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Liturgical Music in Igboland in Nigeria after Vatican II Council

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**Muzyka liturgiczna po Soborze Watykańskim II na terytorium plemienia
Igbo w Nigerii**

Rozprawa doktorska przygotowana pod kierunkiem
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ABBREVIATIONS

BVM	Blessed Virgin Mary
Can.	Canon
CBCWEW	Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales
CBCN	Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria
CCC	Catechism of the Catholic Church
CCCB	Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops
CCL	Code of Canon Law
CDW	Congregation for Divine Worship
CDWDS	Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments
CDF	Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith
CLPCEF	Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of Easter Feasts
Fr.	Father
GILH	General Introduction to the Liturgy of the Hours
GIRM	General Instruction of the Roman Missal
IO	Inter Oecumenici
Jn.	John
LG	Lumen Gentium
Lk.	Luke
LMC	Liturgical Music Commission
Matt.	Matthew
Msgr.	Monsignor
Mk.	Mark
MS	Musicam Sacram
MSD	Musicae Sacrae Disciplina
NACALIMCON	National Catholic Liturgical Music Council of Nigeria
NCIHB	The New Catholic Igbo Hymn Book
OBC	Order of Baptism for Children
OCF	Order of Christian Funeral
OCM	Ordo Cantus Missae
OCM	Order of Celebrating Marriage
PCS	Pastoral Care of the Sick
RC	Rite of Confirmation
RCIA	Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults
RM	The Roman Missal
RO	Rite of Ordination
RP	Rite of Penance
SATB	Soprano, Alto, Tenor and Bass
SC	Sacrosanctum Concilium
SCR	Sacred Congregation of Rites
St.	Saint
SVC	Second Vatican Council
TLS	Tra Le Sollecitudini
UNLYC	Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the Calendar
USCCB	United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
YCS	Young Catholic Students
HCA	Holy Childhood Association
PMS	Pontifical Mission Societies

WSTĘP

Liturgia jako źródło i szczyt naszego życia chrześcijańskiego jest najwyższą i najskuteczniejszą działalnością Kościoła. Dlatego Kościół podejmuje szczególne środki ostrożności w posługiwaniu się muzyką liturgiczną, która stanowi integralną część jego liturgii; wciąż odnawia swoją wiedzę i praktykę w zakresie muzyki liturgicznej w każdym wieku i w każdej kulturze, troszcząc się o to, by jej podstawowe zasady i prawa, ustanowione przez odpowiednie władze kościelne, były roztropnie przestrzegane i w pełni stosowane. Dobra muzyka liturgiczna sprzyja aktywnemu uczestnictwu w liturgii oraz wznosi serca i umysły wiernych ku Bogu.

To dobra wiadomość, że wreszcie w 2021 roku, po raz pierwszy w historii nigeryjskiego Kościoła katolickiego, istnieją oficjalnie opublikowane wytyczne dotyczące muzyki liturgicznej, opracowane przez organ Komisji Inkulturacji i Przekładu Konferencji Biskupów Katolickich Nigerii (CBCN), znany jako Narodowa Katolicka Rada Muzyki Liturgicznej Nigerii (NACALIMCON). W słowie wstępnym do tej książeczki, przewodniczący tego Komitetu, ks. bp Augustine T. Ukwuoma, wyraźnie stwierdził, że utworzenie tego organu w 2008 r. i w konsekwencji opracowanie tego podręcznika było konieczne ze względu na ogólną jakość muzyki liturgicznej w Nigerii, która stopniowo spadała poniżej standardów. Wymieniając niektóre z czynników, które doprowadziły do tego spadku, wymienił nieznaną naukę Kościoła na temat muzyki liturgicznej; zły dobór muzyki do celebracji liturgicznych zarówno w języku angielskim, jak i rodzimym; wpływ zielonoświątkowego rodzaju muzyki świeckiej; używanie kompozycji muzyki liturgicznej pozbawionych treści teologicznych, tradycji kościelnej i duchowości; formy śpiewu sprzeczne z zasadami muzyki liturgicznej; rozrywka lub zaspokajanie własnych emocji w imię muzyki liturgicznej; brak podstawowych cech muzyki liturgicznej w kompozycjach muzycznych i celebracjach liturgicznych; wzrastająca fala dewiacji muzycznych w naszych Kościołach. Można też dodać problem graniczący z inkulturacją muzyki liturgicznej. W świetle tych problemów, których badacz jest w pełni świadomy, ponieważ mieszkał i pracował przez wiele lat w plemieniu Igbo i aktywnie uczestniczył w niektórych konferencjach krajowych, które zakończyły się wydaniem niniejszej książeczki, przeanalizuje praktykę muzyki liturgicznej na tym terytorium i zaproponuje rozwiązania oparte przede wszystkim na nauczaniu Soboru Watykańskiego II.

Rozdział pierwszy tej pracy koncentruje się na historii ludu Igbo i historii pojawienia się katolicyzmu, który rozprzestrzenił się na czternaście diecezji w plemieniu Igbo. Po wyjaśnieniu pojęcia liturgii i muzyki liturgicznej, skupiono się także na ogólnych zasadach muzyki liturgicznej.

W pierwszej części rozdziału drugiego badacz omówi poszczególne funkcje wykonawców muzyki liturgicznej, którzy stosują powyższe zasady, oraz niektóre zagadnienia, które dotyczą ich jako grupy, takie jak formacja, wynagrodzenie, inkulturacja itp. Zasady te mają być stosowane w różnych gatunkach muzyki liturgicznej, co stanowi drugą część tego rozdziału. Przedstawia on krótką historię muzyki wokalne w plemieniu Igbo oraz kategoryzuje lokalne instrumenty muzyczne używane podczas celebracji liturgicznych. W rozdziale trzecim, dyskusja koncentruje się na Eucharystii jako źródle i szczycie wszystkich celebracji liturgicznych. Badacz omówi jej pojęcie, przygotowanie do celebracji, rodzaje uczestnictwa oraz formy muzyki liturgicznej w ramach Mszy św. Wykorzystanie muzyki liturgicznej w innych sakramentach oraz w kontekście roku liturgicznego zostanie omówione w rozdziale czwartym. W ostatnim rozdziale omówione zostaną inne czynności liturgiczne, w których również można stosować muzykę liturgiczną, takie jak Liturgia Godzin, Komunia Święta i kult eucharystyczny poza Mszą Świętą i sakramentalia.

Aby osiągnąć cel niniejszej pracy badawczej, badacz stosuje różne podejścia metodologiczne w zależności od tematu dyskusji w każdym z rozdziałów. W rozdziale pierwszym zastosuje metodę historyczną z wykorzystaniem źródeł wtórnych oraz metodę analityczną. W rozdziale drugim badacz zastosuje metodę opisową połączoną z metodą obserwacji i wywiadów; wykorzysta również metodę historyczną, opisową i analityczną. W pozostałych rozdziałach, dotyczących celebracji liturgicznych, badacz zastosuje podobne metody badawcze: metodę historyczną, opisową i analityczną. Wybierze on kilka pieśni z *New Catholic Igbo Hymn Book* i dokona ich krótkiej analizy formalnej.

Niewiedza jest naprawdę niebezpieczna, gdy chodzi o sprawy tak ważne jak liturgia i muzyka liturgiczna. Głównym celem tej pracy jest wykorzenienie niewiedzy na temat istoty liturgii i muzyki liturgicznej. Ponieważ wiedza jest potęgą według Francisca Bacona, udostępnienie tego kanału poznania umożliwi wszystkim wiernym czerpanie większych owoców z celebracji liturgicznych. Analizując problemy nękające muzykę liturgiczną w plemieniu Igbo i wskazując drogę rozwoju, niniejsza praca będzie miała duże znaczenie w promowaniu aktywnego uczestnictwa w liturgii i rozwoju muzyki liturgicznej nie tylko w Kościele w plemieniu Igbo, ale także w Nigerii i na całym świecie. Ukazując niektóre obszary, w których oczekiwania zawarte w dokumentach Soboru Watykańskiego II nie zostały w pełni spełnione, praca ta pomoże pobudzić działania i plany, jak je urzeczywistnić. Praca ta przyczyni się do wzrostu liczby dzieł literackich z zakresu muzykologii w Nigerii. Co więcej, będąc studentem afrykańskim w Polsce, gdzie literatura muzykologiczna dotycząca muzyki afrykańskiej napisana w języku angielskim jest niewystarczająca, praca ta będzie bardzo potrzebna w bibliotece, gdzie dostarczy przydatnych materiałów na temat muzyki liturgicznej w Nigerii/Afryce.

INTRODUCTION

“Each liturgical celebration is a synthesis of the entire history of salvation and the fullest participation in the life of God on earth.”¹ This is why the Church takes special precautions in the use of liturgical music which is an integral part of her liturgy; she continues to renew her knowledge and practice of liturgical music in every age and culture, making sure that its fundamental principles and laws as legislated by the appropriate Ecclesiastical authorities are judiciously obeyed and fully applied. Good liturgical music promotes active participation in the liturgy and uplifts the hearts and minds of worshippers to God. In Nigeria, especially in Igboland, there is need to upgrade the standard of liturgical music in the context of the teachings of Vatican II Council and find solutions to certain problems that prevent it from achieving its objectives.

Statement of the Problem

It is good news that finally in 2021, for the first time in the history of Nigerian Catholic Church, there is an officially published guidelines for liturgical music through an organ of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) Committee for Inculturation and Translation known as the National Catholic Liturgical Music Council of Nigeria (NACALIMCON). In the forward to this booklet, the Chairman of this Committee, Most Rev. Augustine T. Ukwuoma, clearly stated that the formation of this organ in 2008 and the consequent production of this manual was necessitated by the general quality of liturgical music in Nigeria which has gradually fallen below standard. Enumerating some of the factors that led to this decline, he mentioned ignorance of the church teachings on liturgical music; poor selection of music for liturgical celebrations both in English and indigenous languages; influence of Pentecostal kind of gospel music and secular music; use of liturgical music compositions devoid of theological content, church tradition and spirituality; forms of singing that defy the principles of liturgical music; entertainment or satisfaction of one’s emotions in the name of liturgical music; absence of core characteristics of liturgical music in musical compositions and liturgical celebrations; and rising tide of musical deviations in our churches.² One can also add the problem bordering on inculturation of liturgical music.

In the light of these problems which the researcher is fully aware of, having lived and worked for many years in Igboland and having actively participated in some of the national conferences that culminated in the production of this booklet, he will analyse the practice of liturgical music in this territory and proffer solutions primarily based on the teaching of Vatican

¹B. Migut, “The Liturgical Perspective of Theology,” *Roczniki Teologiczne*, vol.65, issue 8, 2018, p. 63.

²Cf. Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), *Guidelines for Composers of Liturgical Music and Catholic Choirs in Nigeria*, (Benin City: P-Scan Grafix Ventures, 2021), pp. v-viii.

II Council. He will also provide answers to these central questions: How can you explain the concept of liturgical music which helped in spreading Roman Catholic faith in Igboland? What are the general principles of liturgical music according to the documents of the Vatican II Council? Explain the functions of the ministers of liturgical music and their formation? Expatriate on the basic genres/types of liturgical music used in Igboland? How did inculturation influence the growth of liturgical music in Igboland? Explain the various forms of liturgical music used at Mass in Igboland? What are the criteria for proper selection of songs for any liturgical celebration? Explain the use of liturgical music in the sacraments and in the liturgical year with particular reference to Igboland? In what other ways is liturgical music used in Igboland apart from the sacraments?

Significance of the Work

According to William Shakespeare, “there is no darkness but ignorance”³ and for Martin Luther King, Jr., “Nothing in all the world is more dangerous than sincere ignorance and conscientious stupidity.”⁴ Ignorance is truly dangerous when it comes to matters as important as liturgy and liturgical music. The major significance of this work is to eradicate ignorance concerning the essentials of liturgy and liturgical music. As knowledge is power according to Francis Bacon, providing this channel of knowledge empowers the entire faithful to reap more fruits from liturgical celebrations.

By analysing the problems bedevilling liturgical music in Igboland and pointing the way forward, this work will be highly relevant in promoting active participation in the liturgy and uplifting the development of liturgical music not only in the Church in Igboland, but also in Nigeria and the world at large. And by exposing some of the areas where the expectations of the Vatican II Council documents have not been fully met, this work will help to stimulate actions and plans on how to actualize them.

Fr. E. M. Iyara, the chaplain of NACALIMCON, is confident that the booklet mentioned above will provide, in the meantime, a basic requisite knowledge for the enhancement of Nigerian liturgical music. He, however, admits that the booklet is not exhaustive and will soon require a subsequent review.⁵ In Igboland, as far as the author knows, there is little or no literature already written on liturgical music. This work, therefore, will help to fill the gap; it practically touches on

³W. Shakespeare, *Twelfth Night*, Act 4, Scene 2, accessed on 20.05.2020, http://shakespeare.mit.edu/twelfth_night/twelfth_night.4.2.html

⁴S. Ratcliffe (ed.), *Oxford Essential Quotations*, (4 ed.), (London: Oxford University Press, 2016), accessed on 20.05.2020, <https://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/acref/9780191826719.001.0001/q-oro-ed4-00006293>

⁵Cf. CBCN, *Guidelines for Composers of Liturgical Music and Catholic Choirs in Nigeria*, pp. xiv-xv.

every aspect of liturgical celebration, providing more in-depth explanations. As an academic work, it will also inspire and engineer further research work in the field of liturgical music, serving as a vital source material.

This work will contribute to the growth of literary works in musicology in Nigeria. And what is more, being an African student in Poland where musicological literatures on African music written in English language are in short supply, this work will be greatly needed in the library where it will provide useful materials on liturgical music in Nigeria/Africa. European students coming to Poland for Erasmus program can as well benefit immensely from it as much as other scholars and researchers from the different parts of the globe through the internet.

Literature Review

This research work began with the history of Igbo people and the history of the coming of Catholic Church in Igboland. We got enough historical facts from such books as *Roman Catholicism in South Eastern Nigeria 1885 – 1931* by I. Ozigbo; *The Advent of the Catholic Church in Nigeria* by R. A. Njoku; *Missionary Enterprise and Rivalry in Igboland 1857 – 1914* by F. K. Ekechi; *A Hundred Years of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nigeria 1885 – 1985* edited by C. A. Obi; *Hundred Years of Catholicism in Eastern Nigeria 1885 – 1985* by E. Ikenga-Metuh and C. I. Ejizu; *Igbo Catholicism: The Onitsha Connection 1967 – 1984* by I. R. A. Ozigboh; *The History of the Catholic Church in Nigeria* edited by A. O. Makozi and G. J. Afolabi Ojo and *Foreign Missionary: Background and Indigenous Evangelization in Igboland* by N. H. Chigere. For the notion of liturgy and other liturgical concepts, we had access to a lot of materials and resources from the four volumes of *Liturgika* by B. Nadolski; the five volumes of the *Handbook for Liturgical Studies* by A. J. Chupunco and the four volumes of *The Church at Prayer* by A. G. Martimort and co.

For the descriptive explanation of the general principles of liturgical music, we laid our hands on the various Ecclesiastical documents and papal legislations. The book, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music: 95 A.D. to 1977 A.D.*, written by Robert F. Hayburn, is a compendium of papal documents on sacred music, especially from the 4th century to the 20th century. It presented the *Motu Proprio* of Pope Pius X in 1903 as the centre bridge between the previous and the subsequent papal documents.⁶ Whereas Hayburn's commentaries on these documents focus more on the historical dimension, M. T. Winter's book, *Why Sing? Toward a Theology of Catholic Church*

⁶Cf. R. F. Hayburn, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music 95 A.D. to 1977 A.D.*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1979), p. xi.

Music, which is also a commentary on the papal legislations, dwells more on the theological aspect.⁷

J. M. Joncas's book *From Sacred Song to Ritual Music* is an explanation of salient topics in liturgical music, using ecclesiastical documents. Especially from the Vatican II Council documents, the Conference of Catholic Bishops of different countries drafts and issues official documents on liturgical music in accordance with their national socio-cultural settings. We perused such documents from the Conference of Catholic Bishops of America, Canada, Britain and Poland and made judicious use of them.

On our discussion on the use of liturgical music during the different liturgical celebrations, we made copious use of the different papal documents, documents from the CDWDS and the ritual books for the different sacraments. Apart from them, the following books were also helpful: *The Mass and Visions of Liturgy and Music for a New Century* by L. Deiss; *The Use of Music in the Sacred Liturgy* by M. A. Banjo; *What Happens at Mass* by J. Driscoll; *The Ministry of Music and The Mystery We Celebrate, the Song We Sing* by K. Harmon; *Muzyka Liturgiczna* by I. Pawlak; *Sacred Treasure: Understanding Catholic Liturgical Music* by J. P. Swain; *Catholic Music through the Ages* by E. Schaefer and *Music in Catholic Liturgy* by G. D. Gill.

Methodology and Structure of the Work

In the course of this research work, the researcher will employ different methodological approaches depending on the topic of discussion in each chapter. In chapter one where the discussion will focus on the history of Igbo people and history of the advent of Catholicism which has spread to fourteen dioceses in Igboland, he will basically employ historical method through secondary sources. One key factor that promoted the quantitative and qualitative growth of Catholicism is liturgical music which we shall discuss in the last part of this chapter. The discussion will dwell on the general principles of liturgical music after an explanation of the notion of liturgy and liturgical music. Here, the methodological approach will be that of document analysis; identifying these principles as contained in the different documents of the Church, he will expose their proper meaning by way of analysis and synthesis.

The above principles will be applied by the ministers of liturgical music. In the first part of chapter two, we shall individually consider the functions of these ministers and some issues that concern them as a group such as formation, remuneration, inculturation etc. The researcher will use descriptive method coupled with the method of observations and interviews; from book

⁷M. T. Winter, *Why Sing? Toward a Theology of Catholic Church Music*, (Washington, D.C: The Pastoral Press, 1984), p. 0.

analysis of different authors, observations of the practice of liturgical music in Igboland and from different interviews conducted, he will properly describe these functions, stating the requirements for their proper execution and the relationships among them. These principles are to be applied in the various genres of liturgical music which is the second part of this chapter. Here, we shall trace a brief history of vocal music in Igboland and categorize the local musical instruments used for liturgical celebrations. The relevant research methods here will be the historical, the descriptive and the analytic method.

In chapter one, we discussed the principles and in chapter two, the ministers to apply them coupled with the forms of instruments with which to apply them. In chapter three, therefore, we shall enter into the field of liturgical celebrations where all these principles will be concretely relevant and effective. We shall begin with the Eucharist as the source and summit of all the liturgical celebrations, discussing its concept, preparations for its celebration, kinds of participation and the forms of liturgical music within the Mass.

Having discussed the Eucharist, the Sacrament of sacraments, in chapter three, we shall go ahead, in the first part of chapter four, to consider the use of liturgical music in the other sacraments. In the second part, we shall direct our attention to the concept of liturgical year which, serving as the determinant of the nature and character of these sacramental celebrations, affects the use of liturgical music during the celebrations. We shall further narrow our discussion to the two major seasons of the temporal cycle and the key solemnities of the ordinary time and then, the sanctoral cycle.

Apart from the sacraments, there are other liturgical activities where liturgical music can also be employed. These activities which shall occupy us in the fifth and last chapter include: The Liturgy of the Hours, Holy Communion and the Eucharistic Worship outside Mass, and the Sacramentals. Under the sacramentals, we selected the Christian funerals and the rite of dedication of the Church and the Altar. In these three chapters covering the field of liturgical celebrations, the researcher will use similar research methods: historical, descriptive and analytical method. He will select some songs from the *New Catholic Igbo Hymn Book (NCIHB)* and do a brief formal analysis of them.

For the materials for this research work, we shall make use of different sources which include some interviews with important resource persons like the chairman, vice-chairman and the secretary of a Diocesan Liturgical Music Commission and the chairman of a Diocesan Liturgical Choirs' Association. Other sources are: *NCIHB*; the documents of the Church; rich theological, liturgical and music literatures; and Verifiable Websites concerning music in liturgy.

