

Chapter 4

Chants of the Mass

If I could only make the faithful sing the *Kyrie*, the *Gloria*, the *Credo*, the *Sanctus* and the *Agnus Dei* ... that would be to me the finest triumph sacred music could have, for it is in really taking part in the liturgy that the faithful will preserve their devotion. I would take the *Tantum Ergo*, the *Te Deum*, and the Litanies sung by the people over any piece of polyphony.

—Giuseppe Cardinal Sarto (future Pope Saint Pius X), *Letter to Msgr. Callegari*, 1897

4.1 The *Missa Cantata*

Whether it's a ballet, opera, film or show, the music surrounding it is an indispensable element. The same goes for the Mass; something feels missing without chant. The Pearl of Great Price is nevertheless present at a Low Mass, but chant provides the most appropriate setting for this Jewel. Even its strongest rival, polyphony, has to admit defeat in terms of propriety.

Several parties have their chanting roles, and yes, that includes YOU!

- **Father** has his fair share of chanting throughout: the Lesson and Gospel, various prayers and dialogues, intonations of some parts of the Ordinary
- **The Choir** chants the Ordinary and sings hymns (some of which are also chants)
- **The Schola** is a subset of the choir comprised of men who chant the Propers
- **The Congregation** is free to chant or sing whatever parts the Choir is doing

The table below gives a top-level glance of the volume of singing involved in a typical High Mass (for those counting, a choir member is responsible for at least a dozen unique pieces of music!). In this lesson, we'll mostly be focusing on the Ordinary, specifically what we sing during Time of the Year (i.e., after Epiphany or Pentecost).

	Hymn	Ordinary	Proper
Processional	X		
<i>Asperges Me</i>		X	
Introit			X
<i>Kyrie</i>		X	
<i>Gloria</i>		X	
Gradual			X
Alleluia			X
<i>Credo</i>		X	
Offertory	X		X
<i>Sanctus</i>		X	
<i>Agnus</i>		X	
Communion	X		X
<i>Ite</i>		X	
Recessional	X		

4.2 Overview of the Ordinary

The “Ordinary” is so-called because it is a set of texts that are “ordinarily” recited at every Mass. Propers, on the other hand, are “proper” to a feast and change day-to-day, week-to-week. The Ordinary for Sundays includes the *Asperges Me* (or *Vidi Aquam*), the Mass (also called *Kyrie*) and the *Credo*. The last two are designated on the letterboard next to the altar rail as “M” and “C”, respectively. Since there are 18 standard Masses and 6 standard *Credos*, the typical combinations you’ll see at our chapel are:

- **Anytime:** Mass VIII (*De angelis*) and *Credo* III
- **Advent:** Mass XVII (with *Kyrie* B: Mode 6) and *Credo* III
- **Christmas:** Mass IX (*Cum júbilo*) and *Credo* IV
- **Time after Epiphany:** Mass XI (*Orbis factor*) and *Credo* I
- **Lent:** Mass XVII (with *Kyrie* A: Mode 1) and *Credo* III
- **Easter:** Mass I (*Lux et origo*) and *Credo* IV
- **Time after Pentecost:** Mass XI (*Orbis factor*) and *Credo* I
- **Feasts of Our Lord:** Mass II (*Kyrie fons bonitatis*) and *Credo* IV
- **Feasts of Our Lady:** Mass IX (*Cum júbilo*) and *Credo* IV

We also have at our chapel what we call a “split choir” (other places say antiphony, antiphonal singing or call-and-response). This means that one or two members of the schola cantor some parts of the Ordinary followed by the choir and congregation. The rules of the back-and-forth change for each chant of the Ordinary, and will be discussed in their respective sections below.

4.3 *Asperges Me* and *Vidi Aquam*

On Sundays, after the Procession and before the start of Mass, Father blesses the faithful with water while everyone sings the *Asperges Me*. Father intones it and everyone else continues the antiphon. Then at the psalm verse, we begin implementing the “split” choir where one or two schola members cantor the first half of the verse and the congregation responds with the second half. This “split” is repeated for the *Gloria Patri*. Then everyone sings the antiphon again.

Ps 50: 9, 3a

Ant.
7.

