes it possible for the organ to represent the human and divine.

In the chapter on the organ case in *The Cambridge Companion to the Organ*, Stephen Bicknell, author of *The History of the English Organ* writes, "As the use of music in the church is laden with symbolic meaning, so the very presence of the organ can be used as part of the symbolic apparatus and it becomes essential to ask which particular symbols may have been uppermost in the minds of those who commissioned these instruments and of those who made and installed them."²⁰⁵ Bicknell takes note of the design of organ cases. In particular, he identifies crenellations as an early and typical feature of organ casework. He remarks:

The crenellations or battlements are perhaps a clue to the iconography being evoked. The organ case houses a "population" of pipes, all different from each other and quite individual in every respect, but all governed by an overall precise order (the notes of the scale determining the length of the pipes and the relative diameter scaling determining the quality of the sound). This is a neat model of the medieval world view, and one is immediately struck by the idea of a parallel with the Augustinian notion of the City of God or with the image of the Heavenly Jerusalem; hence, perhaps, the battlements. The pipes are of course a representative example of God's creation on earth, all the more potent because their order and manufacture is governed by the...properties of mathematics and geometry. To the medieval mind there would have been a profound symbolic link between this and concepts such as the music of the spheres and the idea that through music fallen man may access, albeit in a transitory way, the pure truth of heaven.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁵ Stephen Bicknell, "The Organ Case," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Organ*, ed. Nicholas Thistlethwaite and Geoffrey Webber (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 56.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 56–7.

The idea of the pipes as representative of God's creation on earth and the reference to the music of the spheres is reminiscent of Pope Benedict's words at the blessing of the organ in Regensburg's Alte Kapelle. Bicknell extends the symbolism:

The image of the organ as a model of a city is surprisingly useful, though it may seem at first to stretch a point. It helps to explain the alternation of towers (or turrets) and flats (or walls); it gives an insight into how the craftsman gave a notional order to the many pipes standing in their house; it explains the application, in several languages, of terms normally reserved for body parts to the pipes themselves—the mouth, the foot, the lips, the tongue (languid) and so on. Indeed it helps to explain why some medieval organs have faces painted on the pipe mouths. It also helps to illustrate that there was a strong metaphysical vision of the organ and of its role in worship.²⁰⁷

Not only can the wind system of the pipe organ be compared to the human body, but, as Bicknell points out, the terminology for the pipes themselves comes from the body.

There is yet another linguistic connection between the organ and the human body. The word associated with the sound of the pipes is "speech." For example, one would say that in depressing the key, the organist causes the pipe to speak. All of these things link the organ to the human person and hence to the logos.

As already indicated, the organ can be seen not just as a symbol of the human person or community of people but as a cosmological instrument. Pope Benedict spoke of the organ as transcending the human sphere. He mentioned its great range of timbre and its ability to take up all the sounds of creation. These attributes of the organ make it possible for the instrument to represent the cosmos. In the first chapter of *The Cambridge Companion to the Organ*, Nicholas Thistlethwaite quotes Charles Burney, an English music historian of the eighteenth century. Burney calls the organ the largest, most comprehensive, and harmonious of musical instruments and asserts that it is called

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 57.

the organ (*organon*—the instrument) by way of excellence.²⁰⁸ Thistlethwaite comments on this:

Although modern etymologists would question Burney's appropriation of a Greek word with a general meaning (*organon* seems to have meant a tool with which to do a job of work) for so specific a purpose, it would be hard to deny that the pipe organ in its most developed form is structurally the largest, and (for sheer variety of effect) musically the most comprehensive of all instruments. And if by 'harmonious' is meant the capacity to order diverse elements and bring them into concord with one another for a common purpose, then Burney's claim for the organ, with its multiplicity of sound-producing and mechanical parts, can surely be substantiated.²⁰⁹