CHAPTER ONE: The History of Catholicism in Igboland and the Concept of Liturgical Music

In this chapter, we shall consider how the mustard seed of Catholicism which came to be planted in Igboland has grown into a giant tree with its branches in fourteen dioceses. We shall also look at the contributions of various missionaries – foreign and indigenous – whose strong faith and heroic sacrifices helped to water and manure the planted seed. Before then, an attempt will be made to understand who the people of Igboland were before the advent of Catholicism. Finally, we shall discuss the concept of liturgy and liturgical music which helped to a great extent to attract this tribal region to the Catholic Church.

1.1 The People of Igboland



Fig. 1 – Map of the Three Major Tribes in Nigeria

1.1.1 Geographical Location, Population and Occupation

In the Nigerian map, the Igbos are geographically situated in the south-eastern part of the country. The territorial area covers about 15,800 square miles and lies “between 5° and 7° north of the Equator and between the 6° and 8° east of the Greenwich meridian, spanning the river Niger approximately midway between the Niger-Benue confluence to the North and the Atlantic to the south.”⁸

The Igbos constitute one of the largest ethnic groups in Africa and one of the major ethnic and linguistic groups in Nigeria. Because of inaccuracy and other problems associated with population censuses both in the precolonial, colonial and postcolonial eras in Nigeria, the exact

⁸C. O. Obiego, *African Image of the Ultimate Reality: An Analysis of Igbo Ideas of Life and Death in Relation to Chukwu*, (Bern/Berlin: Peter Lang, 1984), p.32.

population of the Igbos over the years is not known with certainty.⁹ However, the 1953 census which was reckoned as the first successful and complete population census throughout the now Eastern Region of Nigeria put the figure at 5.4 million.¹⁰ In recent times, the population has been estimated at 40 million which is about 17 percent of the Nigerian total population.¹¹

Farming and trading are the basic means of subsistence for the Igbos some of whom also engaged in fishing and hunting. Among them still were professional blacksmiths, potters, weavers and diviners.¹²

1.1.2 *Origin and History*

Igbo ethnologists and historians have many and varied opinions concerning the origin of the Igbos. These opinions could be categorized into two groups of hypotheses: migration and creation hypothesis. While no one is sure of their accuracy and proper interpretation, they have clearly suggested that the Igbos have occupied their present locale for a very long time, even as far back as the third millennium BC (3000 BC) according to many ethnological accounts.¹³ For history scholars like A. E. Afigbo, Nri-Awka-Orlu axis probably represented “the earliest zone of Igbo settlement from which other parts of Igbo land came to be populated over the centuries.”¹⁴

After the analysis of many myths and legends pertaining to the history of Igbo people, these scholars have also come out with three periods of this history: the pre-agricultural, the agricultural and the agricultural-cum-commercial periods. The first period which saw man in active communication with his maker was regarded as the golden age in man’s relationship with the Supreme Being. Agriculture in the second period, while playing an important role in the social and political aspects of life, shifted the attention of the Igbo man away from the worship of the Supreme Being to the worship of *Ala*, the deity on whose benevolence agriculture directly depended. In the third period, the Igbo society attained a higher level of development with the addition of commerce to agriculture. Believed to have disappeared after his last act of creation which was the institution of marketing and regional trade, the Supreme Being was no longer mentioned in connection with the origin and evolution of the Igbo world and society.¹⁵

⁹For more details, see M. I. Iro, “Projecting Igbo Population to the Year 2000 and Beyond,” *Genus*, vol 45, no 3/4, 1989, pp. 153-155.

¹⁰Population Census Eastern Region of Nigeria, 1953, [in:] M. I. Iro, “Projecting Igbo Population to the Year 2000 and Beyond,” p. 155.

¹¹Cf. A. Adeboyebo, “An Introduction to Nigeria’s Igbo People,” accessed on 28.02.2021, <https://theculturetrip.com/africa/nigeria/articles/an-introduction-to-nigerias-igbo-people/>; New World Encyclopedia, “Igbo People,” accessed on 28.02.2021, https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Igbo_People

¹²E. C. Onyeozili, O. N. I. Ebbe, “Social Control in Precolonial Igboland of Nigeria,” *African Journal of Criminology and Justice Studies*, vol 6, 2012, p. 31.

¹³C. Udeani, *Inculturation as Dialogue: Igbo Culture and the Message of Christ*, (Amsterdam – New York: Rodopi B. V., 2007), p. 10.

¹⁴*Ibid.*, p. 11.

¹⁵For more details about these periods, see *Ibid.*, pp. 14-17.

1.1.3 *Worldview, Religion and Language*

The concept of a worldview has been described as “a paradigm by which the individual or the group interprets reality and acts upon life. It is how we normally view and conceptualize the world... Worldviews represent our pragmatic framework on existence and shape[s] our beliefs, attitudes, actions, and philosophies.”¹⁶ The Igbo worldview can, therefore, be seen as a conglomeration of categories through which the Igbos perceive and give explanations to worldly realities. It is the basis for their theories of illness, death and misfortunes and their solutions to human problems. In fact, all the various aspects of the socio-cultural and religious life of the Igbos come under the influence of their worldview.¹⁷

Just as in many African societies, the Igbo cosmological worldview considered the universe as basically divided into two planes – the physical and the spiritual, the visible and invisible, the heaven and the earth. Some Igbos, however, believed, as J. S. Mbiti wrote, that “the universe is in the form of a three-tier creation, namely: the heavens, the earth and the underworld, which lies below it. African peoples do not think of these divisions as separate but see them as linked together.”¹⁸ They also had the belief that these three layers were densely inhabited and interconnected and that the activities happening in the layers above and below the earth were “seen as meaningful insofar as they relate[d] to human life and the general welfare of humans in the environment.”¹⁹ This anthropological cosmology, that is, the way they understood the universe deeply influenced their religion.

Igbo religion is a broad area to discuss as religious life and secular life in Igbo culture were intertwined. Religious beliefs and practices marked the major events in life such as childbirth, puberty, marriage, sickness, death and burial.²⁰ For our discussion, we shall highlight only the essential elements of Igbo Traditional Religion (ITR). The Igbos believed in the Supreme Being (*Chukwu* or *Chineke*) as reflected in their proverbs, folktales, incantations and the names they give to their children. Whether good or bad, every occurrence was attributed to the will of God whose mysterious nature they respected. Their communication with him was only through other deities or divinities described as messengers and “the executive heads of various divine departments in the Supreme Being’s monarchical government.”²¹ With a name that describes its function, each

¹⁶N. Abi-Hashem, “Worldview, The Concept of,” [in:] D. Leeming (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Psychology and Religion*, (New York: Springer, Berlin, Heidelberg, 2017), accessed on 29.02.2021, https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007%2F978-3-642-27771-9_9357-6

¹⁷C. M. A. Nwoye, “Igbo Cultural and Religious Worldview: An Insider’s Perspective,” *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, vol 3, no 9, 2011, p. 306.

¹⁸J. S. Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion*, (London: Heinemann, 1975), p. 32.

¹⁹C. M. A. Nwoye, “Igbo Cultural and Religious Worldview: An Insider’s Perspective,” p. 307.

²⁰C. M. Ukachukwu, “The Sacred Festival of Iri Ji Ohuru in Igboland, Nigeria,” *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, vol 16, no 2, 2007, p. 249.

²¹I. A. Kanu, “Igbo-African Gods and Goddesses,” *Nnadiesbube Journal of Philosophy*, vol 2, no 2, 2018, p. 119.

deity is served by a chief priest or priestess who mediates between it and the people. While some popular divinities have attained the pan-Igbo status, the popularity of other divinities is generally restricted to a particular village or town where they are recognized as an object of local religious worship. Among the various divinities, one can recognize four major ones all of which are part of the cosmological order: *Anyanwu* – the sun god, *Igwe* – the sky god, *Amadioha* – the god of lightning and *Ala* – the earth goddess.²² While some of these non-human spirits are believed to be malevolent or at least unpredictable, others are benevolent and kind.²³ Besides them, there is also the existence of human spirits known as the ancestors and whose active interest and intervention in the daily life and activities of their descendants form the third major foundation of the traditional religious system. ‘Ancestor-worship’ describes the relationship between these spirits and their descendants with whom they are members of the same lineage.²⁴

With the belief in the spirit world, sacrifice as a form of worship and the notion of the priesthood are also prominent elements of the Igbo traditional religion. Through prayer, offering, libation and sacrifice offered in various forms and with different objects to the divinities or ancestors, one can seek guidance and protection, express gratitude for favours received or ask for special blessings. Religion and morality were interconnected and when the laws of morality were broken, sacrifices as well served to appease the gods and atone for evil actions that frequently brought misfortunes.²⁵

According to M. A. Onwuejeogwu, the term “Igbo” which means the community of people also refers to their language which belongs to the *Kwa* group of languages found in West and Central Africa with various local dialects.²⁶ In Igbo language, tonality, which is one of its specific characteristics, greatly determines the proper meaning of a word, whether spoken or written. Two words with the same spelling can have completely different meanings with different pronunciations and tone-marking. For example, àkwá (egg), ákwá (cry), àkwà (bed), ákwà (cloth); òké (rat), óké (male), ókè (boundary), òkè (share). Igbo language, just like any other language, is a carrier of culture in its totality and a strong unifying factor of the people. Remaining a veritable tool for the dissemination of culture from generation to generation, it is also “the symbol of identity and a medium of communication. Most of the cherished norms and behaviours are preserved in

²²C. N. Ubah, “The Supreme Being, Divinities and Ancestors in Igbo Traditional Religion: Evidence from Otanchara and Otanzu,” *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute*, vol 52, no 2, 1982, p. 94.

²³Cardinal F. Arinze, “Christianity Meets Igbo Traditional Religion,” [in:] A. Njoku, E. Uzukwu (eds.), *Interface between Igbo Theology and Christianity*, (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), p. 11

²⁴C. N. Ubah, “The Supreme Being, Divinities and Ancestors in Igbo Traditional Religion: Evidence from Otanchara and Otanzu,” p. 100.

²⁵Cf. T. Okere, “Interface between Igbo Theology and Christianity,” [in:] A. Njoku, E. Uzukwu (eds.), *Interface between Igbo Theology and Christianity*, p. 24.

²⁶C. Udeani, *Inculturation as Dialogue: Igbo Culture and the Message of Christ*, p. 8.

the language.”²⁷ We shall later mention how the tonal nature of the people’s language affects their music.

1.1.4 *Social and Political Organization*

Social relationships in Igboland were fundamentally based on blood ties and there were three levels of this relationship to which each person belonged and could trace his or her descent. The first level which was the smallest social unit was referred to as *uno* or house. It was the natural family, consisting of a man, his wife or wives, and their children. A number of houses related by blood constituted the second level which was known as *Umunna* or lineage just as a group of lineages together formed the last level which was called *obodo*, village or town. Within any town, the lineage was regarded as a semi-autonomous unit.

All these three levels of relationship are governed by a headman, *onyisi*, a position acquired by virtue of age. While most important house or lineage meetings were held in the *obi* (meeting shed) of the most senior elders, town meetings took place in the town square. Describing the Igbo political system, D. Ohadike emphasized that “a striking feature of Igbo society was the lack of centralized political structures. The Igbo lived in autonomous villages and towns, ruled by their elders.”²⁸ This is the reason for the saying, *Igbo enwe eze* (Igbos do not have a king) which did not totally negate the concept of kingship but rather implied “a leadership that is unequivocally of the people, by the people, and for the people.”²⁹ Simply put, the Igbos were known to be very democratic in their political system. At the lineage level of government, for instance, the oldest man exercises the right of a religious, executive and judicial head but important decisions can only be made in a lineage meeting after some degree of consensus has been achieved. The entire social and political structures of Igbo people were organized around five key institutions namely: the council of elders, age-groups, council of chiefs, women’s associations and secret societies.³⁰

1.1.5 *European Missionary Encounter with Igbo Culture*

Culture is the totality of the way of life of the people. We have briefly discussed some of the key component elements of Igbo traditional culture such as language, worldview, religion and socio-political systems. By the middle of the 19th century, there was already an encounter of Igbo culture with the European colonizers and missionaries. As a result, Western civilization thrived

²⁷B. N. Igbokwe, “Language and Identity: A Case of Igbo Language, Nigeria,” *International Journal of Development and Management Review*, vol 8, no 1, 2013, p. 147.

²⁸D. C. Ohadike, “Igbo Culture and History,” accessed on 20.02.2021, p. xxii, https://womrel.sitehost.iu.edu/REL%20300%20Spirit/REL%20300_Spirit/Igbo%20Culture%20and%20History.pdf

²⁹H. Chukwu, “The Kingless People: The Speech Act as Shield and Sword,” [in:] T. Falola, R. C. Njoku (eds.), *Igbo in the Atlantic World: African Origins and Diasporic Destinations*, (Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2016), p. 17.

³⁰For more details about these institutions, see D. C. Ohadike, “Igbo Culture and History,” pp. xxiii-xxx.

and Christianity flourished but at the expense of Igbo culture. Chinua Achebe, a prominent Igbo author, depicted the general effect of this encounter on Igbo culture in the title of two of his famous novels – *Things Fall Apart* and *No longer At Ease*. Igbo culture fell apart and things were no longer at ease with regards to Igbo customs and traditions which suffered enormous and drastic changes.³¹

Lazarus N. Ekwueme recounted the damages:

Early Christian missionaries, however, branded all indigenous forms of art as the work of the devil, especially as almost invariably these were associated with some religious or quasi-religious ceremony... Innumerable masterpieces of works of art were, in fact, destroyed by over-zealous missionaries and their converts who took it upon themselves to burn shrines and other centres of religious and social organisations where these items were kept... The amount of damage done materially and psychologically to the culture of the Igbo by these misguided zealots may probably never be fully assessed.³²

In the next subtopic, we shall concentrate on missionary journey to Igboland and the flourishing of Catholicism which would have impacted even more positively on the lives of greater majority had the foreign missionaries adopted also the method of proper inculturation.

1.2 The beginning of the Catholic Church in Igboland

1.2.1 Historical Background

“Go out to the whole world; proclaim the gospel to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptised will be saved...” (Mk.16:15) This missionary mandate of Jesus Christ to His apostles has remained the springboard of all missionary activities all over the world including Africa where the history of evangelisation, as enunciated by Pope John Paul II, occurred in three phases.³³ In the first phase, the seed of faith sown in Egypt and North Africa from the first centuries of Christianity produced great saints and Popes of the Ancient Church. But as a result of Islamic invasion between the 7th and 13th century, Catholicism went into extinction.³⁴ In the second phase, the Portuguese who came to explore Africa around the 15th and 16th centuries were accompanied by missionaries whose undertaking yielded some fruits including the erection of some Episcopal Sees and the consecration of Don Henrique in 1518 as the first native Bishop of Black Africa. But due to various

³¹L. M. Kenalemang, “Things Fall Apart: An Analysis of Pre and Post-Colonial Igbo Society,” accessed on 28.02.2021, <https://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:648320/FULLTEXT01.pdf>

³²L. N. Ekwueme, “African Music in Christian Liturgy: The Igbo Experiment,” *African Music*, vol 5, no 3, 1973/1974, p. 13.

³³See the phases in Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, Vatican 1995, nos 30-34.

³⁴Ewtn – The New Evangelization, “Africa: Evangelization of the Continent,” accessed on 21.02.2021, https://www.ewtn.com/new_evangelization/africa/history/continent.htm

difficulties and limitations, this phase which stretched from the Sub-Saharan to the East African coast came to an end in the 18th century with the disappearance of practically all the missions south of the Sahara.³⁵ The third phase recorded remarkable success as could be evidenced in the growing number of African saints and martyrs. Pope John Paul II remarked: “The third phase of Africa's systematic evangelization began in the nineteenth century, a period marked by an extraordinary effort organized by the great apostles and promoters of the African mission. It was a period of rapid growth, as the statistics presented to the Synodal Assembly by the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples clearly demonstrate.”³⁶ This summary of the three phases of evangelization in Africa as a whole will help us now to situate West Africa, Nigeria and Igboland in the missionary map of Africa.

Following the bull of Demarcation “*Inter Caetera*” by Pope Alexander VI on May 4, 1493, especially between the Kings of Spain and Portugal, Catholic missionary journey to West Africa began. This bull officially assigned West Africa to the King of Portugal with the exclusive right to all religious matters, including the evangelization of the colonies. Propelled by this right, the king sent some Portuguese priests from the diocese of Lisbon to the people of Warri and Benin with letters of accreditation for the Oba of Benin. They applied the early missionary strategy used in the conversion of Europe to Christianity by which “efforts were directed to the ruler of the state, in the hope that with his influence over the lives of his subjects, his conversion would automatically mean the conversion of his entire state to Christianity.”³⁷ Unfortunately, this methodology failed to produce the expected result. Language barrier, insufficiency of the numerical strength of the missionaries and the unfavourable climatic conditions were some of the reasons that contributed to the failure of this first mission in Benin. Others are the cultic religion of Benin and the civil war at the time and the lack of continued realization of the economic, military and political reasons for accepting the missionaries at the first instance.³⁸

Another critical problem worthy of mention is the broken relationship between the two most interested powers in the propagation of faith in Benin – Portugal and Rome. Rome was not comfortable with the attitude by which Portugal, regarding herself as the head and independent of Rome, issued orders and received reports from bishops who were heads of mission. The same was true about Spain. On June 22, 1622, therefore, Pope Gregory XV had to create the Sacred Congregation for the propagation of the faith (*Propaganda Fide*) “for the purpose of better

³⁵Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, no 32.

³⁶*Ibid.*, no 33.

³⁷C. A. Imokhai, “The Evolution of the Catholic Church in Nigeria,” [in:] A. O. Makozi, G. J. AfolabiOjo (eds.), *The History of the Catholic Church in Nigeria*, (Lagos: Macmillan Nigeria Publishers Limited, 1982), p. 6.

³⁸R. A. Njoku, *The Advent of the Catholic Church in Nigeria: Its Growth in Owerri Diocese*, (Owerri: Assumpta Press, 1980), p. 25.

organizing and expanding the missions.”³⁹ This Congregation recruited missionaries from both the existing religious orders and the newly founded congregations and also received fascinating report on Benin mission by the prefect of the French Mission to West Africa. Such reports, which formed the basis of structural organization of the local missionary church into Prefectures, Vicariates and Dioceses,⁴⁰ led to the creation of the Prefecture of Benin in 1648. Unfortunately, the efforts of both the Spanish and Italian Capuchin Mission to this Prefecture could neither lead to the conversion of the Oba of Benin nor his subjects to Catholicism.⁴¹

Before it came to gain universal recognition, the Sacred Congregation had to wage a strong and extensive war against the imperial States of Spain and Portugal which vigorously opposed the appointment of Prefect or Vicar Apostolic by the Vatican. In this fight, Rome allied with the French Monarch and thus, France became eventually ‘the first daughter of the Church’ and “the LABOUR SUPPLIER, the FINANCIER, and the INSPIRER of Roman Catholic evangelism in the 19th century. Practically all the new missionary initiatives originated in France – the new missionary societies and the mission funding agencies.”⁴²

It was in the 19th century and unfortunately “in the context of colonization and a dehumanizing phenomenon like the slave trade”⁴³ that the seed of Catholicism actually started to germinate in the Nigerian soil. Following the anti-slavery movements in England finally came the official decree of abolition of slave trade in 1807.⁴⁴ Hundreds and thousands of freed slaves, desiring to return to their root in Africa, landed in Freetown, Sierra Leone. The majority of them were of Protestant denominations. Only a few were Catholics. The question then was how could these slaves be rehabilitated in their fatherland and the wrong done to Africa amended for? To this end, the abolitionists in 1841, resolved to champion a campaign inside Africa ‘by the Bible and the plough’, that is, through missionary work of evangelization and agriculture.⁴⁵

It was at first very difficult to get missionaries to come to the West coast of Africa. Both the Jesuits and the Dominicans turned down the offer because West Africa was then regarded as a grave yard, a land of no return for many a white man.⁴⁶ Meanwhile, Anglican mission in the same area was already wielding a lot of missionary influence, having established in 1804 the Fourah

³⁹Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, no 32.