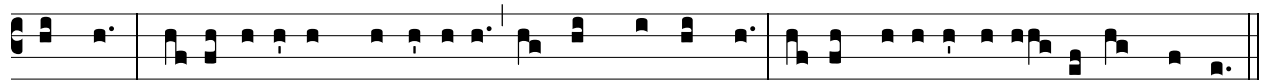
A -sper- ges me, * Dó-mi- ne, hyssó-po, et mundá- bor: la-vá- bis me, et su-per ni-
vem de- albá- bor. *Ps. 50.* Mi- se-ré-re me- i, De- us, * se-cúndum magnam mi-se-ri-cór-di- am
tu- am. Gló- ri- a Patri, et Fí- li- o, et Spi- rí- tu- i Sancto: * Sic- ut e- rat in princí- pi- o,
et nunc, et semper, et in sácu- la sácu- ló- rum. A- men.

Between Easter Sunday and Pentecost inclusive, the *Vidi Aquam* replaces the *Asperges Me*. The structure is the same, except that our choir opts for a psalm tone version of the antiphon the second time around due to time.

Ez 47: 2, 9

Ant.
8.

V I- di a- quam * egre- di- én- tem de tem- plo, a lá- te- re dex- tro, al- le-
lú- ia: et omnes, ad quos pervé- nit a- qua is- ta, sal- vi fac- ti sunt, et
di- cent, al- le- lú- ia, al- le- lú- ia. *Ps. 117.* Confi- témi- ni Dómi- no quón- i- am bonus: *
quón- i- am in sácu- lum mi- se- ri- cór- di- a e- jus. Gló- ri- a Patri, et Fí- li- o, et Spi- rí- tu- i



Sancto. * Sic-ut e-rat in princí-pi-o, et nunc, et semper, et in sá-cu-la sá-cu-ló-rum. Amen.
Ez 47: 2, 9



Ant. 8. **V** I-di aquam egre-di-éntem de templo, a lá-te-re dextro, al-le-lú-ia: 2. et omnes, ad quos



pervé-nit aqua ista, salvi facti sunt, et di-cent, al-le-lú-ia, al-le-lú-ia.

A short dialogue between the priest and faithful follows. This is the same for all Sundays of the year, except that *Alleluia* is added to the end of the first two lines during Easter.



O -sténde no-bis, Dómi-ne, mi-se-ri-córdi-am tu-am.



℟. Et sa-lu-tá-re tu-um da no-bis.

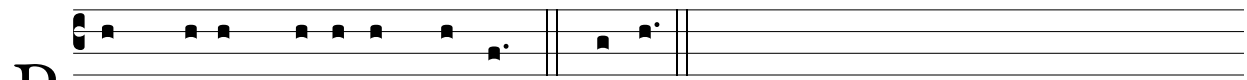


℣. Dómi-ne exáudi o-ra-ti-ónem me-am. ℟. Et clamor me-us ad te vé-ni-at.



℣. Dómi-nus vo-bíscum. ℟. Et cum spí-ri-tu tu-o. ℣. O-remus.

Father proceeds with a prayer, after which we respond with a simple (two-note) form of the *Amen*. This and the *Et cum spiritu tuo* are very common responses throughout Mass.

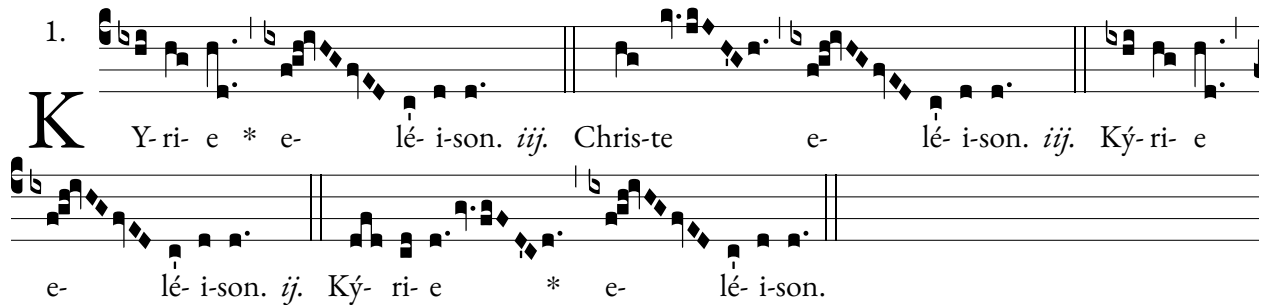


P er Christum Dómi-num nostrum. ℟. Amen.