The sound of the organ is produced when wind goes through the pipes. Any given organ is comprised of multiple groups of pipes, called ranks. A rank of pipes is defined by its sound and by the length of the longest pipe in the rank. The length of the longest pipe determines the sounding pitch of a written note. For example, an eight-foot rank will sound at the written pitch, but a four-foot rank will sound an octave higher and a sixteen-foot rank will sound an octave lower. In bigger organs, it is not uncommon to have two-foot and thirty-two-foot ranks as well sounding two octaves above and two octaves below written pitch respectively. There are two basic kinds of organ pipes. Flue pipes produce the sounds of the principals, flutes, and strings, and reed pipes produce the sounds of the trumpet, oboe, crumhorn, and others. There are also groups of pipes known as mixtures which add higher sounding pitches based on the harmonic series, adding brilliance to the sound. Finally, there are mutations. These sound at different intervals above the written pitch and add color. The admittance of wind into a certain rank of pipes is controlled at the console through stops. Many organs have two or three manuals and a pedalboard. A

²⁰⁸ Nicholas Thistlethwaite, "Origins and Development of the Organ," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Organ*, ed. Nicholas Thistlethwaite and Geoffrey Webber, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 1.

²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

simple overview of the organ reveals the numerous possibilities and combinations of sound.

Even a comparatively small organ, such as an Italian organ from the sixteenth century, is capable of a great variety of sounds. Christopher Stenbridge explains:

When assessing the capabilities of the larger instruments, today's organist should avoid making the mistake of assuming that the presence of only one keyboard, an octave of pedal pull-downs and a small number of stops (basically a principal-based ripieno and a flute) pose strict limitations. Given a 16' or 24' principale, a keyboard range of nearly five octaves, doubling or even trebling of the basic ranks in the treble range together with a shallow case designed to project the sound, the grandeur leaves little to be desired. As for variety, the range of keyboard makes it possible to use the principale, both on its own or in combination with other stops, at either 16' or 8' pitch. Similarly the ottava may be used at 8' (as a smaller principale) or 4' pitch. The XV (fifteenth) can be used as a 4'. The flauto in XV may be used on its own or in conjunction with any of these three. The fact that the upper harmonics are nearly always to be drawn separately obviously increases their usefulness and provides far more variety than a single mixture stop could do. Thus an organ with only seven stops will have between thirty and forty possible registrations.²¹⁰

The organ developed differently in different countries. In Italy, it remained a fairly small instrument. In France, more standardization was attained than in any other country.

Furthermore, it was in France that the large symphonic Cavaillé-Coll organ was invented.

This kind of organ usually has many eight-foot ranks, simulating the abundance of string players in an orchestra. It also has more ranks that imitate orchestral instruments. In this

way, the organ, a single instrument, seeks to attain the sound that normally comes from a group of people who have different roles and are each dedicated to a particular

instrument. All of these characteristics of the organ, such as the variety of sound, the imitation of many different instruments, and the range of dynamics, represent the

community and contribute to the cosmological nature of the organ. Ratzinger concludes his article entitled "The Image of the World and of Man in the Liturgy and Its Expression

²¹⁰ Stenbridge, "Italian Organ Music to Frescobaldi," 152.

in Church Music” by referencing Gandhi’s perspective on the cosmos:

At the end of my reflections I would like to note a beautiful saying of Mahatma Gandhi that I recently found in a calendar. Gandhi refers to the three habitats of the cosmos and how each of these provides its own mode of being. The fish live in the sea, and they are silent. The animals of the earth scream and shout; but the birds, whose habitat is the heavens, sing. Silence is proper to the sea, shouting to the earth, and singing to the heavens. Man has a share in all three of them. He carries the depths of the sea, the burden of the earth, and the heights of the heavens in himself, and for this reason all three properties also belong to him: silence, shouting, and singing. Today—I would like to add—we see that only the shouting is left for the man without transcendence since he only wants to be earth and also try to make the heavens and the depths of the sea into his earth. The right liturgy, the liturgy of the communion of saints, restores totality to him. It teaches him silence and singing again by opening to him the depths of the sea and teaching him to fly, the angels’ mode of being. It brings the song buried in him to sound once more by lifting up his heart. Indeed, we can now even turn this around and say: One recognizes right liturgy by the fact that it liberates us from ordinary, everyday activity and returns to us once more the depths and the heights, silence and song. One recognizes right liturgy in that it has a cosmic, not just a group, character. It sings with the angels. It is silent with the expectant depths of the universe. And that is how it redeems the earth.²¹¹