⁴⁰C. A. Imokhai, *The Evolution of the Catholic Church in Nigeria*, p. 8.

⁴¹*Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁴²I. Ozigbo, *Roman Catholicism in South Eastern Nigeria 1885 – 1931*, (Onitsha: Etukokwu Publishers Nig. Ltd., 1988), p. 48.

⁴³C. A. Obi, “Background to the Planting of Catholic Christianity in the Lower Niger,” [in:] C. A. Obi (ed.), *A Hundred Years of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nigeria 1885 – 1985*, (Onitsha: Africana-Feb Publishers Limited, 1985), p. 3.

⁴⁴*Ibid.*

⁴⁵*Ibid.*

⁴⁶C. A. Imokhai, “The Evolution of the Catholic Church in Nigeria,” p. 5.

Bay College for the training of Africans as teachers, catechists and clergymen with the purpose of grassroot conversion.⁴⁷ To remedy the situation, the Bishop of Philadelphia and the Bishop of New York, acting on the instruction of Pope Gregory XVI in 1840, sent Monsignor Edward Barron and Father John Kelly from their respective dioceses. Each of them had earlier indicated interest for mission to Liberia and the West Coast. When Monsignor Barron who had become the Bishop of Upper and Lower Guinea was campaigning for missionaries around Europe, he met with a Jewish convert, Fr. Francis Mary Paul Libermann, who founded the missionary society of Immaculate Heart of Mary but had yet no ‘vineyard’ for mission.⁴⁸ Reaching an agreement with the bishop, Fr. Libermann sent out the first seven missionaries who landed at Cape Palmas in Liberia on November 29, 1843 for the onerous task ahead.

With the retirement of Bishop Barron, the era of the diocesan bishop/priests’ rule in the Vicariate of the two Guineas was ended. The responsibility fell on the Holy Ghost Fathers.⁴⁹ When bishop Truffet who took over from bishop Barron died less than a year in office, the mantle of leadership was handed over to bishop John Bessieux who became the Vicar Apostolic in 1849. On April 27, 1857, the Vicariate of the two Guineas was divided into Upper and Lower Guinea. The Upper Guinea to which Western and Northern Nigeria belonged became the Vicariate Apostolic of Sierra Leone. The Lower Guinea ruled by Bishop Pierre Le Berre became the Vicariate of Gabon and Onitsha in Eastern Nigeria was one of the out-stations.⁵⁰ For the purpose of this work, we shall concentrate on the advent of Catholicism to Eastern Nigeria.

1.2.2 The Era of the French Missionaries (1885-1905)

As hinted above, France became “the only door to the missions”⁵¹ and the cradle of new missionary societies. It was one of these societies known as the Holy Ghost missionaries (French Holy Ghost Fathers and Brothers) that opened the Lower Niger mission in 1885. Joined by the religious sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny in 1889, they formed the French Pioneer Catholic missionaries in the Lower Niger and were led by Fr. Joseph Lutz (1885-1900) who had been on mission in Sierra Leone for more than ten years before this assignment.⁵² Fr. Lutz left Paris on September 19, 1885 in the company of Father Horne and Brothers Hermas and Jean-Gotto. These

⁴⁷E. C. Ezeokeke, “The Identity of the Catholic Church in Igboland, Nigeria,” *John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin* (Doctoral Thesis), 2018, p. 29.

⁴⁸I. Ozigbo, *Roman Catholicism in South Eastern Nigeria 1885 – 1931*, p. 94.

⁴⁹C. A. Obi, “Background to the Planting of Catholic Christianity in the Lower Niger,” p. 9.

⁵⁰*Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁵¹C. A. Obi, “The Missionary Contributions of Bishop Joseph Shanahan, C.S.Sp. 1902-1932,” [in:] C. A. Obi (ed.), *A Hundred Years of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nigeria 1885 – 1985*, p. 106.

⁵²E. C. Ezeokeke, “The Identity of the Catholic Church in Igboland, Nigeria,” p. 46.

missionaries worked assiduously to sow the seed of Catholic faith in the hearts of the people of Igboland using various methods and applying different policies. Summarizing the missionary strategies of Father Lutz, Ozigbo wrote:

Besides the usual direct means of winning converts (preaching, catechization, religious worship and rituals), he inaugurated a series of indirect means of evangelization. He introduced the use of the school (for boys and for girls), charitable work (dispensaries, hospitals, orphanages and asylums), trade and industrial institutions (for carpentry, masonry, tailoring, shoe-making etc), farming and gardening, as means of attracting and retaining converts to the Catholic religion.⁵³

Lutz also employed the method of redeeming slaves. Following Pope Leo XIII's injunction, he bought slaves who were destined to be used for human sacrifice or to be sold to far distant lands with funds supplied by such organizations like Saint Enfance, the Propagation of the Faith and the French Anti-Slavery Society.⁵⁴ These slaves were harboured in the mission houses built by the missionaries. This eventually led to the idea of Christian village:

The inmates lived a very strictly regulated life with definite hours of prayers, play and work. The missionaries considered it a most favourable circumstance where the Catholic doctrine could be imparted to the catechumens away from the neutralizing influences of non-Christian neighbours, Protestants and some merchants/civil servants who, he said, lived in total disregard of all moral laws. It was a community where the freed slaves practised a kind of quasi-monastic spirituality.⁵⁵

All these missionary strategies did produce a lot of positive results. A great number of people saw in the Catholic missionaries hope for the common man and hope for the future. Neighbouring towns and villages through their chiefs and kings started sending invitation to the missionaries to come and open mission in their respective areas. With time, the Catholic Church gradually began to expand. Even those who were already converted to the Anglican and other Protestant denominations began, in comparison, to prefer the Catholic missionaries and their method of evangelization. As F. K. Ekechi observed, the Catholic missionaries appeared as a different kind of white man to many local people, a kind who had the good of the populace at heart.⁵⁶

⁵³I. R. A. Ozigboh, *Igbo Catholicism the Onitsha Connection 1967 – 1984*, (Onitsha: Africana-Feb Publishers Limited, 1985), p. 7.

⁵⁴C. A. Obi, "The French Pioneers, 1885 - 1905," [in:] C. A. Obi (ed.), *A Hundred Years of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nigeria 1885 – 1985*, pp. 34-35.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 35-36.

⁵⁶F. K. Ekechi, *Missionary Enterprise and Rivalry in Igboland 1857 – 1914*, (London: The Anchor Press Ltd., 1972), p. 75.

Having done his best as the first Apostolic Prefect of the Lower Niger, Fr. Lutz died in France in December 1895 and was succeeded in September 1896 by Fr. Joseph Mary Reling as the second Prefect. But due to continued ill-health, he was unable to achieve much and had to resign in July 1898.⁵⁷ Rene Aime Pawlas who became the third Prefect after him did not live to execute the plans he had drawn for the Prefecture; he bowed to death on March 15, 1900 and his death marked the end of the 15 years of the Lutz-pioneering era.⁵⁸

Fr. Leon Lejeune arrived at Onitsha on September 1900 to take over from Fr. Pawlas as the fourth Prefect Apostolic. He had been a missionary in Gabon for fifteen years but as a result of strings of conflict and disagreement with the people and with his local superiors, he was retired to France in August 1899.⁵⁹ On arrival at Onitsha and finding situations different from his experience at Gabon, he hastily criticised his predecessors after making an unbalanced assessment of their contributions.⁶⁰ He blamed the lack of progress in the mission on four elements: the high costs charged by the Royal Niger Company, the lack of a resident Prefect for many years, the over concentration of mission resources on charities and the high death toll on missionary lives due to poor housing.⁶¹ He also believed that the practice of buying slaves and accepting outcasts and the disabled not only discouraged the freeborn and the ordinary Igbo from entering the church, but also drained the funds of the Mission and drew the attention of the missionaries away from the rest of the population.⁶²

In his own policy, therefore, he focused on the use of school “as a missionary strategy to win people of higher social status to the Church.”⁶³ He utilized mission fund for the opening of new stations and provided better living accommodations for the missionaries even as he cut down on resources earmarked for charity. His era also witnessed the first stride in the promotion of Igbo language for effective evangelization. With the help of Father Vogler and the catechists, He championed the production of a manual of Catholic Doctrine called ‘Katechisma nke Okwukwe Nzuko Katolik’. Describing the success of this manual, Ozigboh wrote: “The impact of this catechism on Igbo Catholicism may perhaps best be compared to that of Martin Luther’s German bible on the course of the 16th century reformation.”⁶⁴ Having recorded other achievements, Fr. Lejeune died on September 5, 1905 as the last of the French pioneer missionaries.

⁵⁷I. R. A. Ozigboh, *Igbo Catholicism the Onitsha Connection 1967 – 1984*, p. 7.

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁵⁹I. Ozigboh, *Roman Catholicism in South Eastern Nigeria 1885 – 1931*, p. 94.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, p. 95.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, p. 94.

⁶²C. A. Obi, “The French Pioneers, 1885 - 1905,” p. 69.

⁶³E. Ikenga-Metuh, C. I. Ejizu, *Hundred Years of Catholicism in Eastern Nigeria 1885 – 1985: The Nnewi Story*, (Nimo: Asele Institute, 1985), p. 31.

⁶⁴I. Ozigboh, *Roman Catholicism in South Eastern Nigeria 1885 – 1931*, p. 146.

1.2.3 *The Era of the Irish Missionaries (1905-1967)*

Before the death of Fr. Lejeune, a missionary priest working in Southern Nigeria, Fr. Francis Xavier Lichten-berger, visited Ireland to campaign for missionaries. One of the fruits of his labour was Fr. Joseph Ignatius Shanahan who volunteered and was appointed as an apostolic missionary to help Fr. Lejeune. The arrival of Father Shanahan at Onitsha marked the beginning of the Irish Missionary Movement to South-Eastern Nigeria, replacing French missionaries in the Lower Niger with English/Irish missionaries.⁶⁵ And more than that, it put an end to the long-lasting controversy over the presence and apostolate of French missionaries in a British colony, a dispute seen as part of the Anglo-French political and commercial rivalry on the Niger.⁶⁶

Having been tutored and recommended by Fr. Lejeune as a good successor, Fr. Joseph Shanahan was appointed as the fifth Apostolic Prefect of the Lower Niger on September 28, 1905. While the achievements of his predecessors were outstanding, Fr. Shanahan was believed to have given missionary evangelism a new twist that produced abundant fruits, especially during the active period of his administration (1905 – 1919).⁶⁷ He paid less attention to the charitable method of evangelization and the method of Christian village. His focus was mainly on school apostolate which, more than Fr. Lejeune, he developed and executed with remarkable success.⁶⁸ Unlike some other missionaries, he understood education not only as a tool for evangelization, but also as a key to knowledge for the betterment of man, spiritually and materially. This wider concept of education “endeared his schools to the people and made him enjoy great patronage from, and partnership with, the then colonial administration as against many other non-Catholic Christian missions whose narrow evangelistic concept of education led them into conflict with the people and government and brought their schools little success.”⁶⁹

In line with his famous slogan of ‘expansion now and consolidation later,’ faith and the gospel continued to spread far and wide, along Onitsha, Nnewi, Ozubulu, Awka-Adazi, Owerri, Eke-Enugu, IkotEkpene, Ogoja-Abakaliki, and Calabar-Anua axis. New out-stations and new parishes were continually being carved out. Training of catechist-teachers became very necessary in order to make up for the problem of insufficient missionary personnel. Though the first world war (1914-1918) disrupted some aspects of the missionary work, the light did not go off completely. Catechetical instructions, treks into the hinterland, charitable works and the establishment of Church-schools went on as much as possible.

⁶⁵C. A. Obi, “The Missionary Contributions of Bishop Joseph Shanahan, C.S.Sp. 1902-1932,” p. 111.

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷V. A. Nwosu, “The Growth of the Catholic Church in Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province,” [in:] A. O. Makozi, G. J. AfolabiOjo (eds.), *The History of the Catholic Church in Nigeria*, p. 40.

⁶⁸E. Ikenga-Metuh, C. I. Ejizu, *Hundred Years of Catholicism in Eastern Nigeria 1885 – 1985 The Nnewi Story*, p. 31.

⁶⁹V. A. Nwosu, “The Growth of the Catholic Church in Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province,” p. 42.

After the war, Fr. Shanahan returned to Ireland in 1919. That notwithstanding his impaired health, on his 49th birthday, June 6, 1920, he was ordained a bishop and with the Prefecture also raised to the Vicariate of Southern Nigeria, he was proclaimed as its first Vicar Apostolic. This new responsibility brought along new challenges. The need for more hands to assist in the ministry challenged the new bishop to found, in 1924, the congregation of the Holy Rosary Sisters in Ireland to be deployed to Nigeria for the formation of a large number of girls in the special convent schools already built by him.⁷⁰ That same year, he also built the first seminary at Igbariam, St. Paul's Senior Seminary, for the formation of priests. He also established a suitable training college for teachers, the St. Charles' College in 1928. Another historic event in the annals of the Vicariate took place on December 8, 1930 when Bishop Shanahan himself ordained the first Igbo priest east of the Niger in the person of Fr. John Cross Anyogu.⁷¹ This event opened the door to other indigenous ordinations to follow in the subsequent years.

Before this time, Bishop Shanahan was already showing serious signs of failing health, but rather than accept his resignation at the moment, the Pope ordained his candidate, Father Charles Heerey, a Co-adjutor Bishop of the Vicariate on May 29, 1927.⁷² After his resignation in 1931, he returned to Ireland in 1932. From 1938, he spent his retirement in Nairobi, Kenya where he became a chaplain to a community of Carmelite nuns, offering spiritual help to priests and the religious.⁷³ On a remarkable day, on Christmas Day in 1943, Bishop Shanahan passed on. Today, the mortal remains of Bishop Shanahan which was transferred from Nairobi to Onitsha in 1956 for final interment lie buried in the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity Onitsha "as a good symbol of his identification with the soil and people of his beloved Nigeria!"⁷⁴

The regime of Bishop Charles Heerey was the sixth and the last of the expatriate regimes, spanning through a long period of 36 years (1931 – 1967). Dr. Ozigboh summarized the twofold objectives of his regime as follows: "Firstly, it embarked on a mop-up operation to reach the relatively few Igbo towns that were yet to be evangelized. Secondly, it made sustained efforts to exploit and perfect the mission strategies and gains of the earlier administrations."⁷⁵ He expanded and solidified the education method of Bishop Shanahan and resurrected the medical strategy of Lutz administration which Bishop Shanahan tended to sweep under the carpet.

In 1934, the Prefecture of Calabar, comprising the civil provinces of Calabar and Ogoja and the Prefecture of Benue, consisting of the Munchi and Muri provinces of the Benue were

⁷⁰C. A. Obi, "The Missionary Contributions of Bishop Joseph Shanahan, C.S.Sp. 1902 -1932," p.153.

⁷¹Ibid., p.165.

⁷²Ibid.

⁷³Ibid., p.169.

⁷⁴Ibid., p.171.

⁷⁵ I. R. A. Ozigboh, *Igbo Catholicism the Onitsha Connection 1967 – 1984*, p. 15.

established by Rome to be managed by the Irish missionary society of St. Patrick and the German province of the Holy Ghost Fathers respectively. What then remained of the Vicariate of the Southern Nigeria in 1934 was renamed the Vicariate of Onitsha-Owerri.⁷⁶ It had 14 residential stations and more than 900 outstations. But as the work of evangelization changed gear, more expansion of residential stations and outstations happened on the Nsukka, Enugu, Adazi-Awka, Onitsha, Ihiala and Owerri axis so much so that Fr. C. Obi commented: “The Vicariate Bishop Heerey inherited in 1931 was not different territorially, from the old Prefecture of 1889, but, when he left the stage in 1967 the picture was quite different.”⁷⁷

As the representative of the Vicariate in the Government Board of Education, Bishop Heerey was already well-versed in the dynamics of education before he took over management in 1931.⁷⁸ So, when the Education Ordinance, No. 15 of 1926 and the Education Regulations, No. 8 of 1927 led to the closure of about 596 primary schools, Heerey quickly adjusted to the demands of the Government’s new policy. With the opening of Christ the King College, C.K.C in 1933, the history of Catholic secondary schools began in the Vicariate and before long, there were numerous and notable Catholic secondary schools with excellent performance to the envy of Anglicans.⁷⁹ As already mentioned, Bishop Heerey revived the Vicariate’s interest in medical services which died down, especially during Shanahan’s regime. By this time, the Protestant missionary societies were waxing strong in medical mission. One major factor that boosted the Catholic medical mission this period was the Instruction (CONSTANS AC SEDULA) by Propaganda Fide in 1936, authorizing Catholic nuns to practise medicine and surgery.⁸⁰ As a result of this Instruction, the Medical Missionary of Mary (M.M.M) came into existence at Calabar in 1937 and the Holy Rosary Sisters began to explore various medical fields in Ireland and Britain. There were soon many Igbo nurses to work as staff in the Catholic hospitals in the Vicariate. With the fulfilment of well-accomplished task, Bishop Heerey died in February, 1967 and Archbishop Francis Arinze continued from where he stopped.

1.2.4 The Era of the Indigenous Missionaries (1967-till date)

The regime of Archbishop Francis Arinze opened a new chapter in the history of the Catholic Church in Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province as it marked the virtual end of foreign missionary work in the Archdiocese.⁸¹ For the Holy Ghost Fathers, the appointment of the young

⁷⁶F. E. Okon, “Expansion and Consolidation: Growth in Onitsha, Calabar, Owerri, Ogoja and Umuahia,” [in:] C. A. Obi (ed.), *A Hundred Years of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nigeria 1885 – 1985*, p.179.

⁷⁷F. E. Okon, “Expansion and Consolidation: Growth in Onitsha, Calabar, Owerri, Ogoja and Umuahia,” p.177.

⁷⁸I. R. A. Ozigboh, *Igbo Catholicism the Onitsha Connection 1967 – 1984*, p. 21.

⁷⁹*Ibid.*, pp. 21-22.

⁸⁰*Ibid.*, p. 23.

⁸¹F. E. Okon, “Expansion and Consolidation: Growth in Onitsha, Calabar, Owerri, Ogoja and Umuahia,” p.185.

Archbishop Arinze as the successor of Bishop Heerey was the culmination and fulfilment of their mission in Southern Nigeria.⁸² They expressed their sense of satisfaction thus:

The Holy Ghost Fathers at home and on the mission, and their missionary associates, rejoice in the fulfilment marked by the appointment of an African Priest to this exalted office. Our aim as missionaries is to bring the gospel to ‘people who are far away’, and till the soil and sow the seed. The work of stabilisation must come from a native hierarchy and native priests. Bishop Shanahan and Archbishop Heerey and those who worked with them tilled and sowed. Their greatest monument is the Onitsha Church, their achievement is embodied in its young Archbishop... under him the Archdiocese and the Ecclesiastical territory of which he is the Metropolitan will come to maturity.⁸³

When the Nigerian government later took over the mission schools and colleges and expelled all the expatriate priests from the country, there was then only a handful of indigenous priests and sisters. To solve this problem, Archbishop Arinze devoted great attention to building up the local clergy and the religious which he himself later described “as his greatest success as the Archbishop of Onitsha.”⁸⁴ In fact, demographic statistics during his tenure of office indicated a swift rise in indigenisation of the clergy and religious. From around 1965 to 1980, the number of indigenous priests steadily grew from 9 to 75, local sisters from 143 to 329 and junior seminarians from 270 to 777.⁸⁵ Today, the increase is even more significant as each of the fourteen dioceses has at least one minor seminary and each of the two provinces in Igboland has two or more major seminaries. More details about this will be made known in our next subheading.

