

MUSIC

A Social Experience

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PEARSON

Boston Columbus Indianapolis New York San Francisco Upper Saddle River
Amsterdam Cape Town Dubai London Madrid Milan Munich Paris Montreal Toronto
Delhi Mexico City São Paulo Sydney Hong Kong Seoul Singapore Taipei Tokyo

As we move through the rest of this chapter, keep in mind the people for whom the musical examples are meant. What is their worldview? What is their spiritual

view? What are their particular needs and desires? And especially, how does music represent and fortify their spiritual understandings?

ACTIVITIES AND ASSIGNMENTS

- Is there such a thing as a “definitive” recording of “Amazing Grace”? Can one performance be more “correct” than another? If so, what might be the criteria?
- How many different performances (recordings, movies, TV shows, Internet videos) can you find of “Amazing Grace”? How do these different performances reflect the values of their audiences?
- Think to a time in a religious service (or perhaps during the singing of “The Star-Spangled Banner” at a sporting event) when the person next to you sang horribly out of tune. (Perhaps you were that person.) What did you think of the performance? Would you have rather she or he did not sing at all? Should “bad” singers be barred from participation? What is most important, sound or intention?
- Look on the Internet for shape-note singing events near you. Consider attending one. Document your own personal experience or interview a participant.

Music in the Early Christian Church

From the early Middle Ages up until the early 1960s, most of the individual elements (collectively called the **liturgy**) in the Catholic **Mass** were chanted. Chant (or plainchant) ranged in style from simple text recitation on just one or two notes to long, soaring, and undulating melodies. Most chant was sung by clerics (men or women who had taken holy orders) in churches, monasteries, and convents. As with the chanting of the Gyuto monks, plainchant was a tool for connecting with the sacred.

Chant was originally performed for voice alone, which was thought to be God’s “perfect

instrument.” The language was Latin, and the melodies were monophonic and rhythmically free. Chants usually had smooth melodic contours and sounded in one of the eight church melodic **modes** (rather than in the major and minor scales we use today).

mysearchlab 2.3 Plainchants were composed anonymously and passed on by oral tradition. They were first written down in the ninth century as Western musical notation began to develop in European monasteries.

mysearchlab 2.4

Listen to a plainchant of *Kyrie eleison*. The text is Greek, a vestige from the early Byzantine church, and the only part of the Mass that is not in Latin.

LISTENING GUIDE



CD 1/Track 4
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KYRIE ELEISON, PLAINCHANT

PLAINCHANT: KYRIE ELEISON (FROM MISSA “CUM JUBILO”)

0:00	<i>Kyrie eleison</i> (3 times)	Lord have mercy
0:36	<i>Christe eleison</i> (3 times)	Christ have mercy
1:03	<i>Kyrie eleison</i> (3 times)	Lord have mercy

Notice that the words are set melismatically. The “e” of the final “eleison” spans nearly 40 pitches. This technique of stretching the words allows the listener time to assimilate the spiritual message. The rhythm is without meter, free and flowing. The melodic contour is conjunct and forms gentle arches. Each line of text is repeated three times, creating a symbolic representation of the Trinity.

The Renaissance Mass

By the Renaissance, composers were writing polyphonic settings for the **Ordinary** of the Mass—the parts of the liturgy in which the texts never changed: the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo,

Sanctus, and Agnus Dei. The rest of the Mass, the **Proper** (with texts that changed from day to day), continued to be chanted. Polyphonic Mass settings peaked during the Renaissance, but even today composers set these traditional texts.

MUSICAL TERMS

GREGORIAN CHANT

There are many plainchant traditions. Gregorian Chant, the most recognized type today, developed in Western Europe in the eighth century. As nearly as scholars can tell, it was probably a mixture of two earlier chant traditions, Old Roman and Gallican. It is likely that the repertory developed because Charlemagne (747–814), the first Holy Roman Emperor, wanted to unify his territory and strengthen ties with Rome. The chant was named for Pope Gregory I (ca. 540–604), who supposedly received the chants from the Holy Spirit (symbolized in literature and painting with a dove). Charlemagne apparently used the story to convince his Frankish countrymen to switch to Roman chant. With the merging of Roman and Gallican chant, “Gregorian Chant” was born. Thus, one of Catholicism’s most sacred musical genres likely developed from political aspirations rather than purely religious intentions.

Gregorian Chant was used in the Catholic church until the Second Ecumenical Council of the Vatican (known as Vatican II), held from 1962–1965. In many Catholic churches, especially in North America, folk-style music replaced the Latin chants. In 2007, however, Pope Benedict XVI suggested reviving the pre-Vatican II plainchant Mass.

LISTENING GUIDE



CD II/Track 6
Download track 28
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KYRIE FROM THE POPE MARCELLUS MASS

by Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina

Palestrina (1525/26–1594) lived during the Counter-Reformation, a time when the Catholic church was responding to the Protestant Reformation. Leaders of the Counter-Reformation sought a return to religious basics. For music, that meant purging from the Mass secular tunes that had infiltrated the polyphonic texture and making sure the sacred text could be understood. Palestrina’s music was held up as a good example of reform aesthetics.

This excerpt is the first part of his *Pope Marcellus Mass*, named for Pope Marcellus II, who died in 1555 after just three weeks in office. The Mass is written for six independent voice parts and is performed a cappella. The six voice lines are soprano, alto, two tenors, and two basses. Palestrina’s Kyrie divides into three sections dictated by the text. Each section begins with a thin texture that increases as more voices enter. The text is repeated as melodic lines are echoed and reshaped throughout the music. The feeling is calm, but metered, and forward in its rhythmic direction.

0:00	<i>Kyrie eleison</i>	Lord, have mercy upon us. The voices enter in the following order: tenor 1, soprano, bass 1, alto, tenor 2, and bass 2. Listen for the distinctive upward leap in each voice. It is easiest to hear in the soprano, but all of the voices are singing it.
1:11		All of the voices gradually converge on a sustained chord that signals the end of the section.
1:19	<i>Christe eleison</i>	Christ, have mercy upon us. This section begins with three of the voices singing homophonically (all together, not imitatively). Soon, however, more voices enter and the texture once again becomes polyphonic with independently moving lines intertwining one with another.
2:38		Once again, the voices cadence on a long note to signal the end of the section. This chord does not sound resolved, however, so we know the piece is not over.
2:45	<i>Kyrie eleison</i>	