Ratzinger thus connects Gandhi’s three properties of the cosmos, that is, silence, shouting, and singing, to man. Furthermore, he states that the concepts of depths and heights as well as silence and song are characteristics of right liturgy. Interestingly, all of these properties can be attributed, and some of them in a literal way, to the pipe organ. Of course, all music arises out of silence and contains both sound and silence within it. The organ’s “thundering *fortissimo*” can be likened to shouting, and through various sounds and melodies, it can be said that the organ sings. Height and depth are best represented by the different pipes that make up the organ. In fact, the organ’s sound is determined by the height and depth of its pipes. The organ is truly, as Ratzinger called it, a cosmic instrument.

In his theological writings on the liturgy and liturgical music, Ratzinger emphasizes the importance of mystery and history in addition to value of the logos and

²¹¹ Ratzinger, “The Image of the World,” 160.

the cosmos. Mystery can be expressed or symbolized through the music of the organ, but in many ways, the pipe organ itself is an instrument of mystery. In general, instruments and their workings are immediately apparent. For example, looking at an orchestra, it is clear how stringed instruments make their sound. With a brass instrument like a trumpet, there is an obvious connection between the player's mouth, the instrument, the valves which change the notes, and the sound that comes out of the bell. Even in keyboard instruments like the piano or harpsichord, the mechanism is evident on closer inspection. However, all of a pipe organ's mechanisms are hidden from view. Other than perhaps by the sound, one would not know that an organ contains a blower and often a reservoir that stores air. The connections from the keys to the pipes are also completely hidden. Furthermore, most of the pipes in an organ are housed behind façade pipes. In large organs, this means that thousands of pipes are essentially invisible, concealed within the organ chest. All of these characteristics of the pipe organ make it in particular a mysterious instrument. The presence of its majestic and glorious sound is astounding given how many of the elements of the pipe organ are unseen. In this way, the organ mirrors the mystery of divinity.

The history of the pipe organ is tied to the history of the Church. The two are so closely linked that the architecture of a church determines features and even the style of the organ. There is no other instrument so closely integrated with the church building. Bicknell writes, "The organ is unique amongst musical instruments in that it makes an architectural contribution to the building in which it stands."²¹² He elaborates:

²¹² Bicknell, "The Organ Case," 55.

To the modern mind the function of a musical instrument may be its sound. With the organ this is not the case: it is a total art object in which its size, scope, form, appearance, manufacture, installation and use are all part of the creative experience. For much of its life an organ is silent—and yet, through its appearance, it continues to make a vital contribution to the building in which it stands.²¹³

Therefore, not only has organ music been part of the Church's liturgy for hundreds of years, but the pipe organ has been a historic part of the church building itself.

Pope Benedict XVI concluded his greeting at the blessing of the organ in Regensburg's Alte Kapelle with these words:

Psalm 150, which we have just heard and interiorly followed, speaks of trumpets and flutes, of harps and zithers, cymbals and drums; all these musical instruments are called to contribute to the praise of the triune God. In an organ, the many pipes and voices must form a unity. If here or there something becomes blocked, if one pipe is out of tune, this may at first be perceptible only to a trained ear. But if more pipes are out of tune, dissonance ensues and the result is unbearable. Also, the pipes of this organ are exposed to variations of temperature and subject to wear. Now, this is an image of our community in the Church. Just as in an organ an expert hand must constantly bring disharmony back to consonance, so we in the Church, in the variety of our gifts and charisms, always need to find anew, through our communion in faith, harmony in the praise of God and in fraternal love. The more we allow ourselves, through the liturgy, to be transformed in Christ, the more we will be capable of transforming the world, radiating Christ's goodness, his mercy and his love for others.²¹⁴

The pipe organ is rich in theological symbolism and imagery. It is in many ways a mysterious instrument with close ties to the history of the Church. Its affinity with the human body and representation of the community as well as its cosmic nature make it the instrument par excellence for the Catholic liturgy.