While appreciating the landmark achievements of Archbishop Arinze, it is good to point out that the era of indigenous missionaries started with him only from the point of view of taking over the mantle of leadership from the foreign missionaries. But in the sense of indigenous evangelization *per se*, this period actually began with the ordination of Rev. Fr. John Cross Anyogu on December 8, 1930 as the first fruit of the missionary work of the Holy Ghost Fathers in Eastern Nigeria and the second Igbo indigenous priest⁸⁶ who later became the first Bishop of Enugu in 1962. According to F. E. Okon, it was then that “the Church in the Vicariate of Southern Nigeria had its tap root.”⁸⁷ In 1937, the ordination of William Obeleagu, Michael Iwene Tansi and Joseph Nwanegbo also added to the list of indigenous priests to evangelize their own people.

⁸²Ibid.

⁸³Ibid., pp. 185-186.

⁸⁴I. R. A. Ozigboh, *Igbo Catholicism the Onitsha Connection 1967 – 1984*, p. 40.

⁸⁵F. E. Okon, “Expansion and Consolidation: Growth in Onitsha, Calabar, Owerri, Ogoja and Umuahia,” p.185.

⁸⁶The first indigenous Igbo priest was Father Emecheta from Asaba in Bendel State. Cf. E. Ikenga-Metuh, C. I. Ejizu, *Hundred Years of Catholicism in Eastern Nigeria 1885 – 1985 The Nnewi Story*, p. 118.

⁸⁷F. E. Okon, “Expansion and Consolidation: Growth in Onitsha, Calabar, Owerri, Ogoja and Umuahia,” p.182.

Rt. Rev. Dr. Mark Onwuha Unegbu became the first indigenous bishop of Owerri who worked hard to improve indigenous effort at evangelization. Under his watch, many religious congregations sprang up and functioned in and around Owerri. But the first Nigerian bishop to shepherd a diocese was Bishop Anthony G. Nwedo. Consecrated on May 17, 1959, he was appointed to head the diocese of Umuahia which was carved out of Owerri diocese on June 23, 1958. Describing this great personality who founded the Congregation of the Daughters of Mary, Mother of Mercy (DMMM) in 1962, an author concisely wrote:

Bishop Nwedo is a strong believer in self-determination, promotion of indigenous clergy and religious, and initiative. His installation was regarded as a 'handover of, and full responsibility for, the divine mission, begun by the expatriate fathers and now entrusted completely to the indigenous clergy. This is not *ad experimentum* but a total commitment of the natives to the Catholic faith – to spread and deepen it.'⁸⁸

Great attempts to raise indigenous clergy and religious congregations actually began from the period of the foreign missionaries, especially during the administration of Bishop Heerey even though the model of their formation was more European than African.⁸⁹ This formation took place in St. Paul's Seminary, Igbariam which was established in July, 1924. Having served effectively as the pioneer institution for the training of future priests, it later started making slow progress. Different solutions were sought for continued formation of seminarians until the climax action which came with the establishment of Bigard Memorial Seminary, Enugu in 1951. According to Fr. Obi, this became a lasting solution for the demand for the formation of local clergy.⁹⁰

The formation of Indigenous Religious Sisters and Brothers who played no less an important role in local evangelization was not overlooked. On the one hand, Bishop Heerey founded the Society of the Most Pure Heart of Mary with its centre at Ihiala and the first profession of the two pioneer members – Sister Mary Benedette Anyogu and Sr. Mary Magdalen Oranu – took place at Urualla on January 6, 1946.⁹¹ On the other hand, he founded the first indigenous congregation of Brothers known as the Brothers of St. Peter Claver. Though short-lived, the congregation celebrated the First Religious Profession of six men on September 9, 1948.⁹² Before this time, however, other religious congregations were already in place such as Sisters of the Handmaids of Holy Child Jesus (1931) and Immaculate Heart of Mary Sisters (1937). Coming

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 220.

⁸⁹I. R. A. Ozigboh, *Igbo Catholicism the Onitsha Connection 1967 – 1984*, p. 16.

⁹⁰F. E. Okon, "Expansion and Consolidation: Growth in Onitsha, Calabar, Owerri, Ogoja and Umuahia," p.183.

⁹¹Ibid.

⁹²Ibid., p. 184.

after were the sisters of the Daughters of Mary Mother of Mercy (1961), Daughters of Divine Love (1969), Sisters of Charity (1982) and so on. On the part of religious brothers, some of the congregations that followed the Brothers of St. Peter Claver were Marist Brothers of Schools and Brothers of St. Stephen founded by Archbishop Arinze (1976). Today, the number of religious brothers and sisters in Igboland has grown by leaps and bounds and most of the congregations are capable of managing their affairs independent of their original founders.

We cannot forget the fruitful efforts of indigenous lay men and women whose services to the foreign missionaries in their earliest years of evangelization could be considered as missionary in nature. The freed slaves who were converted in their settlement in Sierra Leone came back home to become the first indigenous missionaries to their kiths and kin.⁹³ With language advantage and knowing the culture better, the various domestic and official servants of the missionaries as well as the Catechists and the Lay Teachers heralded the gospel message to interior places and virgin territories ahead of the missionaries. Sometimes encountering opposition and incurring the animosity of their kinsfolk, their contributions, in varying degrees, “were the steps that led to the introduction of indigenous hands to make evangelization homely to the Igbo.”⁹⁴

Worthy of mention also is the contributions of the Chiefs, the Obas and the Kings who, in Nigeria as in Africa in general, wielded a lot of influence over their subjects. Though it didn’t always work perfectly, the missionaries explored this aspect of the Igbo culture to their missionary advantage, knowing full well that “when important leaders and chiefs embraced Christianity, they became not only converts but evangelizers by the sheer witness of their position and status in society.”⁹⁵ This was the case with Obi Anazonwu of Onitsha, King Ogbuanyinya Idigo of Aguleri, King Okolo Okosi of Onitsha, Chief Onyeama Onwusi of Eke etc. They played great roles in the wider evangelization of their people.

1.3 Historical Growth and Administrative Specifics of the Dioceses in Igboland

We have already mentioned how the Apostolic Vicariate of the Southern Nigeria was renamed the Apostolic Vicariate of Onitsha-Owerri after the Prefectures of Calabar and Benue were carved out from it in 1934. Later, on February 12, 1948, the Apostolic Vicariate of Onitsha-Owerri was itself divided into two separate Vicariates – the Apostolic Vicariate of Onitsha and the Apostolic Vicariate of Owerri. Two years after, on April 18, 1950, the Vicariate of Onitsha was raised to the status of a Metropolitan Archdiocese while the Vicariate of Owerri which was first

⁹³R. A. Njoku, *The Advent of the Catholic Church in Nigeria: Its Growth in Owerri Diocese*, p. 193.

⁹⁴H. N. Chigere, *Foreign Missionary Background and Indigenous Evangelization in Igboland*, (Owerri: Living Flame Resources, 2013), p. 296.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 286.

promoted to a diocese only became a Metropolitan Archdiocese on March 26, 1994.⁹⁶ Presently, the Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha is made up of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Onitsha and the following seven suffragan dioceses: Enugu, Abakaliki, Awka, Nsukka, Nnewi, Awgu and Ekwulobia. Similarly, the Ecclesiastical Province of Owerri consists of the Metropolitan Archdiocese of Owerri and five suffragan dioceses namely: Umuahia, Orlu, Okigwe, Ahiara and Aba. These two provinces basically form the constitutive parts of the territory of Igboland. Briefly highlighting their historical growth, we shall summarize the administrative specifics of each of these archdioceses/dioceses.

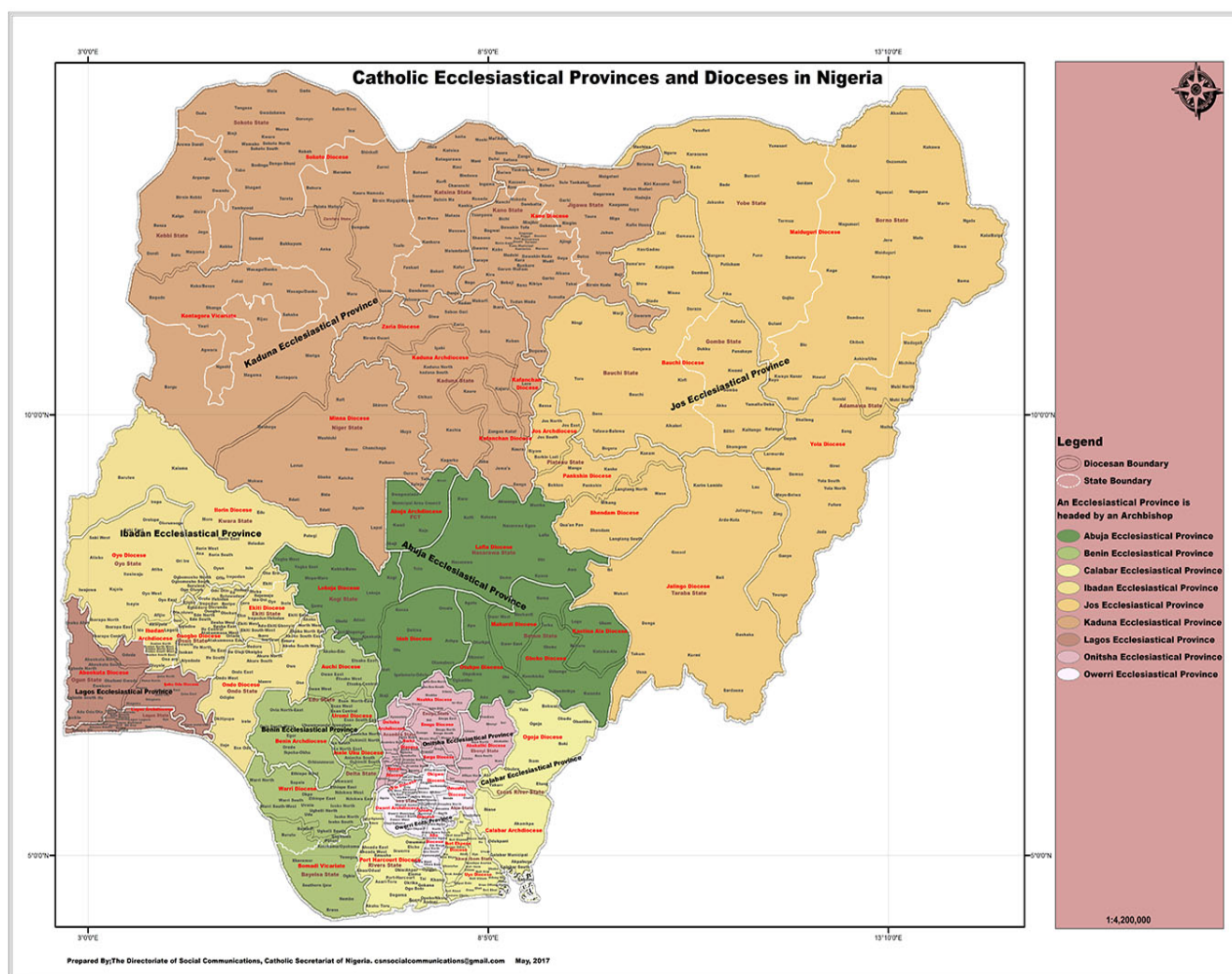


Fig. 2 – Catholic Ecclesiastical Provinces and Dioceses in Nigeria

⁹⁶E. C. Ezeokeke, “The Identity of the Catholic Church in Igboland, Nigeria,” p. 152.

Maps of the Onitsha and Owerri Provinces in the South-Eastern Nigeria: *Nota bene: Ekwulobia diocese newly carved out from Awka diocese in 2020 is not yet represented here.*

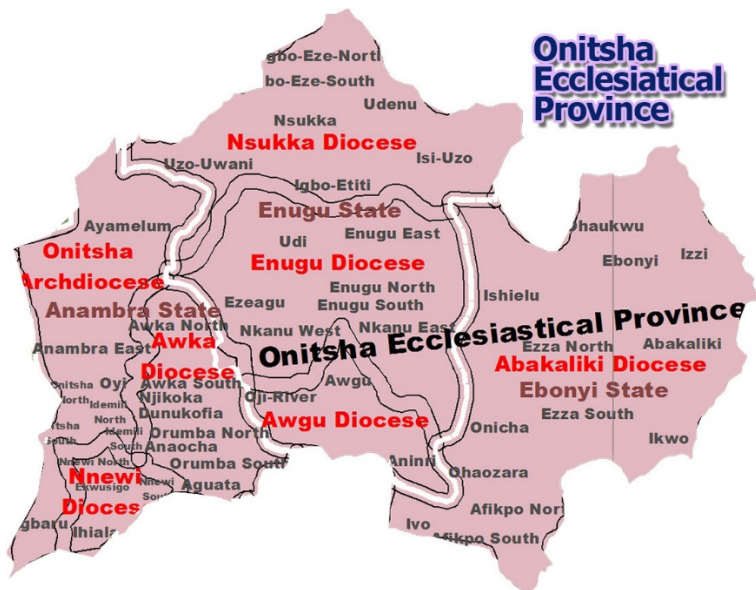


Fig. 3 – Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province

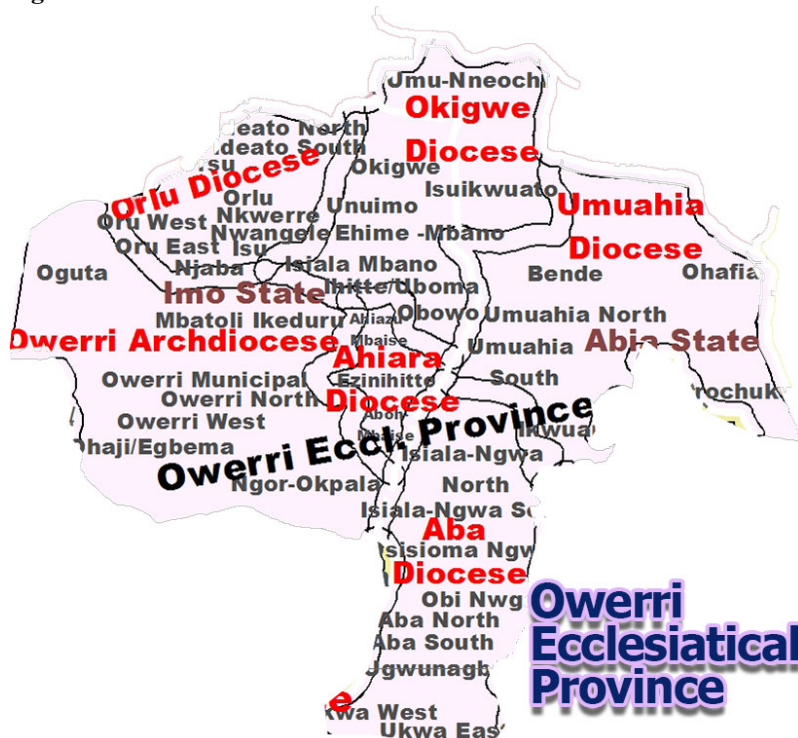


Fig. 4 – Owerri Ecclesiastical Province

1.3.1 Missionary Efforts at the Diocesan Level

1.3.1.1 Onitsha Archdiocese

The history of Onitsha Archdiocese, of course, began with the history of missionary work in Igboland starting from the time of Fr. Lutz. In the section above, we tracked the historical journey up to the period of indigenous missionary leadership which began with the regime of Archbishop Arinze barely 17 days after the Nigerian civil war (July 1967 – January 1970) broke

out. After the war, the Archbishop focused his attention on reconstruction work of some damaged structures like the Holy Trinity Cathedral, the All Hallows Seminary, the diocesan hospitals and parish churches. In the area of liturgy, the process of inculturation of the Catholic faith sowed by the foreign missionaries became more pronounced with the greater use of the vernacular language. Liturgical texts and prayer books translated in Igbo language saw the light of the day and the use of Igbo tunes and musical instruments was also authorized at Mass.⁹⁷

He also adopted the strategy of encouraging the active role and participation of the Laity in the work of evangelisation as proposed by the Second Vatican Council (1965). To this end, he had to reorganize the administrative and pastoral structure in the Archdiocese. He established Archdiocesan and parish councils and created various commissions, directorates and advisory councils, e.g. Medical Advisory Council, Liturgical Music Commission, Church History Commission etc.⁹⁸

On February 13, 1982 when Archbishop Arinze was the president of the Bishops' Conference of Nigeria, the Archdiocese was privileged to host His Holiness Pope John Paul II during his first pastoral visit to Nigeria. This same year was set apart for the first National Eucharistic Congress by the Episcopal Conference of Nigeria. For these two major events, "1982 will go down in history as the year of the most practical and vivid demonstration of the Catholic faith in Nigeria."⁹⁹

The two successors of Archbishop Arinze on the Metropolitan See – Archbishop Stephen Nweke Ezeanya (March 9, 1985 – February 25, 1995), Archbishop Albert Kanene Obiefuna (February 25, 1995 – September 1, 2003) – built on the strong foundation and administrative superstructures he put in place and further expanded the frontiers of the Archdiocese. For lack of space, we shall not outline their individual accomplishments. Situated at the centre of commercial activities in Anambra State, the Archdiocese which is presently under the leadership of Archbishop Valerain Okeke since September 1, 2003 and his auxiliary, Most Rev. Denis Chidi Isizoh, is continually making visible progress in spite of the tangible challenges. Even though the Archdiocese has given birth to the dioceses of Enugu, Awka and Nnewi, she is not yet tired but rather waxing ever stronger. The faith has continued to spread and bear fruits and the birth of yet another diocese in no distant future will serve as a concrete testimony.

⁹⁷I. R. A. Ozigboh, *Igbo Catholicism the Onitsha Connection 1967 – 1984*, pp. 33-34.

⁹⁸F. E. Okon, *Expansion and Consolidation: Growth in Onitsha, Calabar, Owerri, Ogoja and Umuahia*, p.187.

⁹⁹A. O. Makozi, G. J. AfolabiOjo, "Preface" [in:] *The History of the Catholic Church in Nigeria*, p. ix.

1.3.1.2 Enugu Diocese

The city of Enugu which belonged to the Apostolic Prefecture of the Lower Niger at the outset of missionary activity to Eastern Nigeria under Fr. Lutz later became a centre of attraction for the European explorers because of the discovery of coal in 1908. During that time, Bishop Shanahan (then a priest) with the assistance of Fr. Muller explored the opportunity to sow the Catholic faith, thanks to the Paramount Chief of Eke, Chief Onyeama Onwusi who invited him and was instrumental to the success of both the colonizers and the missionaries.¹⁰⁰ As the first resident priest, Fr. Joachim Correia greatly helped to build what has become the Eke mission into the spiritual powerhouse of Northern Igboland from where “the religious tree which spread its branches to other parts of Enugu diocese was planted, watered and nurtured.”¹⁰¹ From Eke, attention was later drawn to Enugu because of its strategic position as a political and commercial centre. With 17 parishes in 1961, Enugu was ready to take off as a diocese. The dream became a reality on November 12, 1962, when Enugu diocese which comprised the Old Enugu and Nsukka districts was carved out of Onitsha Archdiocese during the tenure of Bishop Heerey.