4.4 *Kyrie XI*

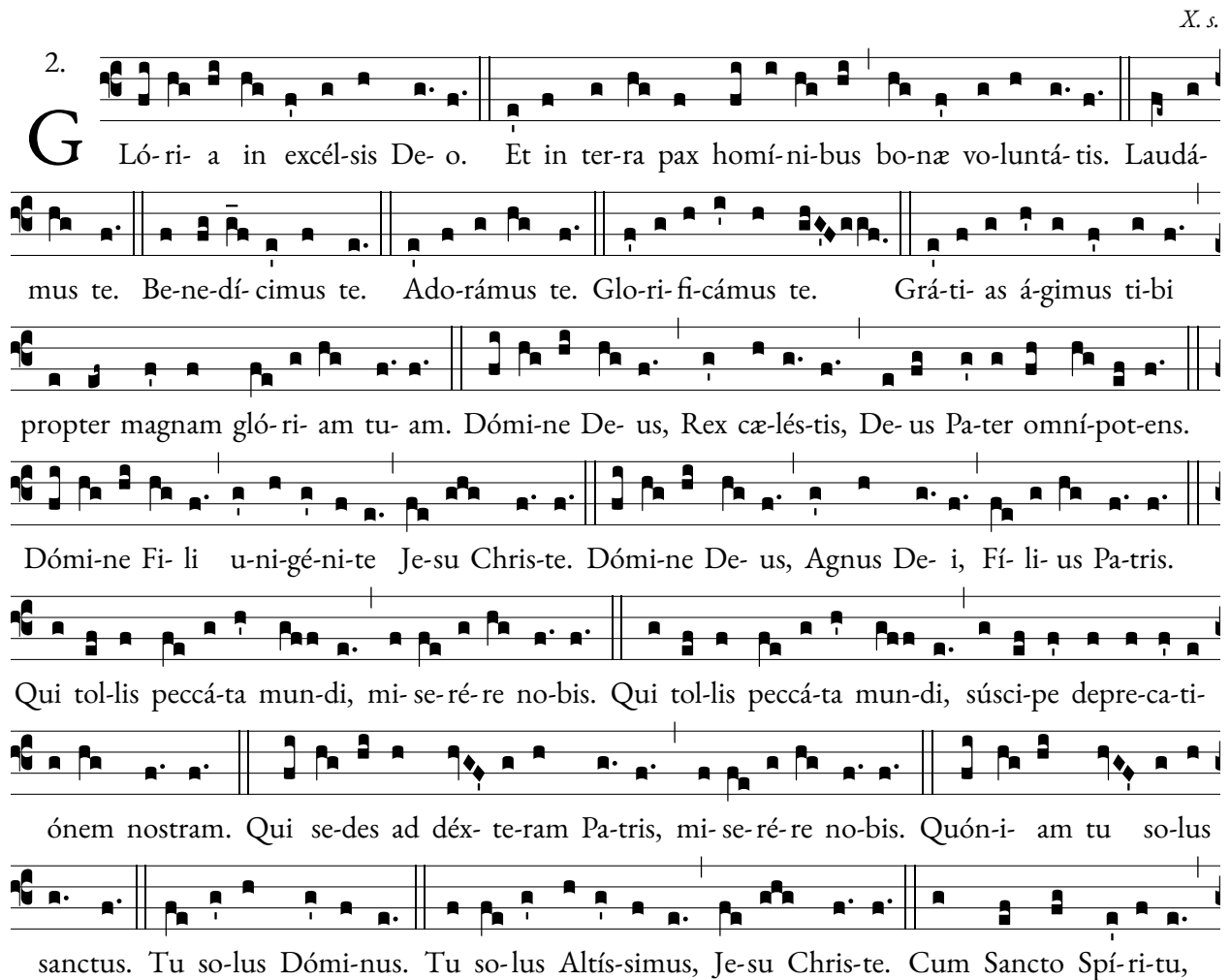
After the Introit and once Father has ascended the altar steps, the *Kyrie* begins. This is performed as a “split” choir with schola members cantoring the first *Kyrie*, the faithful responding with the second *Kyrie*, and so on. Here the *ijj.* after the *Kyrie* and *Christe* means these sections are said three times, then the *ij.* on the following *Kyrie* means this section is said twice.