²¹³ Ibid., 59–60.

²¹⁴ Pope Benedict XVI, "Blessing of the New Organ, *Greeting of the Holy Father*," The Holy See, https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2006/september/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20060913_alte-kapelle-regensburg.html.

CHAPTER NINE

Summary and Effect of Ratzinger's Theology of Liturgical Music

In Ratzinger's theological writings on the liturgy and music, several themes emerge. He speaks often of the cosmological nature of the Catholic liturgy. The cosmos traditionally refers to the universe and alludes to the ancient theory of the harmony of the spheres. Ratzinger identifies a variety of attributes of the cosmos such as height and depth, silence and song.²¹⁵ The cosmos represents a totality. According to Ratzinger, the whole cosmos must resound in liturgy, and all the voices of the cosmos are called upon for help.²¹⁶ At all times, however, the cosmos is in the service of the logos. In ancient Greek thought, which was adopted by Christians, the logos is the meaning or reason behind everything. For Christians, the Scripture as the Word of God and Jesus as the Son of God, are also considered synonymous with the Logos. For this reason, the Catholic liturgy is word-oriented, and vocal music has primacy in worship. Ratzinger especially praises Gregorian chant as a liturgical genre that is ordered to the logos as well as the character of the liturgy as mystery.²¹⁷ He categorizes mystery, along with cosmos and history, as an ontological dimension in which the liturgy lives.²¹⁸ The liturgy is rooted in history; it is based in a moment in time and has existed in every age since that time. The importance of history is expressed in the tradition of the Church which is both received

²¹⁵ Ratzinger, "The Image of the World," 160.

²¹⁶ Ratzinger, "In the Presence of the Angels," 175 and Ratzinger, "On the Theological Basis of Church Music," 124.

²¹⁷ Ratzinger, "In the Presence of the Angels," 174.

²¹⁸ Ratzinger, "The Image of the World," 149.

and handed on to future generations. Ratzinger stresses the necessity of reception over creativity in the liturgy; liturgy is not something one can make for oneself but can only receive.²¹⁹ As he writes regarding music, “In this respect, at the beginning of great sacred music there is of necessity awe, receptivity, and a humility that is prepared to serve by participating in the greatness that has already gone forth.”²²⁰

Although Ratzinger seldom addresses the pipe organ specifically in his writings on the liturgy and music, all of his theological themes can be related both to the instrument and to its liturgical repertoire. Ratzinger calls the organ a cosmic instrument.²²¹ As the largest instrument with the greatest variety of timbres, the organ is capable of representing the sounds of creation and hence the cosmos. The cosmos can also be represented musically through the overall order and harmony of many voices. For example, in the *Kyrie della Domenica* versets from Frescobaldi’s *Fiori Musicali*, the music is composed of up to four voices. Each is largely independent from the others, and though each line is horizontally constructed, all work together to produce harmony on the vertical level. In Tournemire’s *L’Orgue Mystique*, the cosmos is expressed through a range of dynamics and variety of registrations. Often these in turn serve to express the text of the chant that is quoted. Chromaticism and modality, too, give Tournemire’s music a cosmic sense. In a way, Langlais depicted the cosmos as he knew and experienced it by using harsh dissonances.

The logos is best exemplified in chant-based music. The purpose of Gregorian

²¹⁹ Ratzinger, *Credo for Today: What Christians Believe*, 198.

²²⁰ Ratzinger, “The Image of the World,” 158.

²²¹ Ratzinger, “The Artistic Transposition of the Faith,” 490.

chant is to add beauty and sublimity to the proclamation of the word. When a chant is used in an instrumental work, the melody calls to mind the text of the original chant. Familiarity with chant demands familiarity with the text of the chant; Gregorian chant is a form of prayer in which word and music are united. Consequently, chant-based music has an inherent orientation towards the word, that is, the logos. Therefore, the vast majority of the liturgical repertoire for the organ in the Catholic Church is based on Gregorian chant or can be connected to it. However, it is not a requirement that Catholic organ music be based on Gregorian chant if it is to be liturgical. Ratzinger remarks:

Naturally this internal norm of music in accord with the Logos must be grounded. It must show people here and now, at this time and in this place, as prayers into Christ's communion. It has to be accessible to them but at the same time lead them farther, and lead them farther exactly in that direction which the liturgy itself indicates in a matchlessly brief formula at the beginning of the Preface: *sursum corda*—the heart, that is, the inner person, the entirety of the self, lifted up into the height of God, to that height which is God and which in Christ touches the earth, draws it to itself, and pulls it up to itself.²²²

It is certainly possible to express the glory and majesty of God through the music of the organ. The joy of the Resurrection as recounted in the Gospels, or the still small voice of God as recounted in the book of Kings can be easily be conveyed on the organ without the use of Gregorian chant. The logos can also be signified by music that is closely related to the human voice. Frescobaldi's *Fiori Musicali* shows the influence of the vocal polyphonic style that is revered in the Catholic Church. Tournemire's *L'Orgue Mystique* honors the tradition of unaccompanied chant-singing by incorporating statements of the chant as a solo line. The organ itself can be related to the human body, and much of the terminology used for the organ pipes is in fact taken from the human body. Additionally,

²²² Ratzinger, "In the Presence of the Angels," 176.

the organ can be used to support the human voice and the word through chant accompaniment.

Ratzinger emphasizes the character of the liturgy as mystery. Indeed, mystery is at the center of the Christian faith. The liturgy is the worship of the Triune God, and the Catholic Church teaches, “The mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of Christian faith and life. It is the mystery of God in himself. It is therefore the source of all the other mysteries of faith, the light that enlightens them.”²²³ The music of the liturgy should therefore reflect the character of mystery. The pipe organ itself is a mysterious instrument. It is immensely powerful, but its inner mechanisms and many of the pipes are hidden from view and known to only a few, though its sound is present to all. But, how can mystery be expressed in the music of the organ? An analysis of the music written for the Mass, and especially for the elevation during the Mass reveals some answers. As early as Frescobaldi’s time, chromaticism was associated with the elevation toccatas. These toccatas were played at the most solemn and mysterious point in the Mass. Chromaticism, like mystery, denotes something “other.” Another characteristic of music written to accompany the sacred mystery of the Mass is the use of suspensions. This musical device seemingly manipulates time and becomes an expression of eternity.

Ratzinger upholds the historical tradition of the Church; according to him, true sacred music will be rooted in history. In addition to assuring a connection with the logos, basing an organ work on Gregorian chant affords an instant link with history. It was a nostalgia for history that popularized inclusion of Gregorian chant even in secular

²²³ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 234.

works of the Romantic era. Chant is readily recognized as ancient and has become a symbol of history. Other ancient musical techniques can also be used to participate “in the greatness that has already gone forth,” as Ratzinger might say.²²⁴ Frescobaldi’s music reveals the influence of the vocal polyphony of composers before him, like Palestrina. Tournemire and Langlais both use parallel fifths in their organ music, mirroring the ancient practice of vocal organum. All three composers employ pedal points, like the drones that constitute the most primitive form of harmony. By intentionally composing modal music, Tournemire honors the history of Gregorian chant. Chant-based organ works are also symbolic of Ratzinger’s theological principle that liturgy is not something that is made but received.

Ratzinger’s life in the Catholic Church has been marked by reform. He was present at the Second Vatican Council and is known for his criticism of its implementation. Accordingly, he is associated with the so-called reform of the reform. His theological writings indicate what is meant by this. For example, he expresses concern that in responding to the Council’s encouragement to be open to what is truly good and beautiful in other cultures, the Roman Catholic Church has rejected her own cultural tradition. He writes:

It is strange however that, in their legitimate delight in the new openness to other cultures, many people seem to have forgotten that the countries of Europe also have a musical inheritance that “plays a great part in their religious and social life”! Indeed, here we have a musical tradition that has sprung from the very heart of the Church and her faith. One cannot, of course, simply equate the great treasury of European church music with the music of the Church or, on account of its stature, consider that its history has come to an end; it would be equally impossible simply to identify the great figures of Latin theology with the teaching of the Church or to see in them some ultimate theological perfection. All the same it is just as clear that the Church must not lose this rich inheritance which was developed in her own matrix and yet belongs to the whole of mankind. Or does this “esteem” and a “suitable place”