The first bishop of Enugu who set the diocese on a firm foundation was Rt. Rev. Dr. John Cross Anyogu. When he died after a period of four years at the outbreak of the Nigerian civil war, Msgr. S. N. Ezeanya became the administrator. Immediately after the war in 1970, Bishop Godfrey Mary Paul Okoye was appointed to succeed Bishop Anyogu and he acquired a lot of assets for the diocese and founded the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love (D.D.L). Bishop Michael Ugwu Eneja became the third Local Ordinary when Bishop Okoye died on the day of his seventh episcopal anniversary in 1977 and with 18 years of successful pastoral leadership, he set Enugu diocese on a solid spiritual footing. The bishop who was installed on February 8, 1977 to succeed Bishop Eneja was Anthony Okonkwo Gbuji whose major achievements among others were the establishment of St. Paul’s International Institute of Evangelization (SPIIEE) and St. Bernard Seminary Hostel, Nchatancha. At his retirement in 2009, Bishop Callistus Chukwuma Onaga took over after his installation on May 2, 2009 as the present bishop of Enugu.¹⁰² Within barely 12 years of his administration and with the support of his auxiliary, Bishop Ernest Obodo, “significant transformation has already taken place in the entire Diocese of Enugu. Spiritually, economically, socially and in terms of infrastructural development, the diocese has made giant strides. The three big structures or edifices (the Jubilee Hall, the modern Secretariat building and the *Domus Sancti*

¹⁰⁰Catholic Diocese of Enugu, “Brief History,” accessed on 04.03.2021, <https://www.catholicdioceseenugu.org.ng/brief-history/>

¹⁰¹C. I. Eke, “The Creation of More Dioceses after 1960,” [in:] C. A. Obi (ed.), *A Hundred Years of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nigeria 1885 – 1985*, p. 284.

¹⁰²Catholic Diocese of Enugu, “Brief History,” accessed on 04.03.2021.

Spiritus) we have at the diocesan Secretariat are a symbol of what has happened in all the parts of our diocese.”¹⁰³

1.3.1.3 *Abakaliki Diocese*

Abakaliki diocese was carved out of Ogoja diocese in 1973 with Bishop Thomas McGettrick, a missionary of St. Patrick’s Society, as the first Local Ordinary. The missionary efforts that made this a reality started back in 1914 with the establishment of Afikpo mission through the instrumentality of Fr. Francise Howell. When this first attempt failed because the local community felt that the missionary teachings were a big threat to their traditional religion and customs, several other attempts were made by the missionaries stationed at Eke (near Enugu) between 1916 and 1925. From there, Frs Davey and Grandin helped to administer the sacraments in the newly established missions in Abakaliki and Ishiagu as there was no priest then in the present diocese of Abakaliki. Bishop Shanahan also came to administer the sacrament of Confirmation. By 1932, the province had got two priests and by 1938, two parishes which were later increased to eleven between 1940 and 1957.¹⁰⁴

Establishment of schools and the provision of health care services played key roles in the work of evangelization in Abakaliki. St. Augustine’s Ezzamgbo which was the only junior seminary for the diocese was established in 1958 with barely six seminarians. By 1967, the number of Catholic primary schools had increased to 249 from 178 in 1960. “The provision of health services, especially for lepers, is an area where the Catholic Mission in this region is yet to be rivalled by any other religious or charitable organization. Through the Medical Missionary Sisters, the Church established hospitals, outstation clinics and leper settlements.”¹⁰⁵ Since 1978, Abakaliki as a diocese has distinguished herself in the area of family planning by teaching Ovulation Method in different hospitals managed by the diocese.

Beginning with a diocese of 144,000 Catholics and 22 parishes on November 27, 1983 when he took over as the new diocesan bishop, Bishop Michael Okoro, recently presiding over more than 600,000 Catholics and 178 parishes, has continued on the path of consolidation of the faith and evangelization through school management and health care. Beyond that, his legacies will also include the Bishop Thomas McGettrick Memorial Pastoral Centre which is one of the best in Africa and the Printing Press with an Ultra-Modern Studio.¹⁰⁶ With his retirement on July

¹⁰³Ibid.

¹⁰⁴Catholic Diocese of Abakaliki, “Brief History of Abakaliki,” accessed on 05.03.2021, <https://abakalikidiocese.org/briefhistory-of-abakaliki/>

¹⁰⁵C. I. Eke, “The Creation of More Dioceses after 1960,” p. 294.

¹⁰⁶Catholic Diocese of Abakaliki, “Brief History of Abakaliki,” accessed on 05.03.2021.

6, 2021, Peter Nworie Chukwu has taken over the mantle of leadership as the third and current bishop of Abakaliki.

1.3.1.4 *Awka Diocese*

The history of Catholic Church in Awka diocese actually started with the missionary expeditions of Fr. Albert Bubendorf and his companions in early 20th century under the regime of Bishop Shanahan whose missionary roadmap was mainly aimed at opening up the interior of Igboland. Beginning with Nri and Nimo, these missionaries finally settled in Adazi which became “the base used for evangelisation of towns and villages in the present Catholic Diocese of Awka.”¹⁰⁷ As a diocese, Awka was carved out from Onitsha Archdiocese on November 10, 1977 and inaugurated with the ordination of her first bishop, the Most Reverend Albert Kanenechukwu Obiefuna on February 5, 1978. With no deaneries and regions, the new diocese started off with only about 232,782 Catholics according to 1980 population census,¹⁰⁸ 18 parishes and 44 priests. At forty in 2017, the diocese has greatly developed both physically and spiritually with approximately 1,714,608 Catholics, 6 regions with 23 deaneries, 184 parishes, 7 chaplaincies and 593 priests.¹⁰⁹ Greater part of the credit for these rare achievements goes to the bishops who have piloted the affairs of the diocese from inception till date. Writing about the legacy of the pioneer bishop, Fr. Anthony C. Mbanefo mentioned the physical structures that he put in place such as St Patrick Cathedral Awka, Okpuno Retreat Center Awka, and the minor seminaries at Isuaniocha and Akpu and the tradition of perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament which is still practiced in majority of Nigerian Catholic dioceses today.¹¹⁰

Much of what the diocese missed in Bishop Obiefuna when he was transferred to Onitsha Archdiocese, she regained in Bishop Simon Akwali Okafor who replaced and continued from where he stopped. Under his regime, school education apostolate and missionary outreach received a priority attention. Bishop Okafor will also be remembered for two landmark events under his watch: “first, the convocation, execution and promulgation of the first diocesan synod (2001); and secondly, the dedication of the new cathedral of St. Patrick’s (2008). The success of these two events gave the diocese new lease of life, and placed it on a firmer path of progress, creativity and higher achievement.”¹¹¹

¹⁰⁷W. N. Ofojebe, F. Obi (eds.), *A Short History of the Catholic Diocese of Awka at Forty*, (Okpuno: Fides Communications, 2017), p. 32.

¹⁰⁸I. Oliobi, T. I. Onwuasoanya, W. N. Ofojebe (eds.), *Awka Diocese at 25: A Historical Overview*, (Nimo: Rex Charles Patrick Ltd., 2002), p. 45.

¹⁰⁹Catholic Diocese of Awka, *2017 Diary and Directory*, Awka: Fides Communications, 2017), p. i

¹¹⁰A. C. Mbanefo, “Archbishop Albert Obiefuna: The Legacy of a Man of God,” accessed on 26.03.2021 <http://nigeriaworld.com/articles/2011/jun/231.html>

¹¹¹W.N. Ofojebe, F. Obi (eds.), *A Short History of the Catholic Diocese of Awka at Forty*, p. 78.

With the personality and leadership quality of Bishop Paulinus C. Ezeokafor who took over from Bishop Simon Okafor as the incumbent bishop, the diocese will have more success stories to tell in the future. Meanwhile, the Catholic University which he started in the diocese is nearing completion even as he organized the second diocesan synod (November 5 – 11, 2017) to mark the 40th anniversary of the diocese and the 10th anniversary of his episcopal ordination.¹¹²

1.3.1.5 Nsukka Diocese

The journey of the current political zone designated as Nsukka becoming a diocese started in 1932 when Bishop Shanahan transferred Fr. James Mellet from Ogoja to Nsukka to become the first Catholic Parish Priest of Nsukka. But for over two decades before this time, some missionary incursions through Fr. Aloysius Muller and other priests from Aguleri parish had already taken place in different parts of Nsukka province around 1910. Greater missionary impact was even made by the priests from Eke parish led by Fr. Vincent Davey who, on the invitation of Chief Atama Nwamba, visited and built a rest house in Eha-Alumona in 1920 after opening a Catholic mission house and a school in 1919. Adopting the strategy of establishing schools, they spread the faith like wild fire to different parts of Nsukka.¹¹³

Under the administration of Fr. Joseph Horgan who continued the good job done by Fr. Mellet, about six parishes were created out of Nsukka parish between 1940 and 1956. By 1972, three more parishes were added under Msgr. Peter Meze Idigo who took over from him. In all, the number of parishes which had risen to 27 in 1991 took 59 years of “arduous planning, toiling, competition, challenges and execution”¹¹⁴ to accomplish. The significant growth in this region was also measurable in the field of health. In 1938, there was only a maternity clinic built by Bishop Heerey to serve the whole area. Presently, however, the diocese has been blessed with about four health institutions.¹¹⁵

On 19th November, 1990, Nsukka diocese was carved out of Enugu diocese with Most Rev. Dr. Francis Ogonnaya Okobo as the pioneer bishop. The good work he did as the shepherd of the diocese and what the present bishop, Most Rev. Dr. Godfrey Igwebuike Onah is doing, spiritually and physically, have contributed immensely in reshaping the face of the diocese as the statistical data below indicate. Recently, on November 19, 2020, the entire diocese celebrated the dedication of St. Theresa’s Cathedral, Nsukka which has been described as “one of the cathedral churches

¹¹²F. Igboemeka, “2nd Synod of Awka Catholic Diocese Takes Off,” accessed on 27.03.2021, <https://old.anambrastate.gov.ng/news?r=2nd-synod-of-awka-catholic-diocese-takes-off&hs=b16e41d9aa8e7cab040dba0ef2947c39>

¹¹³Catholic Diocese of Nsukka, “Brief History,” accessed on 05.04.2021, <https://www.nsukkacatholicdiocese.org/brief-history.html>

¹¹⁴Ibid.

¹¹⁵Catholic Diocese of Nsukka, “Brief History,” accessed on 05.02.2021,

with unique sophisticated architectural design that would definitely attract tourists to Nsukka.”¹¹⁶ This project to which Bishop Onah invested everything has been a topmost priority of his administration. During the celebration, however, he thanked all for their various contributions and said: “The Church is family and our cathedral project has been a truly family project.” And to his predecessor, he added: “This Cathedral is just one visible manifestation of the healthy and lasting fruit of your selfless and tireless labor.”¹¹⁷

1.3.1.6 Nnewi Diocese

After Enugu and Awka dioceses, Nnewi is the third diocese that was carved out of Onitsha Archdiocese on November 9, 2001 with Bishop Hilary Paul Odili Okeke as the first Local Ordinary. Through the instrumentality of Frs. J. Shanahan and V. Duhaze who helped to establish mission stations at St. Michael, Eziora Ozubulu and St. Peter Claver, Odida Nnewichi around 1906, “the evangelization of what is today Nnewi was to spread like wild fire.”¹¹⁸ From these two centres which became parishes in 1908 and 1933 respectively, many other outstations sprang out and later became parishes also, especially between 1970 and 2000.¹¹⁹ The combined efforts of foreign missionaries like Fr. Joe Delany, Fr. Bubendorf and Fr. Vogler and the indigenous missionaries like Fr. John Cross Anyogu and Fr. Michael Iwene Tansi helped to make this a reality. Mr. Emmanuel Okeke who was the father of the first bishop of Nnewi diocese was among the pioneer Christians of this period.

By the time the diocese was created in 2001, the evangelization process which began 95 years ago had given birth to 47 Parishes, 129 diocesan Priests, St. Paul’s Junior Seminary Ukpokor (1967-1971) and Holy Ghost Juniorate within the diocese. Other structures include the diocesan hospital – Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, Ihiala and a hospital Chaplaincy – St. Luke’s Chaplaincy; Nnamdi Azikiwe University Teaching Hospital, Nnewi; many convents and fraternities for men and women religious; a monastery for nuns – St. Benedictine Monastery, Ozubulu; many Church Schools from nursery to secondary level. Despite the challenges of paganism and Pentecostalism the diocese was able to build a robust and vibrant Christian community with the co-operation existing between their energetic and dynamic bishop and the industrious and committed

¹¹⁶M. O. Eze, “Cathedral Project: Issue at Hand,” accessed on 09.04.2021, <https://www.nsukkacatholicdiocese.org/cathedral-construction.html>

¹¹⁷M. Maina, “Completion of Nigerian Cathedral ‘Not One Person’s Achievement’: Bishop at Dedication,” accessed on 09.04.2021, <https://www.aciafrica.org/news/2375/completion-of-nigerian-cathedral-not-one-persons-achievement-bishop-at-dedication>

¹¹⁸Anaedo, “The History of the Catholic Church in Nnewi Diocese,” accessed on 09.04.2021, <https://nnewi.info/history-of-the-catholic-church-in-nnewi-diocese/>

¹¹⁹For the list of outstations, when they were created as parishes and the names of the pioneer parish priests, see *Ibid.*

presbyterium.¹²⁰ With the retirement of Bishop Odili and the appointment of Bishop Jonas Benson Okoye on November 9, 2021 to succeed him, the diocese hopes to grow from strength to strength, looking forward to the speedy completion and dedication of her gigantic cathedral.

1.3.1.7 Awgu Diocese

While the light of Catholicism remotely began to shine in the Awgu division from the time of the French missionaries who came to Onitsha led by Fr. Lutz, it was precisely under the administration of Fr. J. Shanahan that missionaries from Eke town in Udi division and partly from Uturu in Okigwe planted the seed of the faith in Awgu. From these two sources (Eke and Uturu), “the church continued to spread in Awgu areas with joyful yet uneasy circumstances, on both sides of the missionaries and mission converts.”¹²¹ The School/Church at Oke-Oli Ali-Awgu (St. Michael’s Awgu) set up by the Roman Catholic Mission attracted over 100 converts in less than a year. Around this time, it was an act of heroism to be a Christian because of the constant attack that came from the practitioners of the native ancestral religion and proponents of the old tradition against the emerging Christianity.

On July 8, 2005, Enugu diocese gave birth to the young diocese of Awgu to be headed by Most Rev. John Ifeanyichukwu Okoye as the first bishop. St. Michael Archangel parish church in Awgu which is the largest parish in the vicinity is to serve as the cathedral and the bishop is sparing no effort to complete and dedicate it.

1.3.1.8 Ekwulobia Diocese

As in Awka diocese, Adazi mission which was established in 1912 “became the staging point for the spread of the Catholic faith in Ekwulobia Diocese.”¹²² Fr. Bubendorf and his companion quickly spread their missionary tentacles from Adazi to Otikpo of Uga and Amesi, Akpu, Achina, and Igboekwu in the territory of the present Ekwulobia diocese. In any town that invited them, they would establish churches and schools and leave behind a catechist-teacher to minister to peoples’ needs. They would pay occasional visits from Adazi to administer the sacraments and monitor their progress. With visible signs of maturity, the out-station is promoted to the status of a parish with a resident priest. Such was the case with Akpu mission which attained the noble status of a parish in 1945, Achina in 1945, Igboekwu in 1954 etc.¹²³ Many out-stations

¹²⁰Ibid.

¹²¹Catholic Diocese of Awgu, “Roman Catholic Diocese of Awgu,” accessed on 10.04.2021, https://wikivisually.com/wiki/Roman_Catholic_Diocese_of_Awgu

¹²²Catholic Diocese of Ekwulobia, *2020 Diary & Directory*, (Nsukka: Shepherd Press, 2020), p.14.

¹²³W.N. Ofojebe, F. Obi (eds.), *A Short History of the Catholic Diocese of Awka at Forty*, p. 61.

attached to these pioneer parishes later attained the parish status one after the other. Ekwulobia, St. Joseph was one of them. From being an out-station of St. Charles' parish Achina in 1945, it became a parish in 1955 under the leadership of Fr. Moses Orakwudo C.S.Sp as the first parish priest. And today, it has become the cathedral and the seat of the new Ekwulobia diocese which was erected and carved out from Awka diocese on March 5, 2020 with bishop Peter Ebere Okpaleke as the first Local Ordinary. In just three years of its creation, the diocese is showing great signs of fast development, thanks to the wisdom and diligence of the bishop (newly appointed a Cardinal) and the co-operation of the presbyterium and the entire faithful.

1.3.1.9 Owerri Archdiocese

In terms of a major centre of church growth in Eastern Nigeria, the area known today as Owerri diocese was the third after Onitsha and Calabar, and the coming of the Missionaries to the region marked the completion of the project to evangelize the Igbos.¹²⁴ Owerri diocese which consisted of the two political provinces of Owerri and the Rivers was created a diocese on April 18, 1950 when Bishop C. Heerey “saw the great potentials of the Christian growth in this thickly populated heart of Igboland and recommended its ecclesiastical independence.”¹²⁵ In the policy document of Bishop Whelan as the first bishop of Owerri diocese, great emphasis was laid on “the extension of an enlightened Christianity solidly founded; expansion through the multiplication of parishes; enlightenment through education solidly *through an African clergy*.”¹²⁶ Through his own effort and the hard work of Bishop Mark Unegbu who succeeded him on June 25, 1970, these objectives, which were quickly realized as Owerri diocese made tremendous progress in its missionary strides, led to the creation of many dioceses out of Owerri diocese – Umuahia (1958), Port Harcourt (1961), Orlu (1980), Okigwe (1981), Ahiara (1987). On November 28, 1980 when Bishop Unegbu completed and dedicated the ultra-modern cathedral, his predecessor, Bishop Whelan, who began the big project expressed his joy and fulfilment at the success achieved by them as foreign missionaries in creating an Igbo clergy and hierarchy that could sufficiently manage the rapidly growing Igbo Church.¹²⁷

On March 3, 1994, the diocese was promoted to the status of a Metropolitan Archdiocese and Most Rev. Anthony John Valentine Obinna who started as the bishop of Owerri diocese on July 1, 1993 assumed the post of the Metropolitan Archbishop. Following in the footsteps of his

¹²⁴F. E. Okon, “Expansion and Consolidation: Growth in Onitsha, Calabar, Owerri, Ogoja and Umuahia,” pp. 205-206.

¹²⁵R. A. Njoku, *The Advent of the Catholic Church in Nigeria: Its Growth in Owerri Diocese*, p. 182.

¹²⁶*Ibid.*, p. 183.

¹²⁷V. A. Nwosu, “The Growth of the Catholic Church in Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province,” p. 48.

predecessors, the Archbishop has never relented in his efforts towards upgrading the standard of education. He has increased the number of nursery, primary and secondary schools and opened an Institute of advanced studies to serve as a centre for religious and cultural research – the Whelan Research Academy. He has also set up the Assumpta Pastoral Centre which provides facilities for various forms of spiritual retreat, seminars and conferences.¹²⁸ And to promote the Igbo culture, he introduced the Archdiocesan Day Celebration in 1996, an annual September event at the heart of which is the Odenigbo Lecture Series delivered only in Igbo Language and by renowned Igbo Scholars and which attracts people from all walks of life, Local and International.¹²⁹ Just recently, Archbishop Ugorji, the former bishop of Umuahia, has been announced to replace Archbishop Obinna whose voluntary retirement was accepted by Pope Francis. And simultaneously, he has been elected as the new president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria in their first plenary meeting of 2022.

