**Sacred Heart Catholic Church Choir**

**Book II**

**(Fixed and Movable Propers)**

Sacred Heart is a parish in the arch-diocese of Cincinnati

Entrusted to the Oratorian Community

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NB: Most Octaves were eliminated in 1962, but despite name changes, the propers remain the same. The old name (Sunday within the Octave) has been maintained for simplicity, but these Masses are technically not ‘within the Octave’ since the Octave is rarely kept.

The Mass can be subdivided in many different ways. For example, The **Mass of the Catechumens** vs. the **Mass of the Faithful** is a distinction between those parts of the Mass which were available to everyone, baptized or not, vs. the part that, in the ancient Church, could only be witnessed by those who had received their baptism.

The **Mass of the Catechumens** would have consisted of the first part of the Mass from the entrance of the celebrant through the sermon inclusive. This part of Mass is primarily instructional. It has prayers such as at the foot of the altar, particularly the *Confiteor*, as well as readings from scripture interpolated with psalms (*Introit*, *Collect*, *Gradual*, *Tract*, *Alleluia*). There are readings of the Epistle and Gospel which are more instructive, and the sermon to discuss all of these things presented by the Church to the faithful. Upon concluding this part, catechumens would have departed from what was to follow; what was called in the early centuries “the mysteries”.

By way of contrast, the **Mass of the Faithful** is not instructional but contains everything that is geared toward the impending sacrifice. It starts with the preparations that take place in the Offertory, and moves to the canon where the sacrifice is actually fulfilled. Following the consecration under both species, the final act is one of Communion – all of the faithful receiving the Body and Blood of our Lord, indicating, among other things, unity of worship. There are a few concluding readings to meditate upon what has been received before the Mass ends.

Another division is according to the **Ordinary** of the Mass vs. the **Propers** of the Mass.

The **Ordinary** are the fixed parts that remain essentially constant from Mass to Mass. This includes things like the prayers at the foot of the altar, the *Kyrie*, the *Gloria*, prayers of the Offertory, the *Credo*, the *Sanctus*, prayers of the Canon (including the *Agnus Dei*), and the concluding prayers (including the dismissal *Ite Missa Est*).

The **Propers** are those readings and prayers that typically change from Mass to Mass. The *Introit*, the *Collect(s)*, the *Gradual* / *Tract* / *Alleluia* / *Sequence*, the Epistle and Gospel, the Offertory verse, the Secret, the Communion and Post Communion verses are all part of the Propers of the Mass.

Depending on the proficiency of the choir and in some cases the season of the Liturgical year, there are different ways to render the chants of Mass and the Divine Office. There are a variety of “tones” which can be used… **Recto Tone** (mostly sung on a single pitch); **Psalm Tone** (long sections sung on a single pitch called the reciting tone, but with an introductory intonation, a median, and a termination); and the **Proper Tone** (melody as indicated in the *Liber Usualis*). There are further subdivisions of **Psalm Tone** into **Simple** and **Solemn**. There are also numerous designations to differentiate the tones of the responses during Mass and parts of the Liturgy such as Lessons, Prophecies, the Passion, Epistles, and Gospels. (e.g. Prophecy Tone, Passion Tone, Ancient Tone, Solemn Tone, more Solemn Tone, Simple Tone, Ferial Tone, etc.).

In this choir, we additionally distinguish three ways of preparing Propers for Mass. “**Short**” indicates that three parts are sung in Psalm Tone according to the mode of the individual pieces; “**Medium**” to indicate one or two parts sung in Psalm Tone; “**Full**” to indicate that all the sung Propers are in full Proper Tone. In the following pages, examples are marked to indicate the pattern to follow when marking Propers during the year.

Typically, the Solemn Psalm Tone is used for very specific purposes – e.g. the canticles of the Divine Office (the ***Benedictus*** at Lauds, the ***Magnificat*** at Vespers, and the ***Nunc Dimittis*** at Compline). It is also typically used for the psalm of the Introit in the *Liber*.

In the Solemn Tone, the incipit is repeated for each verse; in the Simple Tone, the verses following the first all start on the Dominant (also known as the Reciting Tone).

When we apply Psalm Tone to Propers here at Holy Family, we use the Simple tone almost universally. This is simply the custom implemented here – there is no defined standard one way or the other. There are several books that apply Psalm tone to the Propers:

* *Chants Abrégés* contains Solemn Psalm Tones for Graduals, Alleluias and Tracts. It does not contain the other parts of the Mass, so it is quite short comparatively.
* *Liber Brevior* contains a subset of the chants found in the standard *Liber Usualis*, including certain feast and Sunday Propers (not all). It has the Proper Tone for each feast / Sunday, and a separate section for Solemn Psalm Tones for Graduals, Alleluias, and Tracts. Essentially, the *Liber Brevior* contains a kind of equivalent to the *Chants Abrégés*.
* The Rossini Propers (arranged and composed by Fr. Rossini in early 20th century) contains Simple or Solemn Psalm Tones for nearly all Mass Propers.