²²⁴ Ratzinger, “The Image of the World,” 158.

in the liturgy (art. 119) apply only to non-Christian tradition? Fortunately the Council itself clearly opposes any such absurd conclusion, insisting that “the treasury of sacred music is to be preserved and cultivated with great care” (art. 114). Music such as this can only be preserved and cultivated, however, if it continues to be sung and played as prayer, as a gesture glorifying God, in the place where it was born—in the Church’s worship.²²⁵

Thus, Ratzinger declares the value of the Church’s treasury of sacred music, which includes Gregorian chant, vocal polyphony, and organ music. He also explicitly states that this treasure must be preserved in the context of the liturgy itself. It is not enough to study or merely perform the works that form the Church’s treasury of sacred music; these must continue to have a place in the active prayer of the Church. He even writes, “For its part, art lives insofar as it repeatedly places itself at the service of the festive liturgy and is continually reborn therein.”²²⁶

For eight years, Ratzinger, as Pope Benedict XVI, guided the Catholic Church. During this time, he opened the treasury of sacred music to the Church in a variety of ways. First, the liturgies at St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome underwent a change during his papacy; the propers from the *Graduale Romanum* were once again sung in the liturgy. In his apostolic exhortation, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, Pope Benedict personally encouraged the restoration of chant in the liturgy, writing, “Finally, while respecting various styles and different and highly praiseworthy traditions, I desire, in accordance with the request advanced by the Synod Fathers, that Gregorian chant be suitably esteemed and employed as the chant proper to the Roman liturgy.”²²⁷ The fact that Pope Benedict blessed the

²²⁵ Ratzinger, “On the Theological Basis of Church Music,” 125–6.

²²⁶ Ratzinger, “The Artistic Transposition of the Faith,” 482.

²²⁷ Pope Benedict XVI, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation of the Holy Father Benedict XVI to the Bishops, Clergy, Consecrated Persons, and the Lay Faithful on the Eucharist as the Source and Summit of the Church’s Life and Mission *Sacramentum Caritatis*, February 22, 2007, The Holy See, accessed August 6, 2018, http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_ben-xvi_exh_20070222_sacramentum-caritatis.html.

organ at Regensburg's Alte Kapelle reveals his appreciation for this liturgical instrument. Furthermore, in his greeting which accompanied the blessing, he elucidated the organ's capacity to express the human and divine, explaining its title as the king of musical instruments.

Ratzinger's concept of reform is based on fidelity to the Church and her teachings. Conversion is not just a turning away from things such as sin or pagan forms of religion, it is a turning towards God. In the Catholic understanding, God is inseparable from his Church, which is the Body of Christ. Hence, any true reform of the liturgy, together with its music, will be faithful to the teachings and directives of the Church. At the same time, it is possible to have diversity within fidelity. Ratzinger explains:

Catholicity does not mean uniformity. Vatican II had a purpose in making special mention of the cathedral church in its Constitution on the Liturgy. The cathedral can and should be more ambitious than the normal parish church in terms of the solemnity and beauty of the worship of God, and here too art will be involved at different levels depending on the occasion and the prevailing conditions. Together we make up the whole; we do not all have to be doing everything. It is strange that the postconciliar pluralism has created uniformity in one respect at least: it will not tolerate a high standard of expression. We need to counter this by reinstating the whole range of possibilities within the unity of the Catholic liturgy.²²⁸

Ratzinger has elsewhere discussed the importance of skill in church music and here hints at a condemnation of sub-standard repertoire and performance. He alludes to this again in another passage:

As the Old Testament speaks of the Temple, the Church is to be the place of "glory" and, as such, too, the place where mankind's cry of distress is brought to the ear of God. The Church must not settle down with what is merely comfortable and serviceable at the parish level; she must arouse the voice of the cosmos and, by glorifying the Creator, elicit the glory of the cosmos itself, making it also glorious, beautiful, habitable, and beloved.²²⁹

Church musicians, including organists, have a lofty mission. With skill, devotion to the

²²⁸ Ratzinger, "On the Theological Basis of Church Music," 123.