1.3.1.10 Umuahia Diocese

Umuahia diocese was created out of Owerri diocese on June 23, 1958 with Bishop Anthony Gogo Nwedo as the first Local Ordinary. St. Joseph's Catholic Church, Bende as the first mission station was created in 1921 while St. Theresa's Catholic parish was created in 1928 as the first parish and the first missionary in Umuahia was Rev. Fr. Herbert Whytte, C.S.Sp.¹³⁰ Despite the strong presence and opposition of the Methodist and Presbyterian Churches in the area, the diocese witnessed remarkable growth through the ingenuity and hard work of Bishop Nwedo who employed whatever means available at his disposal for effective evangelization. To ensure good Christian education and formation of school children, he established many primary and secondary schools with carefully drafted curricula, eight Colleges for the training of teachers (four each for men and women) and well-planned administrative structure.¹³¹ He also founded two indigenous religious congregations for men and women in order to forestall the problem of shortage of manpower – the Congregation of Daughters of Mary, Mother of Mercy (D.M.M.M – 1962) and the Society of Sons of Mary, Mother of Mercy (S.M.M.M – 1971). The testimony of the rapid

¹²⁸J. C. Ike, I. Aguwom, "Catholic Archdiocese of Owerri – A History," accessed on 11.04.2021, <http://www.owarch.org/about/the-archdiocese/>

¹²⁹Catholic Archdiocese of Owerri, "Directory 2007," accessed on 12.04.2021, <http://www.owarch.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/CatholicArchdioceseOwerri-Directory.pdf>

¹³⁰Catholic Diocese of Umuahia, "Brief History," accessed on 13.04.2021, <https://umuahidiocese.org/viewcontent3.php?tab=2>

¹³¹F. E. Okon, "Expansion and Consolidation: Growth in Onitsha, Calabar, Owerri, Ogoja and Umuahia," pp. 221-222.

development in the diocese since after the Nigerian civil war soon led to the creation of Okigwe and Aba dioceses in 1981 and 1990 respectively.¹³²

On April 2, 1990, Bishop Lucius Iwejuru Ugorji took over the mantle of leadership from Bishop Nwedo and as the statistical data in the diocesan diary and directory indicate,¹³³ the diocese which celebrated her Golden Jubilee in 2008 under his administration has made and continues to make tremendous improvements in both physical and spiritual aspects of the life of the diocese in spite of being the minority among the different Christian denominations. With the elevation of Bishop Ugorji to the position of the Metropolitan of Owerri Province, there is presently a *sede vacante* in Umuahia diocese.

1.3.1.11 Orlu Diocese

The first missionary journey to the area called Orlu diocese began around 1910 but it was in 1937 at Amaigbo that the first parish was created with Rev. Fr. Hackette as the first parish priest. The area which was raised to the status of a deanery in 1966 quickly matured on November 19, 1980 to be a sovereign diocese carved out of Owerri diocese. Most Rev. Gregory O. Ochiagha was appointed and installed on February 15, 1981 as the first Local Ordinary to serve the diocese whose cathedral is named after the Most Holy Trinity. With 23 parishes to take off, Bishop Ochiagha consolidated on the gains of the missionaries before him and put the diocese on the path of physical development and spiritual upliftment. By the tenth anniversary, he had already increased the number of parishes to 50. The diocese celebrated the dedication of her big Diocesan Cathedral on December 6, 2000, having ended her first Diocesan Synod the previous year. The uncountable achievements of the pioneer bishop by the time the diocese celebrated her Silver Jubilee on February 18, 2006 leaves no one in doubt concerning the high level of unity, co-operation and co-ordination between the bishop, the diocesan priests, the religious and the laity.¹³⁴

At the age of retirement, Bishop Ochiagha handed over to Bishop Augustine T. Ukwuoma who was ordained and installed on June 21, 2008. Continuing from where Bishop Ochiagha stopped, he “has continued to grow and fulfil the church’s mission. He has established more parishes, laid the foundation for the first Catholic University in the province – Trinitas University.”¹³⁵

¹³²V. A. Nwosu, “The Growth of the Catholic Church in Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province,” p. 49.

¹³³Cf. Catholic Diocese of Umuahia, *2016 Liturgical Diary/Directory*, (Umuahia: Lumen Press, 2016), p.18.

¹³⁴Catholic Diocese of Orlu, “Brief History of the Catholic Diocese of Orlu,” accessed on 15.04.2021, <https://orludiocese.org/history/>

¹³⁵Ibid.

1.3.1.12 Okigwe Diocese

Like in other dioceses already discussed, missionary activities by both Catholics and Protestants began in Okigwe area by the late 1900s. Between 1910 and 1918, three mission stations have been opened, first at Uturu, second at Umunumo and the last at Nneato-Ubahu. Uturu was then popular in the diocese not only as the oldest parish (1912) but also as a place associated with the formation of Reverend Brothers whose duty was to educate the youth. Apart from the education sector, the Catholic Mission also established hospitals, a rehabilitation centre and a leprosy centre to take care of the sick, the helpless and the disabled war victims.¹³⁶

Okigwe diocese was established as a diocese on January 24, 1981 with Bishop Anthony E. Ilonu as the first bishop. Around this time, Okigwe diocese had about 29 parishes, 69 indigenous priests, 66 senior seminarians and 60 indigenous religious men and women. With their co-operation and through the leadership style of Bishop Ilonu, Okigwe diocese has continued “to grow from strength to strength exemplifying the historic mustard seed. Now Okigwe Diocese has an enviable population of Catholic Christians, Clergy, religious houses and para-institutions.” The current bishop of Okigwe is Bishop Solomon A. Amatu who, at the retirement of Bishop Ilonu, has taken the diocese to yet a greater height from the day of his installation on April 22, 2006. With his wise homilies and administrative ingenuity, it is hoped that Okigwe diocese will soon be a diocese to beat in Igboland.

1.3.1.13 Ahiara Diocese

The visit of Fr. Daniel Walsh from Emekuku to Umuopara, Nguru in 1914 which was the breaking ground of Catholic missionary activity to the whole of Mbaise area was immediately followed by the creation of different missionary stations around Nguru. By 1959, each of the five original clans making up Mbaise district – Ahiara, Ekwerazu, Agbajah, Ezinihitte and Oke Uvuru – had gotten at least a parish. The number of parishes grew up to 10 with nearly 170,000 Catholics by 1970 when the Nigerian civil war broke out. By the time Ahiara diocese was carved out of Owerri diocese on November 18, 1987, Bishop Victor Adibe Chikwe who was ordained on January 6, 1988 as the first Local Ordinary had 19 parishes with more than 270,000 Catholics to begin his episcopal apostolate. Because of the huge and fast-growing population of Catholics and indigenous clergy since after the civil war, Mbaise has been touted as the “Ireland of Nigeria.”¹³⁷

After the death of Bishop Chikwe on September 16, 2010, Bishop Okpaleke was consecrated on May 21, 2013 to replace him as the substantive bishop but “local clergy and faithful

¹³⁶C. I. Eke, “The Creation of More Dioceses after 1960,” pp. 301-303.

¹³⁷Mbaise Catholics’ Forum, “A Brief History of Ahiara Diocese,” accessed on 15.04.2021, <https://medium.com/@mbaisecatholicsforum/a-brief-history-of-ahiara-diocese-cd38c100c503>

objected to his appointment and prevented him from entering the cathedral in order to take possession of the diocese.”¹³⁸ In a petition written by Ahiara Diocese World-Wide Laity Council to Archbishop Luis Francisco Ladaria Ferrer, they expressed their preference only for a shepherd from the Presbyterium of Ahiara diocese, no more no less.¹³⁹ For more than seven years, this sad and scandalous incident has led to the state of *sede vacante* in Ahiara diocese which is presently run by the bishop of Umuahia, Most Rev. Lucius Ugorji who replaced Cardinal Onaiyekan as the Apostolic Administrator to the diocese.

1.3.1.14 Aba Diocese

Catholicism which was a late-comer in Aba zone started around 1916 through the indefatigable and unwavering apostolic spirit of Rev. Fr. Cornelius Liddane, C.S.Sp. The first generation of Catholics at this time were converts from Anglicanism, Sabbatarianism or from old paganism. As a fast-growing commercial city in Igboland, however, Aba quickly became a centre of attraction for immigrants who came from other parts of Igboland where Catholicism had taken root like Anambra and Imo States. Their permanent residence in Aba helped to develop the city which indirectly served the cause of Christ as it meant the growth of Catholicism.¹⁴⁰

Aba zone which was one of three major districts of Umuahia diocese became an independent diocese on April 2, 1990 with Bishop Vincent Valentine Ezeonyia, CSSp as the first diocesan bishop. With a Catholic population of 227,225 concentrated around Aba Urban and its immediate environs, 24 parishes, 33 indigenous priests and many religious men and women, he focused on deepening the faith and improving the lot of the masses through the apostolate of establishing schools and hospitals to render the best of services to humanity. At the tenth anniversary of the diocese which coincided with the Great Jubilee Year 2000, the diocese decided to hold a “Synod for True Christian Identity” which took place in 2001. The Cathedral was dedicated in December 2004 to Christ the King.¹⁴¹ Five years after the death of Bishop Ezeonyia on February 8, 2015 and being a *sede vacante*, the diocese has been blessed with the gift of a new

¹³⁸B. M. Reis, “Pope Francis Accepts the Resignation of Nigerian Bishop,” accessed on 15.04.2021, <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2018-02/pope-francis-nigerian-bishop-resignation.html>

¹³⁹Ahiara Diocese World-Wide Laity Council, “Pope Francis: Give Ahiara Diocese Justice – a ‘Pastor Close to the People,’” accessed on 15.04.2021, https://www.change.org/p/archbishop-luis-francisco-ladaria-ferrer-pope-francis-give-ahiara-diocese-justice-a-pastor-close-to-the-people?source_location=topic_page

¹⁴⁰Catholic Diocese of Aba, “History of the Catholic Diocese of Aba,” accessed on 16.04.2021, <http://www.doc88.com/p-9438285676508.html>

¹⁴¹Catholic Diocese of Aba, “Roman Catholic Diocese of Aba,” accessed on 16.04.2021, <https://alchetron.com/Roman-Catholic-Diocese-of-Aba>

bishop in the person of Most Rev. Augustine Ndubueze Echema whose tenure of office which started on February 13, 2020 is hoped to put the diocese back on the path of tremendous growth.¹⁴²

1.3.2 Statistical Data of the Different Dioceses

The data below were gathered by *GCatholic.org*, a non-profit website owned by Gabriel Chow and which aims “at providing comprehensive and useful information of the Universal Catholic Church for all Catholics in the world.”¹⁴³ Though the numerical figures posted by this website may not be perfectly accurate in all cases as it sometimes clashes with the data in some of the diocesan websites, the researcher has preferred to use it since it is the same source of information collected the same year but separately for the different dioceses except Ekwulobia which was newly created in 2020. Comparing these data with the numerical strength of the Catholic Church from the missionary era to the creation of the different dioceses, one can only confirm that Catholicism in Igboland in general has made a steady and tremendous growth within the first century and three decades of its existence.

S/N	Diocese/Arch	Y.St	Ar.k	Pop.Cath	T.Pop	Perc	N.Pa	T.Pr	D.Pr	R.Pr
1	Onitsha Arch	2018	2,778	2,141,900	3,142,460	68.2	183	512	471	41
2	Enugu	2018	2,738	1,431,400	2,808,450	51	204	482	336	146
3	Abakaliki	2018	6,342	605,520	2,480,480	24.4	145	167	156	11
4	Awka	2018	1,551	890,878	1,765,814	50.5	186	415	400	15
5	Nsukka	2018	3,180	533,100	666,800	79.9	185	276	255	21
6	Nnewi	2018	1,160	576,280	964,230	59.8	102	261	228	33
7	Awgu	2018	1,310	413,000	722,760	57.1	48	65	58	7
8	Ekwulobia	2020	675	602,115	984,415	61.2	82	252	240	12
9	Owerri Arch	2018	2,996	1,086,393	1,547,780	70.2	155	357	268	89
10	Umuahia	2018	2,460	251,852	1,316,000	19.1	70	186	163	23
11	Orlu	2018	929	1,483,700	1,869,000	79.4	183	312	283	29
12	Okigwe	2018	1,386	1,020,000	2,771,300	36.8	109	323	315	8
13	Ahiara	2018	425	465,170	691,535	67.3	73	117	109	8
14	Aba	2018	2,494	427,500	1,120,300	38.2	90	221	139	82

S/N	Diocese/Arch	N.Br	N.Sr	N.Se
1	Onitsha Arch	129	702	191
2	Enugu	358	550	240
3	Abakaliki	17	224	218
4	Awka	23	222	144
5	Nsukka	194	100	209
6	Nnewi	405	182	219
7	Awgu	7	24	97
8	Ekwulobia	9	22	334

¹⁴²G. Abiakam, “Aba Diocese Gets a New Bishop After Five Years,” accessed on 16.04.2021, <https://fmic.gov.ng/aba-diocese-gets-a-new-bishop-after-five-years/>

¹⁴³“About this Site,” accessed on 16.04.2021, <http://www.gcatholic.org/about.htm>

9	Owerri Arch	282	294	182
10	Umuahia	136	161	96
11	Orlu	33	197	15
12	Okigwe	33	183	176
13	Ahiara	8	202	178
14	Aba	101	84	86

S/N – Serial Number

Y.St – Year of Statistics

Ar.k – Area of land in Km.sq

Pop.Cath – Population of Catholics

T.Pop – Total Population

Perc – Percentage of Catholics

N.Pa – Number of Parishes

T.Pr – Total Number of Priests (both Diocesan and Religious)

D.Pr – Diocesan Priests

R.Pr – Religious Priests

N.Br – Number of Religious Brothers

N.Sr – Number of Religious Sisters

N.Se – Number of Seminarians

1.3.3 Common Features in the Diocesan Administration

From the above brief historical development of Catholic Church in Igboland, one discovers that the different dioceses were offspring of the same parent and products of the same missionary methodology. Administered together under one Apostolic Vicariate till 1950, it is not surprising that, as different dioceses, they still have the same or similar administrative structures. Each diocese is broken down into smaller units for more effective grassroot evangelization. In increasing order, the units each of which has an administrative head include: zones, parishes, deaneries and regions. There is a huge number of religious congregations for men and women with different apostolates working and supplying for the limited number of priests required to serve the need of the teeming population of Catholics in each diocese. And for the training of more priests, each diocese has got at least a minor seminary and a spiritual year formation centre. Their formation is continued in the major seminaries till the year of ordination; Onitsha province has about 6 of them within the metropolis just as Owerri has about 3.

To promote the spirituality of the laity and their greater participation in the affairs of the Church, many pious societies were founded and lay statutory bodies established. These groups together make up what is known as *Lay Apostolate Groups* and the role of the laity in the evangelization of Igboland became more pronounced as a result of “the loss of mission schools to the government, expulsion of missionaries, and socio-economic challenges in the postwar

period.”¹⁴⁴ Some of the most popular pious societies in every diocese are Region of Mary, Block Rosary Crusade, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement and Purgatorian Society. Others include: St. Jude’s Society, St. Anthony’s Society, St. Vincent de Paul Society, Catholic Biblical Movements of Nigeria. Some of these societies embark on external apostolates that benefit the poor, the sick and the needy in the surrounding communities.¹⁴⁵

The organization of the laity comes under four basic categories of Men, Women, Boys and Girls. Popularly known as Catholic Men Organization (C.M.O), Catholic Women Organization (C.W.O), Catholic Boys Organization (C.B.O) and Catholic Girls Organization (C.G.O), “these four umbrella organizations were to serve as ‘pastoral school’ rather than as ‘colleges of piety’ reminiscent of the traditional pious sodalities.”¹⁴⁶ In some dioceses, Catholic Youths Organization and Mary League Association are the simple designations used for boys and girls respectively. Holy Childhood Association is the organization for children.

Each diocese has administrative cadre consisting of different councils, commissions, committees, boards, organizations and institutions set up for administrative purposes.¹⁴⁷ Membership into these groups comprises both the clergy and the laity who, in the judgement of the bishop, have the required knowledge and skill to achieve the desired goal. And for the purpose of self-reliance and sustainability, each diocese has also got many financial projects and investments like banks, filling stations, hospitals and some agricultural establishments. Finally, each diocese still battles with the problem of lack of proper inculturation which results in shallow faith that easily slumps down to paganism or becomes an easy market to increasing Pentecostalism.

In all the dioceses, beginning from the time of the European missionaries, one major element that has continued to help in attracting and growing the people in Catholic faith is the solemn celebration of the liturgy in which soul-lifting liturgical music plays a vital role.¹⁴⁸ The personal experience of the researcher supports this. Part of what attracted him to the priestly vocation as a young altar server of 11 years in 1984 was the decorum with which a particular priest in his parish then at St. Michael’s Parish Fegge, Onitsha sang the Mass each Sunday, especially the preface. Having a similar experience as a child, I. Ozigboh confirmed that “one need[ed] to be present at a Latin sung Mass for an Igbo congregation in order to appreciate the attraction which the Catholic liturgy had for the Igbo. The Latin texts were unintelligible to the converts, but the

¹⁴⁴J. C. Chiamaka, “The Catholic Church, the Nigerian Civil War, and the Beginning of Organized Lay Apostolate Groups Among the Igbos of SouthEastern Nigeria,” *The Catholic Historical Review*, vol 99, no 1, 2013, p. 95.

¹⁴⁵A. O. Achononu, *Poverty and the Church in Igboland, Nigeria*, (Bloomington: Xlibris, 2012), pp. 157-158.

¹⁴⁶I. R. A. Ozigboh, *Igbo Catholicism the Onitsha Connection 1967 – 1984*, p. 43.

¹⁴⁷The co-ordinators, chaplains and members of these groups are published inside the Liturgical Diary/Directory of each diocese.

¹⁴⁸Cf. V. A. Nwosu, “So Rich and Abundant A Harvest,” [in:] C. A. Obi (ed.), *A Hundred Years of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nigeria 1885 – 1985*, p. 381.

heart-throbbing refrains and rhythms of the Gregorian plain chant transmitted a compelling aesthetic pleasure.”¹⁴⁹ Till date, people still travel long distances away from their parish of residence just to attend Masses at Churches where they feel that liturgical music is rendered with greater dignity and solemnity. To understand more the reason for this, we shall focus our attention in the next subtopic on the concept and basic principles of liturgical music.

1.4 General Principles of Liturgical Music

1.4.1 What is Liturgy

For better understanding of the concept of liturgical music, it may be necessary to begin with the concept of liturgy itself. From the first article of the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), we learnt that man was created for the purpose of knowing, loving and serving God in order to live eternally with Him in heaven.¹⁵⁰ When man sinned, however, he lost not only his natural and preternatural gifts, but also the supernatural gifts which made possible his relationship and union with God. But out of His goodness and love, God did not abandon him to his fate but rather sent His Only Begotten Son by the power of the Holy Spirit to take human nature in order to repair the injustice of man’s disobedience to God. Liturgy comprises the whole history of salvation by which God reveals himself to man and seeks to unite with him. This work of God reaches its full realization in Christ who, through His works of redemption, accomplishes the eternal mystery of God in which man participates in the Church through the Holy Spirit.¹⁵¹

Going back to etymology, the word “liturgy” originated from the Greek *leitourgia* which is a compound of two words: *laos* = people and *ergon* = work. It denotes the work for the people and of the people. Religiously, it connotes the work of Christ done on behalf of the people. As the people are incapable of accomplishing the work of redemption on their own, Christ who is the principal liturgist does the work on their behalf. He prays to His Father and the people join.¹⁵² Liturgy is the work of God involving the people’s participation.¹⁵³ For K. Harmon, liturgy combines both; it is *primarily* the work of God who transforms us perfectly into the Body of Christ and *secondarily* our work by our voluntary surrender to this transforming work of God who also

¹⁴⁹I. Ozigbo, *Roman Catholicism in South Eastern Nigeria 1885 – 1931*, pp. 84-85; cf. R. Skeris, “Ordinary of the Mass,” accessed on 17.04.2021, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/ordinary-of-the-mass-11175>

¹⁵⁰CCC, (Nairobi: Paulines Publications, 1994), no 1.

¹⁵¹Cf. B. Nadolski, *Liturgika: Liturgika Fundamentalna, vol 1*, (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Pallottinum, 2014), pp. 12-13.