By the ninth *Kyrie*, the cantor begins the *Kyrie* and everyone joins in after the asterisk. Sometimes there are multiple asterisks; just join in when you hear the full choir.

1.  Musical notation for the beginning of the Kyrie. It consists of two staves. The top staff is for the cantor, and the bottom staff is for the choir. The music is in G major and 4/4 time. The lyrics are: K Y-ri- e * e- lé- i-son. *ij.* Chris-te e- lé- i-son. *ij.* Ký- ri- e e- lé- i-son. *ij.* Ký- ri- e * e- lé- i-son.

4.5 Gloria XI

After the *Kyrie*, Father intones the *Gloria*. Being “split” choir again, the cantors continue singing the second phrase. Once they reach the double-bar, the third phrase begins and the faithful respond. At the next double-bar it goes back to the cantors, and this alternation continues until the concluding *Amen* when everyone comes together. Note that during Advent and Lent there is no *Gloria* apart from major feasts.

2.  Musical notation for the beginning of the Gloria. It consists of two staves. The top staff is for the cantor, and the bottom staff is for the choir. The music is in G major and 4/4 time. The lyrics are: G Ló-ri- a in excél-sis De- o. Et in ter-ra pax homí-ni-bus bo-næ vo-luntá-tis. Laudá-mus te. Be-ne-dí-cimus te. Ado-rá-mus te. Glo-ri-fi-cá-mus te. Grá-ti- as á-gimus ti-bi propter magnam gló-ri- am tu- am. Dómi-ne De- us, Rex cæ-lés-tis, De- us Pa-ter omní-pot-ens. Dómi-ne Fi- li u-ni-gé-ni-te Je-su Chris-te. Dómi-ne De- us, Agnus De- i, Fí- li- us Pa-tris. Qui tol-lis peccá-ta mun-di, mi-se-ré-re no-bis. Qui tol-lis peccá-ta mun-di, sú-sci-pe depre-ca-ti- ónem nostram. Qui se-des ad déx- te-ram Pa-tris, mi-se-ré-re no-bis. Quón-i- am tu so-lus sanctus. Tu so-lus Dómi-nus. Tu so-lus Altís-simus, Je-su Chris-te. Cum Sancto Spí-ri-tu, X. s.

in gló-ri- a De- i Pa- tris. A- men.

4.6 Gospel

Before the reading of the Gospel, Father and the faithful have the following dialogue.

D Omi-nus vo-bíscum. *R.* Et cum spí-ri-tu tu-o.

Sequénti- a sancti E-vangé-li- i se-cúndum Matthaé-um. *R.* Gló-ri- a ti-bi Dómi-ne.

4.7 *Credo* I

After the Gospel and sermon, Father ascends to the altar and intones the *Credo*. The intonation shown is common to all *Credos* except for *Credo* III. The flow of is identical to that of the *Gloria*.

XI. s.

4. **C** Redo in unum De- um, Patrem omni-pot-éntem, factó-rem cæ-li et terræ, vi-si-bí-
 li- um ómni- um, et invi-si-bí- li- um. Et in unum Dómi-num Je-sum Christum, Fí- li-
 um De- i u-ni-gé-ni-tum. Et ex Patre na-tum ante ómni- a sæ-cu- la. De- um de De- o,
 lumen de lúmi-ne, De- um ve-rum de De- o ve-ro. Gé-ni-tum, non factum, consubstanti- á-lem
 Patri: per quem ómni- a facta sunt. Qui propter nos hómi-nes, et propter nostram sa-lú-tem
 descéndit de cæ-lis. Et incarná-tus est de Spí-ri-tu Sancto ex Ma-rí- a Vír-gi-ne: Et homo

factus est. Cru-ci-fí-xus ét-i am pro no-bis: sub Pónti-o Pi-lá-to passus, et sepúl-tus est.