²²⁹ *Ibid.*, 124.

Church, and a correct understanding of the Church's teachings, the organist is called to play the organ for the glorification of God and the strengthening of faith. Ratzinger calls this the "proper aim" of the organ.²³⁰

How has Ratzinger's theology and papacy influenced the role of the pipe organ, and what are the implications for today? Several ways Pope Benedict encouraged the discovery of the Church's treasury of sacred music in his papacy have already been mentioned. Since the pope is the head of the Church, the papal liturgies at St. Peter's with their inclusion of Gregorian chant from the *Graduale Romanum* set the standard for the entire Church. It is important to acknowledge the pride of place of Gregorian chant in writing, as Ratzinger has done many times, but it is even more effective to actually implement this music in the liturgy. The focus on Gregorian chant is relevant for the organ, as chant has provided the inspiration for organ music for hundreds of years.

Pope Benedict XVI has already been mentioned in recent doctoral work in music. In a Doctor of Musical Arts essay, Elizabeth Gotlund notes, "Scholarly interest in *L'Orgue Mystique* has increased in recent years, especially since the publication of Pope Benedict XVI's *Summorum Pontificum* (2007), which allows for the use of the pre-Vatican II Mass by any priest."²³¹ The pre-Vatican II Mass, known now as the extraordinary form, was the form of the Mass from 1570 until 1962. It would have been the form of the Mass familiar to all of the major Catholic composers for the organ. After the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, it disappeared for the most part from the

²³⁰ Pope Benedict XVI, "Blessing of the New Organ, *Greeting of the Holy Father*," The Holy See, https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2006/september/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20060913_alte-kapelle-regensburg.html.

²³¹ Gotlund, "A Guide to Chant in Charles Tournemire's *L'Orgue Mystique*," 3

liturgical life of the Church. The resurgence of interest in music of this liturgy can therefore be traced to Pope Benedict, who facilitated and promoted the extraordinary form with his *motu proprio*. Pope Benedict is also mentioned in a Ph.D. dissertation by Vincent Rone. Rone credits Ratzinger with identifying the liturgical crisis that followed the Second Vatican Council and calling for a restoration of music. Rone writes that Pope Benedict was “extremely devoted to restoring a sense of mystery to the liturgy during his papacy and believed that that sense would be the source of strength for Catholics.”²³² Pope Benedict and his writings have also provided inspiration for church musicians across the world, including the United States of America. For instance, his name can be found in the section about sacred music on the website of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington D.C. The section begins:

In the words of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI, “[music] has the power to lead us back...to the Creator of all harmony, creating a resonance within us which is like being in tune with the beauty and truth of God, with the reality which no human knowledge or philosophy can ever express.” Acknowledging the exalted mission sacred music has to the service of God and understanding the profound impact that music has upon the liturgical celebrations at the National Shrine is what guides the efforts of the Musicians of the Basilica.²³³

Surely, Pope Benedict and his writings have influenced music and musicians in the Catholic Church in a number of undocumented ways as well.

In a way, the election of Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger to the papacy was an affirmation of his theological work up until that point. Due to his position as pope, there was a natural increase in interest in his writing, and many of his works have since been

²³² Rone, “A Voice Cries Out in the Wilderness: The French Organ School Responds to the Second Vatican Council of the Catholic Church,” 230.

²³³ Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, “Sacred Music,” Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception Music, 2008–2011, accessed August 6, 2018, <http://www.nationalshrine.com/site/c.osJRKVPBjH/b.4747323/k.9B19/centerMusiccenter.htm>.

published. *A New Song for the Lord*, which contains several of his articles on music, was originally published in English in 1996, but in 2005 was given a new cover that features the name, “Pope Benedict XVI,” along with a picture of the pope. This change in presentation of the book is an indication of the power and authority of the pope. His writings, which have an authority of their own in as much as they express the truth, have even greater implications because of his papacy.