We apply the Psalm Tones ourselves rather than using one of the above sources because it is an excellent opportunity to discuss and learn about Psalm Tone – which is too frequently misunderstood and poorly rendered. It is particularly important to incorporate a degree of Psalm Tone into the Propers since we don’t typically sing the Divine Office where the Psalm Tones are most used and best appreciated.

To allow for the greatest flexibility of Proper and Psalm Tone, we indicate the modal tonality with markings over the text of a given Proper. Here are the key symbols we use and which you will need to become familiar with:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | A two-note grouping. |  |  | A three-note grouping. |
|  | A four-note grouping. |  |  | Inflect the tone upward. Add a dot if held. |
|  | Same pitch as previous syllable. Add a dot if held. |  |  | Inflect the tone down-ward. Add a dot if held. |
| † | A flex – a pause that is lowered by a 3rd or a 2nd depending on the tone. |  |  | A pause in the text |
|  | Median of the verse. |  |  | Cadence or termination of verse. |

Here are sample mark-ups for a given termination in each mode:

**MODE 1**



**Tone 1D**

**LA**

**SOL**

**FA**

“Hollow” notes may be used if needed for extra syllables. In Latin text, syllables are grouped in two’s or three’s. In other words, for longer words – 4 or 5 syllables – there are secondary stresses which act as if they were an accent. Hollow notes allow flexibility where a stress may be followed by either one or two syllables.

**MODE 2**



**Tone 2D**

**FA**

**RE**

**DO**

**MODE 3**



**Tone 3 a2**

**DO**

**LA**

**SOL**

**MODE 4**



**Tone 4E**

**LA LA**

**SOL**

**MODE 5**

**Tone 5A**

**DO**

**LA**

**FA**

******MODE 6**

**Tone 6F**

**LA**

**SOL**

**FA**

**MODE 7**



**Tone 7c**

**RE**

**DO DO**

**TI**

**MODE 8**



**Tone 8G**

**DO**

**LA**

**SOL**

**Peregrinus (“wanderer”) tone**

**Peregrinus Tone**

**TE**

**LA**



**Classification of Feasts**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sundays** | **Feasts** | **Vigils** | **Octaves** | **Weekdays** |
| **1st** | **1st** | **1st** | **1st** | **1st** |
| **2nd** | **2nd** | **2nd** | **2nd** | **2nd** |
|  | **3rd** | **3rd** |  | **3rd** |
|  |  |  |  | **4th** |

**Sundays**

* **1st Class**
  + Sundays of Advent, Lent, and Passiontide
  + Christ the King
  + Easter and Low Sunday
  + Pentecost and Trinity Sunday
* **2nd Class**
  + All other Sundays of the year
* **Sundays of 2nd Class yield to 1st Class feasts or 2nd Class feasts of our Lord.**

**Feasts**

* **1st Class**
  + Christmas
  + Holy Week Triduum
  + Epiphany, Ascension, Corpus Christi, Sacred Heart
  + Immaculate Conception, Assumption
  + Christmas Vigil (**supersedes Advent IV**), Circumcision
  + Ash Wednesday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday of Holy Week
  + All Souls Day (**yields to Sunday**)
  + Pentecost Vigil
  + Octave of Easter and Pentecost
  + All other 1st class feasts of the Universal Church
  + Feasts of 1st class proper to particular calendars (saint of parish, saints of Diocese, anniversary of Dedication of church, 1st class feasts for the FSSP)
* **2nd Class**
  + Feasts of our Lord that are not 1st Class
  + All other 2nd class feasts of the Universal Church
  + Octave of Christmas
  + Advent from December 17th to December 23rd; Ember Days (Advent, Lent, September)
  + Vigils of 2nd class
    - Vigil of the Ascension
    - Vigil of the Assumption
    - Vigil of the Birth of St. John the Baptist
    - Vigil of Ss. Peter and Paul

**Votive Masses**

* Votive Masses may only be celebrated on Liturgical days of equal or lower rank. For example, a 3rd Class votive can only be celebrated on days ranked as 3rd or 4th Class.
* Mass of Dedication for the consecration of a church is a 1st class votive.
* Nuptial Masses are 2nd class votive.
* Votive Mass of Jesus Christ, Eternal High Priest on 1st Thursdays or Saturdays, Votive Mass of the Sacred Heart on 1st Fridays, and Votive Mass of the Immaculate Heart on 1st Saturdays are all 3rd Class votive.