Et re-surré-xit térti-a di-e, se-cúndum Scriptú-ras. Et ascéndit in cæ-lum: se-det ad dex-te-ram Patris. Et í-te-rum ventú-rus est cum gló-ri-a, ju-di-cá-re vi-vos et mórtu-os:

cu-jus regni non e-rit fi-nis. Et in Spí-ri-tum Sanctum, Dómi-num, et vi-vi-fi-cántem: qui ex Patre Fi-li-ó-que pro-cé-dit. Qui cum Patre et Fí-li-o simul ado-rá-tur, et conglo-ri-fi-cá-tur:

qui lo-cú-tus est per Prophé-tas. Et unam sanctam cathó-li-cam et apostó-li-cam Ecclé-si-am.

Confi-te-or unum bap-tís-ma in remis-si-ó-nem pec-ca-tó-rum. Et expé-cto re-surrecti-ó-nem mor-tu-ó-rum. Et vi-tam ventú-ri sá-cu-li. A-men.

4.8 Preface Dialogue

A little after Father turns to the faithful and says *Orate fratres*, the Preface Dialogue begins. In this and two more instances (the *Pater noster* and *Pax vobis*) the *Amen* that is said is of a more solemn (three-note) form.

P ER ómni-a saécú-la saecu-ló-rum. R̄. Amen. V̄. Dómi-nus vo-bíscum. R̄. Et cum spí-ri-tu tu-o. V̄. Sur-sum corda. R̄. Ha-bé-mus ad Dómi-num. V̄. Grá-ti-as a-gá-mus Dómi-no De-o nostro. R̄. Dignum et justum est.

4.9 *Sanctus XI*

At the end of the Preface, Father says *dicentes* and this cues up the *Sanctus*. Only the first word is intoned by the cantors. The rest is sung by everyone.

XI. s.

2.

S Anctus, * Sanc-tus, Sanctus Dómi-nus De- us Sá-ba-oth. Ple-ni sunt cæ- li et ter-
ra gló- ri- a tu- a. Ho-sánna in ex- cél-sis. Be-ne-díctus qui ve-nit in nó- mi-ne
Dómi-ni. Ho-sánna in ex- cél-sis.

4.10 *Pater noster*

After the Consecration, Father and the faithful have the following dialogue before and at the end of the *Pater noster*.

P ĒR ómni- a saécu-la saecu-ló-rum. R̄. Amen.

P̄. Et ne nos indú-cas in tenta-ti- ó-nem. R̄. Sed lí-be-ra nos a ma-lo.

4.11 *Pax Domini*

Right before the *Agnus Dei*, Father and the faithful have the following dialogue.

P ĒR ómni- a saécu-la saecu-ló-rum. R̄. Amen.

P̄. Pax † Dómi-ni sit † semper vo-bís-†cum. R̄. Et cum spí-ri-tu tu-o.

4.12 *Agnus XI*

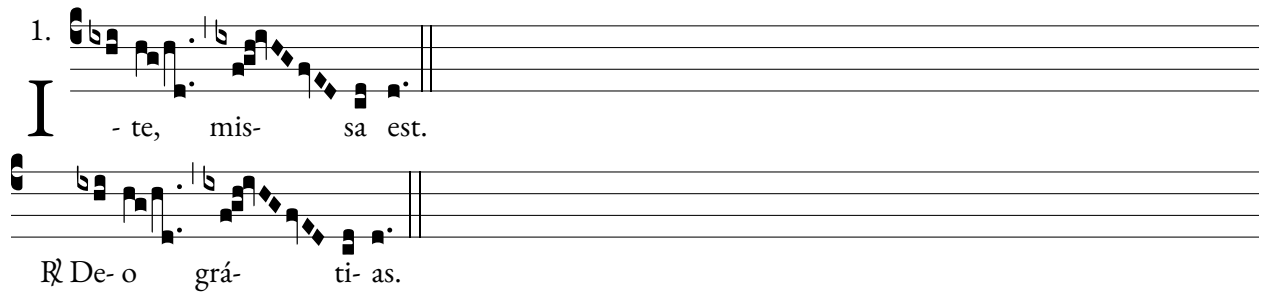
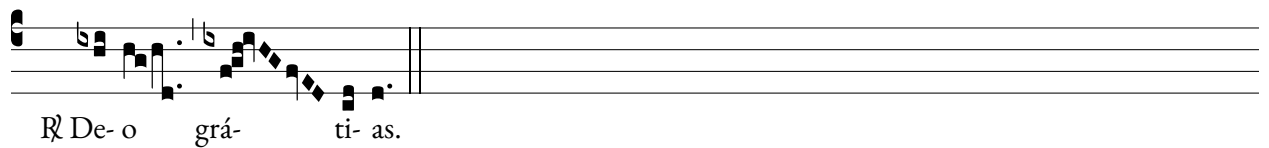
As a “split” choir, the schola members cantor the words *Agnus Dei* and the faithful immediately follow to complete the phrase. This form is repeated two more times.