Ratzinger’s assertion that history is a central character of the Catholic liturgy appears consistently in his writings. This has consequences for liturgical music in the current age. It means that there is a value and even a relevance of music of previous eras. In particular, those pieces which can be said to exemplify the theological characteristics of cosmos, logos, and mystery in addition to history can serve as models for future compositions. In this regard, the works of Frescobaldi and Tournemire are especially appropriate. Tournemire himself actually looked to Frescobaldi’s music for inspiration. A musical analysis of the works of these composers reveals characteristics and approaches that can help guide modern composition. The practice of improvisation, which has been a part of liturgical music since its beginning, should also have a role in the liturgy and can be informed by written compositions.

Ratzinger’s acknowledgement of Gregorian chant as the “permanent standard for sacred music, music for the liturgy of the Church” is a significant statement and one that contains perhaps the most implications.²³⁴ It validates the entire history of Gregorian chant-based organ repertoire and implies that it is useful even today. Furthermore, it

²³⁴ Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 145.

signifies that modern compositions should conform in some way to the style of Gregorian chant. This can occur in a straightforward way by quoting chant melodies in an organ composition or improvisation. Chant can also be honored as a standard when certain elements of chant form the basis of a work for the organ. For example, the modal system with its eight different modes is based entirely on Gregorian chant. At least initially, chant was not composed to fit a certain mode; rather, the modes were identified after the development of the chant repertory. An organ composition or improvisation that is modal but does not technically quote a chant could still be said to honor the standard that chant sets.

Although maintaining the critical importance of history, Ratzinger stresses the value of the present time. He has written, “We all know what a difference there is between a church that is always prayed in and one that has become a museum.”²³⁵ History and the present time can seem to oppose each other. Ratzinger explains, “we can say that the history of liturgy always stands in the tension between continuity and renewal. It is always growing into new todays, and it must constantly prune the today that has become yesterday, so that what is essential may appear vigorous and new. Liturgy needs growth as well as cleansing, and the preservation of its identity is crucial.”²³⁶ Normativity in the Catholic Church is derived from history, but Ratzinger clarifies, “Normativity, when properly understood, does not mean the exclusion of the new, but guidance that points one toward what lies on the horizon.”²³⁷

²³⁵ Ratzinger, *Collected Works: Theology of the Liturgy*, 295.

²³⁶ Ratzinger, “In the Presence of the Angels,” 168.

²³⁷ *Ibid.*, 174.

Although Ratzinger doesn't explicitly connect his theological themes of cosmos, logos, mystery and history to the repertoire for the pipe organ, this can indeed be done. Frescobaldi's *Fiori Musicali*, Tournemire's *L'Orgue Mystique*, and Langlais' *Livre Oecumenique* find a place in Ratzinger's theology, as an analysis reveals. Ratzinger's theology of liturgical music provides guidelines for analyzing, interpreting, and judging the existing liturgical repertoire for the organ. The liturgical repertoire of the Church can, in turn, provide guidelines for modern compositions. Additionally, Ratzinger has upheld the esteemed role of the organ in worship. Upon a visit of a chorus from Regensburg in 2008, he recalled his blessing of the organ at Alte Kapelle two years prior. He stated that he was pleased that the organ "continues to play and to help people perceive something of the splendor of our faith—a splendor kindled by the Holy Spirit himself. With it, the organ carries out an evangelizing function, proclaims the Gospel in its own way."²³⁸ Through his words and actions, Ratzinger has actively encouraged the environment that inspired the masterworks of Catholic liturgical organ music. Frescobaldi's *Fiori Musicali*, Tournemire's *L'Orgue Mystique*, and Langlais' *Livre Oecumenique* reflect the musical era to which they belong, but they also reflect Gregorian chant, polyphony, and the liturgy. It is precisely these things that Ratzinger has called to renewal. If this instruction is followed, it may usher in a new era of inspiration for organ music.

²³⁸ Zenit Staff, "Pope Calls Organ an Evangelization Tool," *Zenit*, July 7, 2008, accessed August 6, 2018, <https://zenit.org/articles/pope-calls-organ-an-evangelization-tool/>.

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