¹⁵²Elements of the Catholic Mass, “Episode 1: The Meaning of “Liturgy,”” accessed on 19.05.2021, <https://d2y1pz2y630308.cloudfront.net/14533/documents/2020/6/Elements%20of%20the%20Mass%20-%20Study%20Guide.pdf>

¹⁵³CCC, no 1069.

raises us with Christ from death to new life.¹⁵⁴ In the papal encyclical *Mediator Dei*, Pope Pius XII harmonized all these perspectives in his comprehensive definition of liturgy as “the public worship which our Redeemer as Head of the Church renders to the Father as well as the worship which the community of the faithful renders to its Founder, and through Him to the Heavenly Father. It is, in short, the worship rendered by the Mystical Body of Christ in the entirety of its Head and members.”¹⁵⁵

Some liturgists talk about the two aspects or dimensions of liturgy: the “descending” or “katabatic” dimension which emphasizes God’s sanctifying descent in the Holy Spirit and the “ascending” or “anabatic” aspect stressing the glorifying of God the Father, which is worship or cult understood in a narrower sense.¹⁵⁶ Describing these dimensions, H. Vorgrimler warned against a wrong interpretation that might imply that while the first is the work of God, that the second must be purely a human activity. For him, both are the work of the “one and the same divine Spirit in the head and members of the body of Christ.”¹⁵⁷ Combining these two dimensions, the authors of the book *Introduction to the Study of Liturgy* see liturgy as “God’s action toward human beings, the immediate consequence of which is worship of God, the cultic dimension of liturgy.”¹⁵⁸ This idea which they link to the presence of Christ in the worship service is only an interpretation of the definition of liturgy according the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council (SVC):

*The liturgy is considered as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ. In the liturgy the sanctification of the man is signified by signs perceptible to the senses, and is effected in a way which corresponds with each of these signs; in the liturgy the whole public worship is performed by the Mystical Body of Jesus Christ, that is, by the Head and His members.*¹⁵⁹

Up to the present day, the term ‘the Liturgy’ is used in the Eastern Orthodox Churches to refer specifically to the Eucharist.¹⁶⁰ But in the West, apart from the Eucharist, it also includes the other sacraments, the Divine Office, funerals, the blessing of abbots and abbesses, the consecration of virgins and of churches, the rites for religious profession, and similar rites.¹⁶¹ Certain characteristic qualities are regarded as essential to liturgy, liturgical assemblies or liturgical prayers. According to one source, such qualities include: trinitarian, paschal, ecclesial,

¹⁵⁴K. Harmon, *The Ministry of Music: Singing the Paschal Mystery*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2004), pp. 1-2.

¹⁵⁵Pope Pius XII, *Mediator Dei*, no 20.

¹⁵⁶H. Vorgrimler, *Sacramental Theology*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1992), p. 22

¹⁵⁷*Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸A. Gerhards, B. Kranemann, *Introduction to the Study of Liturgy*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2017), p. 9.

¹⁵⁹SVC, *Sacrosanctum Concilium (SC)*, no 7.

¹⁶⁰M. Davie, T. Grass, S. R. Holmes, J. McDowell, T. A. Noble (eds.), *The New Dictionary of Theology: Historical and Systematic*, (London: Inter-Varsity Press, 2016), 2nd ed., p. 525.

¹⁶¹R. P. McBrien, *Catholicism*, (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1994), p. 1064.

sacramental, ethically-oriented and eschatological.¹⁶² The definition of liturgy in the Catechism of Filipino Catholics underlined these qualities: “The liturgy, then, is a) the official public worship of the *Blessed Trinity*, b) by the *whole Church*, through the celebration of Christ’s *Paschal Mystery*, c) in a *sacramental*, symbolic activity, d) with intrinsic *moral/ethical* links, and e) in a built-in *eschatological* orientation toward perfect fulfilment in the future.”¹⁶³ Another source emphasizes three other essential qualities of liturgy: biblical, tradition-related and doctrinal. The Catholic liturgy is bible-oriented; the readings and the prayers are basically from the Bible. It is the carrier of tradition and expresses the doctrines of the faith in the prayers and the songs (*lex orandi, lex credendi*).¹⁶⁴

While liturgy as the official public worship of God is at the heart of the life of the Church and is the source of her holiness,¹⁶⁵ it does not, however, exhaust her entire activity. According to CCC, “it must be preceded by evangelisation, faith and conversion” and followed by the fruits it must bear in the lives of the faithful: “new life in the Spirit, involvement in the mission of the Church and service to her unity.”¹⁶⁶ Besides the liturgical prayers, we have other prayers – communal or private – which benefit the Whole Church even though not offered in the name of the Whole Church but rather in the name of the individual or individuals engaging in it at the time;¹⁶⁷ such prayers are not opposed to the sacred liturgy; they rather find its source and goal in it.¹⁶⁸

We shall conclude this section with a distinction between liturgy and non-liturgical prayers known as “popular religiosity” or “popular piety”. Sometimes called devotions or pious exercises, these are “multiple and varied expressions of simple and fervent faith in God, of love for Christ the Redeemer, of invocations of the Holy Spirit, of devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, of the veneration of the Saints, of commitment to conversion and of fraternal charity.”¹⁶⁹ Examples of these exercises of piety approved by the Holy See for the faithful are May devotion in honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, June devotion to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, novenas and tridiums and stations of the cross.¹⁷⁰ Others include devotions in honour of Our Mother of Perpetual Help,

¹⁶²For explanations of these qualities, see Catholic Bishops’ Conference of the Philippines, *Catechism for Filipino Catholics*, (Manila: Word & Life Publications, 1997), New Edition, nos 1506 – 1513.

¹⁶³*Ibid.*, no 1514.

¹⁶⁴M. Davie, T. Grass, S. R. Holmes, J. McDowell, T. A. Noble (eds.), *The New Dictionary of Theology: Historical and Systematic*, p. 525.

¹⁶⁵D. B. Hardy, “Praying with the Church – the Divine Office,” accessed on 21.05.2021, <https://www.pluscardenabbey.org/divine-office>

¹⁶⁶CCC, no 1072; Cf. Pope John Paul II, *Spiritus et Sponsa (Apostolic Letter on the 40th Anniversary of SC)*, no 3.

¹⁶⁷Sr. Marietta, S. N. J. M., *Singing the Liturgy – A Practical Means of Christian Living*, (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1956), p. 28.

¹⁶⁸CCC, no 1073; Cf. SC no 10.

¹⁶⁹CDWDS, *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy: Principles and Guidelines*, (Vatican: 2001), no 6.

¹⁷⁰Pope Pius XII, *Mediator Dei*, no 182.

Chaplet of Divine Mercy, Novena to the Holy Spirit etc. Some of these devotional prayers and practices which marked the history of the Western Church flourished at the time when Mass was in Latin, Holy Communion was infrequent and the people were alienated from the activities going on at the altar.¹⁷¹

Because they are communal and objective, popular devotions may be preferred to the prayer of the individual. However, they can never be equated with the liturgy to which pre-eminence of right belongs. Stressing this, Guardini added: “The liturgy is and will be the ‘*lex orandi*.’ Non- liturgical prayer must take the liturgy for its model, and must renew itself in the liturgy, if it is to retain its vitality.”¹⁷² As an embodiment of sacramental actions, liturgy is necessary to life in Christ and this is why attendance at Sunday Mass is obligatory according to the Church’s precept. Popular devotions are optional and must always be measured, evaluated and renewed in line with the Gospel in order to guarantee their proper relationship with the Christian mystery.¹⁷³ Being optional must not, however, lead to an under estimation of these practices which, “by nourishing the spiritual life of the faithful,” according to Pope Pius XII, “prepare them to take part in the sacred public functions with greater fruit.”¹⁷⁴ For this benefit, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (SC) instructs that they are to be highly commended as long as they are not opposed to the laws and norms of the Church and can be drawn up to synchronize with the liturgical seasons.¹⁷⁵ But while permitting pious exercises to precede or follow liturgical functions when the need arises, Sacred Congregation of Rites (SCR) however warned against the illegality of mixing both together.¹⁷⁶ Having briefly discussed the concept of liturgy, let us now try to understand what liturgical music is.

1.4.2 *An Understanding of Liturgical Music*

As singing belongs to the one who loves according to St. Augustine, music has remained a vital means of expression of deeper sentiments of love to God in a way mere word cannot. Even from ancient times, the history of any religion, pagan or Christian, has always recognized the prominent role of music in worship – to express adoration, contrition, thanksgiving and supplication to God.¹⁷⁷ According to Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, this divine function can only be performed by the kind of music which does not cause man’s disintegration into formless

¹⁷¹R. Thiron, “What is the Difference between Liturgy and Devotions?” accessed on 21.05.2021, <https://faithmag.com/what-difference-between-liturgy-and-devotions>

¹⁷²R. Guardini, “The Spirit of the Liturgy,” no 1, accessed on 21.05.2021, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/spirit-of-the-liturgy-11203>

¹⁷³CDWDS, *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy: Principles and Guidelines*, nos 11 – 12.

¹⁷⁴Pope Pius XII, *Mediator Dei*, no 175.

¹⁷⁵SVC, SC, no 13.

¹⁷⁶SCR, *De Musica Sacra et Sacra Liturgia*, no 12.

¹⁷⁷Sr. Marietta, S. N. J. M., *Singing the Liturgy*, p. 49.

intoxication or mere sensuality but rather has the *Logos* as its standard.¹⁷⁸ Such forms of music, therefore, which can be judged worthy of the dignity and splendour of human encounter with the Divine in liturgy falls within the realm of liturgical music. Encyclopaedia Britannica, in simple terms, defines liturgical music as the “music written for performance in the religious rite of worship.”¹⁷⁹ In *Musicam Sacram (MS)*, it is considered as that type of music “which, being created for the celebration of divine worship, is endowed with a certain holy sincerity of form.”¹⁸⁰

The term that has been most common for worship music is “Church Music,” but because of its shortcomings in expressing the differing manifestations of music for worship, historical as well as contemporary, other alternative terminologies have appeared such as: “Religious Music,” “Sacred Music,” “Ritual Music,” “Christian Ritual Music,” and “Pastoral Music.” Pointing out their little nuances and limitations, R. A. Leaver finally chose “Liturgical Music” as the most suitable term for worship music in spite of the danger of its interpretation as the music of liturgical texts alone. For him, the term “Liturgy” in its contemporary usage is not just restricted to texts, but embraces also all that is designated by “Rite” – words, actions, music and physical space.¹⁸¹ In this work, especially in the citations from various authors, some of these nomenclatures can show up now and then but the terms that will appear with the highest frequency are sacred music and liturgical music which the researcher wishes to use interchangeably. However, the use of liturgical music here will exclude the kind of sacred popular music that is purely religious. This kind of religious music, no doubt, should be cultivated and promoted as long as it aids religion, uplifts the souls of the faithful, promotes catechesis, brings spiritual progress to Christian families and assists Catholic apostolate.¹⁸² But “since it is not meant for sacred worship and is expressed in a rather free form, it is not permitted in liturgical functions.”¹⁸³

Liturgical music and liturgy are closely connected by their very nature that “laws cannot be made for the one without affecting the other.”¹⁸⁴ Don E. Saliers argues that music is not ‘an ornament,’ something we ‘insert’ or ‘apply’ to liturgy or something that just plays a ‘role’ in worship. For him, it is misleading to think that liturgy is something out there to which we add something else called music. With certain acoustical qualities and patterns which the basic acts or

¹⁷⁸Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Joseph Ratzinger Collected Works: Theology of the Liturgy*, (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2014), vol 2, p. 203.

¹⁷⁹Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia, “Liturgical Music,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2019, accessed on 21.05.2021, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/liturgical-music>

¹⁸⁰SVC, *MS*, no 4a.

¹⁸¹For more detailed explanations, see R. A. Leaver “What is Liturgical Music?” [in:] R. A. Leaver, J. Ann Zimmerman (eds.), *Liturgy and Music*. (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1998), pp. 213-217.

¹⁸²Pope Pius XII, *Musicae Sacrae Disciplina*, nos 36-37.

¹⁸³SCR, *De Musica Sacra et Sacra Liturgia*, no 10.

¹⁸⁴*Ibid.*, Introduction.

units of a worship service have, he rather believes “that music is *integral* to Christian liturgical worship.”¹⁸⁵ Silent liturgy – Mass or Divine Office – is only but an institutionalized exception.¹⁸⁶

Shedding more light on this connectedness during the lecture he delivered at the VIII International Church Music Congress in Rome on November 17, 1985, Pope Benedict XVI also expressed how music joins the whole of creation together in liturgy. He said:

From the very beginning, liturgy and music have been quite closely related. Mere words do not suffice when man praises God. Discourse with God goes beyond the boundaries of human speech. Hence by its very nature the liturgy has everywhere called upon the help of music, of singing, and of the voices of creation in the sounds of instruments. The praise of God, after all, does not involve only man. To worship God means to join in that of which all creatures speak.¹⁸⁷

For J. B. Ward, liturgical music is one art in which prayer (liturgy) and music combine in such a way that the music must pray and the prayer must sing. This art is to be guided by the simple formula ‘*Lex orandi lex cantandi*’ which means that the law of prayer is the law of music. The same principle is also recognized in opera where the law of the drama is the law of the music, that is to say, that the spirit and form of the music are regulated by the spirit and form of the drama. Relating this principle to musical composition, she was firmly convinced that “the composer must understand the meaning of the drama, in the one case, and the meaning of prayer in the other, in order to give either an adequate musical setting.”¹⁸⁸

As a sacred action of the Church which no other action equals in efficacy by the same title and to the same degree,¹⁸⁹ liturgy takes the place of pre-eminence in this intimate relationship with music. Hence, the place of music is not primary, but secondary. It is not a master or an end in itself, but an assistant or a necessary means by which the liturgical enactment of the paschal mystery and our immersion into it is greatly fostered.¹⁹⁰ In occupying its proper position of service to liturgy and not seeking attention for its own sake, music helps us to encounter the Divine, Jesus Christ and through him, the Father. Only then can it express the joy and gladness of which the Holy Spirit is the source. This relatedness to liturgy raises music to the highest rank in the ladder of arts as confirmed by the Fathers of Vatican II: “The musical tradition of the universal Church

¹⁸⁵D. E. Saliers, “Liturgical Musical Formation,” [in:] R. A. Leaver, J. Ann Zimmerman (eds.), *Liturgy and Music*, p. 387.

¹⁸⁶A. Gerhards, B. Kranemann, *Introduction to the Study of Liturgy*, p. 308.

¹⁸⁷Pope Benedict XVI, “Liturgy and Church Music,” accessed on 22.05.2021, <https://media.musicasacra.com/publications/sacredmusic/pdf/liturgy&music.pdf>

¹⁸⁸J. B. Ward, “The Reform of Church Music,” accessed on 23.05.2021, pp. 1-2, <https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/25980913/the-reform-of-church-music-by-justine-bayard-ward>

¹⁸⁹SVC, SC, no 7.

¹⁹⁰K. Harmon, *The Ministry of Music*, p. 3; Cf. R. F. Hayburn, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music*, p. 389.

is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art. The main reason for this pre-eminence is that, as sacred song united to the words, it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy.”¹⁹¹ By this relatedness also, music participates in the same purpose of liturgical words and actions: glory of God and sanctification of the faithful.¹⁹²

1.4.3 *The Fundamental Principles of Liturgical Music*

What the Church teaches on liturgical music remains the standard and is contained in the various documents of the Church. Other writings - books and articles - on liturgical music are mainly commentaries and elucidations of the Church’s teaching. In this sub-topic, we shall clarify some of the key principles and regulations guiding the art of music in our liturgy, concentrating on conciliar documents like *SC* and *MS*, papal documents and other documents on liturgical music issued by the Congregation in charge of sacred worship.

1.4.3.1 *The Purpose of Liturgical Music*

In the above documents, the purpose of liturgical music is of primary importance. Just like a house built on sand is bound to suffer a great fall, practicing liturgical music without proper understanding of this fundamental principle leads to a catastrophe. This may be the reason Pope Pius X in 1903 mentioned it as number one principle in his Instruction on Sacred Music, *Tra Le Sollecitudini (TLS)*. He clearly stated, as SVC would affirm sixty years later,¹⁹³ that the goal of liturgical music must fully correspond to the general goal of liturgy: “Sacred music, being a complementary part of the solemn liturgy, participates in the general scope of the liturgy, which is the glory of God and the sanctification and edification of the faithful.”¹⁹⁴ Like the goal of liturgy, the goal of liturgical music has simultaneously the vertical and the horizontal dimensions. Explaining this, J. M. Joncas emphasized that “any attempt to divorce the glorification of God from the sanctification of humanity in the theory and practice of Catholic Christian worship music distorts its purpose.”¹⁹⁵

a) *Glory of God*

Liturgy is defined as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ.¹⁹⁶ This priestly office began already when he took human nature and, as the high priest of the new and eternal covenant,

¹⁹¹SVC, *SC*, no 112.

¹⁹²CCC, no 1157.

¹⁹³SVC, *SC*, no 10.

¹⁹⁴Pope Pius X, *TLS*, no 1.

¹⁹⁵J. M. Joncas, “Liturgy and Music,” [in:] A. J. Chupungco (ed.), *Handbook for Liturgical Studies: Fundamental Liturgy*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1998), vol 2, p. 318.

¹⁹⁶SVC, *SC*, no 7.

introduced the heavenly hymn that is sung throughout all ages into this earthly exile and then, joining the entire community of mankind to himself, associates it with His own singing of this canticle of divine praise.¹⁹⁷ If liturgy is the exercise of Christ's priestly ministry, then the purpose of liturgy is the purpose of Christ Himself which is "to give glory to God directly through a worship worthy of Him and indirectly through the salvation and sanctification of men. The liturgy gives glory to God by expressing exteriorly and corporately the interior worship of the Church and by effecting in the souls of men a fuller Christ-life."¹⁹⁸

Liturgical music, while participating in this general scope of the liturgy, serves the primary purpose of supplying a beautiful voice and adding a greater efficacy to the liturgical texts and uniting all the faithful in this heavenly worship of glorifying God through Christ Jesus in the power of the Holy Spirit. During liturgy and by means of liturgical music, the Church militant on earth joins with one voice with the Church triumphant in heaven in singing a wondrous and eternal song of praise to the most Holy Trinity.¹⁹⁹ In his address, on March 4, 2017, to all the participants in the International Conference on Sacred Music to mark the 50th anniversary of *MS*, Pope Francis ended by reiterating the task of sacred music and liturgical chants to constantly give us "a sense of the glory of God, of his beauty, of his holiness which wraps us in a 'luminous cloud.'"²⁰⁰

It is quite unfortunate that today more people seem not to realise that liturgical music is basically a means of expressing our loving service to God and to Him alone; it neither aims at satisfying human emotional needs nor at serving the pleasure of human entertainment.²⁰¹ Cardinal Ratzinger stresses that celebrating ourselves and forgetting about God who calls us and for whom we gather at any liturgical celebration portends an imminent danger in our age.²⁰²

b) The Sanctification of the Faithful

Apart from the purpose of the glory of God, liturgical music is also a veritable means to effectively foster the sanctity of the faithful not only at liturgy, but also in the celebrations of God's word and in popular devotions.²⁰³ The twofold purpose – Glory of God and the sanctification of the faithful – is like the two sides of the same coin. When the Church sings the praise and glory of God, simultaneously she receives sufficient graces for the sanctification of her entire members.

¹⁹⁷SVC, *SC*, no 83.

¹⁹⁸Sr. Marietta, S. N. J. M., *Singing the Liturgy*, p. 34; Cf. SVC, *SC*, no 83.

¹⁹⁹Pope Pius XII, *Mediator Dei*, no 192.

²⁰⁰Pope Francis, "Address of his Holiness Pope Francis to Participants in the International Conference on Sacred Music," accessed on 24.06.2021,

https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2017/march/documents/papa-francesco_20170304_convegno-musica-sacra.html

²⁰¹Cf. H. M. Schueller, *The Idea of Music: An Introduction to Musical Aesthetics in Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications), 1988, p. 330.