XIV. s.

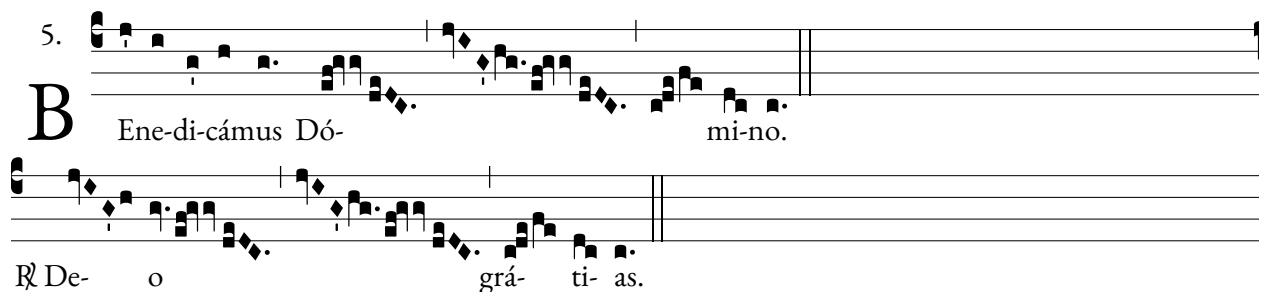
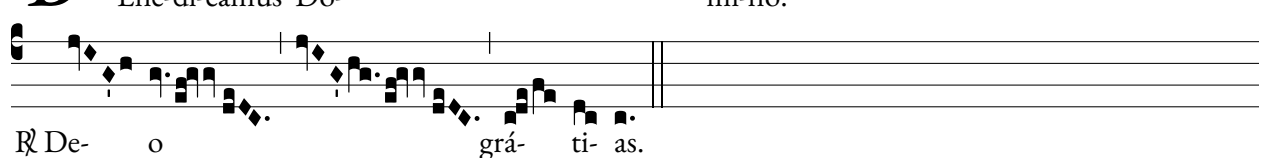
1.  **A** - gnus De- i, * qui tol- lis pec- cá- ta mundi: mi- se- ré- re no- bis. Agnus De- i, *
qui tol- lis pec- cá- ta mun- di: mi- se- ré- re no- bis. Agnus De- i, * qui tol- lis pec- cá- ta
mundi: dona no- bis pa- cem.

4.13 *Ite XI and Benedicamus II*

The *Ite* at the end of Mass is intoned by Father and usually follows the melody of the *Kyrie* (Mass XVII during Advent and Lent is a common exception). The faithful respond with *Deo gratias*.

1.  **I** - te, mis- sa est.
 **R** De- o grá- ti- as.

When a procession follows Mass (Maundy Thursday, Corpus Christi, Christ the King), the dismissal is instead the *Benedicamus* following the tone from Masses II and III.

5.  **B** Ene- di- cá- mus Dó- mi- no.
 **R** De- o grá- ti- as.

4.14 Homework

From either your missal, hymnal or the Internet ([Chant Tools](#), [Square Note](#), [CCWatershed](#)), find the chant notation for an Ordinary you are familiar with, such as Mass VIII (*De angelis*). Then find a recording and see how well you can follow along with the choir. Then try your hand a chanting with the recording, and finally chanting by yourself with only the chant notation in front of you.

If you're feeling extra adventurous, follow the above instructions for an Ordinary you are unfamiliar with, such as *Credo* II.