²⁰²J. Ratzinger [in:] Cardinal R. Sarah, *Cardinal Sarah at Sacra Liturgia Conference*.

²⁰³Cf. SVC, *MS*, no 46.

The graces received in turn dispose them more perfectly to join in the heavenly song of glory. From the perspective of human sanctity, therefore, the purpose of liturgical music is to clothe the words of the liturgical prayer with an appropriate melody that will more easily introduce the faithful into the spirit expressed in the prayer and thus, dispose them to receive the fruits of grace which God wills to send through the prayer.²⁰⁴

As part of its ministerial function, liturgical music adds a greater degree of solemnity to liturgical celebration. The impact of this form of celebration on the sanctity of the faithful is undeniable as they are aroused to greater devotion just as the glory of the Church is increased.²⁰⁵ Whether by singing or listening to music, according to J. Melloh, the Christian appropriates the great *mysterium* which envelopes his entire faculties; it touches the heart, forms the feelings and vivifies the body.²⁰⁶ This was the experience of St. Augustine which he documented in his book, *The Confessions of St. Augustine*: “How I wept, deeply moved by your hymns, songs, and the voices that echoed through your Church! What emotion I experienced in them! Those sounds flowed into my ears distilling the truth in my heart. A feeling of devotion surged within me, and tears streamed down my face - tears that did me good.”²⁰⁷

1.4.3.2 *The Qualities of Liturgical Music*

In order to achieve its purpose, any liturgical music must possess certain characteristic qualities. Three major qualities are identifiable in papal documents and ecclesiastical legislations on sacred music: holiness, beauty of form and universality.²⁰⁸ After Pope Pius X had articulated them in his *TLS*, other popes have reiterated them. On the occasion of the centenary celebration of *TLS* in 2003, Pope John Paul II mentioned it in his Chirograph on Sacred Music which Pope Benedict XVI in 2007 referred to in his address to the professors and students of the Pontifical Institute for Sacred Music in Rome: “John Paul II observed that today as always, three traits distinguish sacred music: ‘holiness’, ‘true art’ and ‘universality’ or the possibility that it can be proposed to any people or type of assembly.”²⁰⁹ Let us briefly explain each of these core

²⁰⁴Sr. Marietta, S. N. J. M., *Singing the Liturgy*, p. 38.

²⁰⁵Abbot Wheathamstead [in:] W. P. Mahrt, *The Musical Shape of the Liturgy*, (Virginia: Church Music Association of America, 2012), p. 71.

²⁰⁶J. Melloh, “Feel the Music,” [in:] V. C. Funk (ed.), *Music in Catholic Worship – the NPM Commentary*, (Washington, D.C: Pastoral Press, 1983), p. 19.

²⁰⁷St. Augustine, *Confessions*, 9, 6, 14 [in:] CCC, no 1157.

²⁰⁸For more details about these qualities, see J. Gelineau, *Voices and Instruments in Christian Worship*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1964), pp. 52-56.

²⁰⁹Pope Benedict XVI, *Address during His Visit to the Pontifical Institute for Sacred Music*, accessed on 24.07.2021, <https://adoremus.org/2007/12/31/VISIT-TO-THE-PONTIFICAL-INSTITUTE-FOR-SACRED-MUSIC/>

characteristics in order to appreciate why Bishop A. Ukwuoma laments their general absence in some musical compositions used for liturgical celebrations in Nigeria.²¹⁰

a) Holiness

The holiness of liturgical music is a quality which ensures that no form of secularity is found either in the music itself or in its performance.²¹¹ Being an integral part of liturgy, liturgical music must exhibit qualities of piety, nobility, sanctity, godliness and prayer. The primary responsibility of liturgical music is not just to make liturgy attractive but essentially to lead to a better understanding of God's word and to create a conducive atmosphere for a joyful ascent of minds and hearts to God which is prayer.²¹² To function then as a liturgical prayer, liturgical music must be in consonance with liturgical texts and liturgical season; it must "serve the spirit and norms of the liturgy and the faith it expresses."²¹³ In fact, "sacred music is to be considered the more holy in proportion as it is more closely connected with the liturgical action, whether it adds delight to prayer, fosters unity of minds, or confers greater solemnity upon the sacred rites."²¹⁴

b) Beauty of Form

While being holy, liturgical music must also be a true art. It must be in accord not only with the general standards of art, but also with the liturgical standards of art.²¹⁵ By the general standards of art, liturgical music must possess the technical, aesthetic and expressive qualities that ensure its effectiveness over a long period of time.²¹⁶ These qualities also "exercise on the minds of those who listen to it that efficacy which the Church aims at obtaining in admitting into her liturgy the art of musical sounds."²¹⁷ To ignore this beauty of form and "admit to the Liturgy the cheap, the trite, or the musical cliché often found in secular popular songs is to cheapen the Liturgy, to expose it to ridicule, and to invite failure."²¹⁸

For liturgical music to fulfil its proper function as a true art, it must also meet the liturgical standards of art. A good piece of musical art cannot qualify as a liturgical music if it does not also

²¹⁰CBCN, *Guidelines for Composers of Liturgical Music and Catholic Choirs in Nigeria*, p. vii.

²¹¹Pope Pius X, *TLS*, no 2.

²¹²P. Wiśniewski, "Granice Inkulturacji w Muzyce Liturgicznej," [in:] J. Bramorski (ed.), *Tożsamość Muzyki Sakralnej w Dialogu z Kulturą Współczesną*, (Gdańsk: Akademia Muzyczna im. Stanisława Moniuszki, 2017), p. 48.

²¹³P. Mason, "Guideline: Music within the Mass," p. 4, accessed on 11.08.2021, <https://docplayer.net/21558500-Guidelines-music-within-the-mass-by-paul-mason-coordinator-of-liturgy-diocese-of-wollongong.html>

²¹⁴SVC, *SC*, no 112.

²¹⁵Sr. Marietta, S. N. J. M., *Singing the Liturgy*, p. 52.

²¹⁶For explanation of these qualities, see E. Gutfreund, "Is It Any Good? The Musical Judgement," [in:] V. C. Funk (ed.), *Music in Catholic Worship – the NPM Commentary*, p. 68.

²¹⁷Pope Pius X, *TLS*, no 2.

²¹⁸USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no. 135.

fulfil the function and express the spirit of liturgy.²¹⁹ As P. Wiśniewski put it, the search for the highest measure of artistry in liturgical music should go hand in hand with its subordination to the service of God's glory.²²⁰ In essence, therefore, liturgical music is not just a true and pure art; it is also a sacred art.

c) Universality

Universality is the third quality of liturgical music which flows spontaneously as a product of its holiness and goodness of form.²²¹ Among the three qualities, it is the most controversial according to I. Pawlak. It is very often misinterpreted to mean exclusion from everything that is associated with national or folk style of music or anything that has a strong subjective or individual musical colouration. Those with such misconception regard Gregorian chant as the only objective and universal music of the church. Their opinion notwithstanding, the truth is that the documents of the SVC have not exclusively labelled any particular kind of music as the universal music of the church and Pawlak maintains that cultural pluralism and the experiences of the mission churches do not even support such an option.²²²

Pope Pius X's perspective is clear. Liturgical music must be universal "in the sense that while every nation is permitted to admit into its ecclesiastical compositions those special forms which may be said to constitute its native music, still these forms must be subordinated in such a manner to the general characteristics of sacred music that nobody of any nation may receive an impression other than good on hearing them."²²³ Rest assured of the universality of liturgical music, guaranteed by its musical artistry and sacrality, a European, for example, should always feel comfortable attending any liturgical celebration in a Nigerian Church and vice versa.²²⁴ Without causing any form of distraction, the liturgical music of one cultural milieu should be able to dispose a worshipper of another cultural background to join in the prayer and singing. While such music may suit a particular assembly, it should also respect the need for universal appeal.²²⁵

²¹⁹Sr. Marietta, S. N. J. M., *Singing the Liturgy*, p. 52.

²²⁰P. Wiśniewski, *Granice Inkulturacji w Muzyce Liturgicznej*, p. 48.

²²¹Pope Pius X, *TLS*, no 2.

²²²I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna po Soborze Watykańskim II w świetle dokumentów Kościoła*, (Lublin: Polihymnia, 2000), p. 66.

²²³Pope Pius X, *TLS*, no 2.

²²⁴Cf. J. T. Orakwe, *Composing Music for the Liturgy: Basic Requirements*, (Onitsha: Nayostace Blossom Enterprise, 2019), p. 6.

²²⁵P. Mason, *Guideline: Music within the Mass*, p. 5.

1.4.3.3 Functions of Liturgical Music

We have discussed the general objective of liturgical music and the qualities of music that can achieve this objective. Functions of liturgical music which we shall consider here could be seen as concrete ways of realizing this objective. According to *MS*, liturgical worship celebrated in song is the more noble and preferred form of celebration which every pastor of souls should frequently strive to achieve. Through this form of celebration, “prayer is expressed in a more attractive way, the mystery of the liturgy, with its hierarchical and community nature, is more openly shown, the unity of hearts is more profoundly achieved by the union of voices, minds are more easily raised to heavenly things by the beauty of the sacred rites, and the whole celebration more clearly prefigures that heavenly liturgy which is enacted in the holy city of Jerusalem.”²²⁶ Here, *MS* provides a fivefold classification of the functions which liturgical music performs: alluring or decorative, differentiating, unifying, transcendental and eschatological.²²⁷ Some authors regard them as the ministerial functions of sacred music in line with the teaching of *SC* which first mentioned the word *ministerial*. Ministerial function, here, means the useful and practical role that music plays in liturgy and the service it renders to the community celebrating it. It is “the particular goal which the Church has in mind for chant and music.”²²⁸ The importance of this topic to the practice of liturgical music is to help in eliminating false mentalities about liturgical music and to prepare us better for its proper use.

Many authors have their own classification system for these ministerial functions. According to L. Deiss, for instance, these functions are classified under the following headings: a) Song adds solemnity to the celebration, b) Song gives the text a greater efficacy, c) Song imbues the liturgy with beauty and d) Song helps to create unity. For the sake of our discussion here, however, we shall consider the fourfold classification system of I. Pawlak which falls under these headings:

a) Community-forming Function

Liturgical music provides a golden opportunity for an active and communal participation of the entire faithful in the liturgy.²²⁹ This is the last point according to L. Deiss’ classification which emphasizes the beauty and glory that manifest when the hearts, minds and voices of the liturgical assembly are joined together to praise God through the acclamations, responses, antiphons, refrains, psalms, prayers, hymns, canticles and other parts of the singing which pertain

²²⁶SVC, *MS*, no 5.

²²⁷J. M. Joncas, “Liturgy and Music,” [in:] A. J. Chupungco (ed.), *Handbook for Liturgical Studies: Fundamental Liturgy*, p. 315.

²²⁸Pope Pius X, [in:] R. F. Hayburn, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music*, p. 205.

²²⁹Cf. J. Gelineau, *The Liturgy Today and Tomorrow*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), p. 85.

to them.²³⁰ Added to that, I. Pawlak also stressed that common singing builds a block of unity and establishes closeness among the members of the worshipping community while removing barriers and the differences between groups.²³¹ There is a natural capacity in music “to unite the singer with the song, the singer with those who listen, singers with each other. Christian ritual song joins the assembly with Christ, who is the source and the content of the song.”²³² Therefore, liturgical unity, expressed and deepened by liturgical music, is a spiritual union which is not based just on physical, psychological, ideological or socio-cultural ties, but rather “stems from the action of God through Christ in the Holy Spirit calling people out to be the Church of God (*ekklēsia tou theou*).”²³³ Having experienced it, St. Ambrose exclaimed: “What a grand bond of unity becomes clearly evident when a multitude of diverse peoples sing in unison! Like a harp with many strings sounding a single melody!”²³⁴

b) Meditative Function

Writing about meditation, Thomas Merton, among other things, said: “The true end of Christian meditation is practically the same as the end of liturgical prayer and the reception of the sacraments: a deeper union by grace and charity with the Incarnate Word, who is the only Mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ.”²³⁵ Through meditation, we come to terms with our earthly condition and open ourselves to the truths and realities of the heavenly liturgy in relation to which our earthly liturgy is the beginning and its foretaste.²³⁶ Music serves as a very useful tool to meditation by giving rise to the proper and desired affect or emotion (*affectio*) that leads to effective prayer to God (*oratio*) through the reading of the text (*lectio*).²³⁷

Some examples of meditative songs in the liturgy are recitative and psalms. Biblical wisdom demands melodic recitation as in the case of the parables and proverbs and indeed, the readings of the Old and New Testaments. The truth cannot be controverted that when biblical passages like the Beatitudes, the Lord’s prayer and the hymn about love from the first letter of St. Paul to Corinthians are sung rhythmically and melodically in the form of liturgical recitative, the

²³⁰SVC, *MS*, no 16.

²³¹I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 69; Cf. P. Westermeyer, *Te Deum: The Church and Music*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), pp. 27-28.

²³²The Milwaukee Symposia for Church Composers: A Ten-Year Report, (Washington, D.C: Pastoral Press, 1992), no 16, accessed on 10.08.2021, <https://www.archmil.org/ArchMil/Resources/TheMilwaukeeStatement.pdf>

²³³J. M. Joncas, *From Sacred Song to Ritual Music: Twentieth-Century Understandings of Roman Catholic Worship Music*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1997), p. 39.

²³⁴St. Ambrose [in:] J. P. Swain, *Sacred Treasure: Understanding Catholic Liturgical Music*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2012), p.75.

²³⁵T. Merton, *Spiritual Direction and Meditation*, (Collegeville: The Order of St. Benedict, Inc., 1960), p. 105.

²³⁶I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 71.

²³⁷U. Hascher-Burger, H. Joldersma, “Music in the Spiritual Culture of the Devotio Moderna,” *Church History and Religious Culture*, vol 88, no 3, 2008, p. 323.

message sinks more deeply into the human person. The same is true with psalms, especially during the liturgy of the Word.²³⁸ Sitting down, the faithful listen to the words of the psalm sung by the psalmist and respond with a specific refrain. The liturgical and pastoral importance of this Responsorial Psalm is great and lies in the fact that it fosters meditation on God's Word.²³⁹ Using Gregorian chant as an example, S. Haynes stressed the fact that music helps one to reflect on the Word of God.²⁴⁰

Not only vocal music, instrumental music can also perform meditative function. What is crucial, however, is to certify that the music is professionally composed and properly performed. Amateur composition or performance is not an option at all in liturgy.²⁴¹ Especially when one is about to settle down for prayer or at other opportune moments during liturgy, listening to good meditative music can be of great assistance.²⁴²

c) *Decorative Function*

After a series of discussions, brainstorming and consultations, a group of Catholic liturgists and musicians in the English-speaking world, including the United States of America, Canada, United Kingdom and Ireland believe that beauty is essential in the liturgical life and mission of the church. For them:

Beauty is an effective even sacramental sign of God's presence and action in the world. The beautiful expresses the joy and delight which prefigure the glory of the liturgy of the heavenly Jerusalem. An injustice is committed against God's people when styles of worship and liturgical art are promoted which lack aesthetic beauty... While not wishing to promote aestheticism, we encourage a new attention to the theology and practice of beauty in Catholic worship, especially in the area of liturgical music.²⁴³

Because beauty is one of its important elements, liturgical music is essentially the decoration of liturgy; it gives prayer a more attractive and graceful expression.²⁴⁴ It embellishes and beautifies the voices of all the participants in liturgy – the presiding minister and the rest of the faithful – with its lovely melodies and its magnificence.²⁴⁵ By its sensual appeal, music can

²³⁸I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 72.

²³⁹GIRM, Vatican: 2011 edition, no 61.

²⁴⁰S. Haynes, "The Spirituality of Sacred Music," *Adoremus*, 2016, accessed on 10.09.2021, <https://adoremus.org/2008/10/15/the-spirituality-of-sacred-music/>

²⁴¹I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 74.

²⁴²Praying with Music, accessed on 10.09.2021,

<http://www.rochester.anglican.org/content/pages/documents/1460986048.pdf>

²⁴³CanticaNOVA Publications, *The Snowbird Statement on Catholic Liturgical Music*, no 3, accessed on 10.09.2021, <http://www.canticanova.com/articles/liturgy/art9o1.htm>

²⁴⁴Cf. SVC, *MS*, no 5; I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 74; J. M. Joncas, *From Sacred Song to Ritual Music*, p. 40.

²⁴⁵Pope Pius XII, *Musicae Sacrae Disciplina (On Sacred Music)*, no 31.

influence psychological conditions and clothe language in such a manner that it expresses sentiments with more powerful emotional resonances.²⁴⁶ Whether vocal or instrumental, music has the power to express a variety of feelings – joy, sorrow, regret, thanksgiving, petition, adoration – and to do so at the proper time and season of the liturgical calendar is the beauty of liturgy. But for this beauty to be attained and maintained, preparation is crucial. The decorative function of music is gravely affected when there is lack of adequate preparation on the part of the ministers of liturgical music. The negligence to prepare well is the worst enemy of beauty and is detrimental to the essence of music and liturgy.²⁴⁷ Better to avoid the use of music than to use it badly or inadequately!

Another factor that opposes the decorative function of liturgical music is what I. Pawlak called artistic minimalism.²⁴⁸ As T. J. McGovern put it, the sense of beauty and art in contemporary Church music “has often given way to banality and mediocrity in an effort to try to be more ‘meaningful.’”²⁴⁹ Lastly, as we strive to uphold beauty in liturgy, it is, nevertheless, pertinent to emphasize that liturgical music cannot be understood only as an aesthetic embellishment of liturgical rite and musical ornamentation of prescribed texts and ceremonies. To do so can only lead to the danger of aestheticism.²⁵⁰ According to the Catholic Encyclopaedia, “music in liturgical functions is an integrant and not a purely ornamental part thereof.”²⁵¹ Therefore, while performing its decorative function, music must be able to provide and integrate other functions.

d) Kerygmatic Function

Kerygma is the apostolic proclamation of the message of Christ, the preaching of the mystery of our salvation through His suffering, death and resurrection. According to Archbishop Ryś, kerygma “is not a mere discourse; it is an event – or THE EVENT! The experience – THE ENCOUNTER with living Lord. It is fundamental. Nothing happens without it. It is an Evangelization. It is the reason for our existence as the Church.”²⁵² Kerygma is all about the Saving Word of God in the Scripture which we proclaim and listen to. The true sense of this Word,

²⁴⁶J. M. Joncas, *From Sacred Song to Ritual Music*, p. 40.

²⁴⁷I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 75.

²⁴⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 74 – 75: Artistic minimalism in the sense of using, for example, only the simplest and easiest melodies, resorting sometimes to the use of just primitive songs, constant repetition of the same repertoire of songs or allowing exclusive use of congregation songs to stifle occasional performances solely by the schola, the choir or the instrumental ensemble.

²⁴⁹T. J. McGovern, *Priestly Identity: A Study in the Theology of Priesthood*, (Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2002), p. 296.

²⁵⁰Cf. L. Deiss, *The Mass*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1992), p. 27.

²⁵¹A. Santi, “Liturgical Chant,” [in:] *The Catholic Encyclopaedia*, (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910), vol 9, accessed on 11.09.2021, <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09304a.htm>

²⁵²Konferencja Episkopatu Polski, “Archbishop Ryś about Kerygma as the Encounter with the Living Lord,” accessed on 11.09.2021, <https://episkopat.pl/en/archbishop-rys-about-kerygma-as-the-encounter-with-living-lord/>

however, lies beyond the words and as L. Deiss earlier hinted, liturgical music serves to give an audible expression and greater efficacy not only to the words but to that which lies beyond the words.²⁵³ Without such musical expression, words remain incapable of revealing their full meaning. Expressing this high communicative potential of music, E. Kloppers wrote: “The musical 'word' has in many ways better communicative possibilities than the spoken word. On the emotional level it can speak more intensely and with more subtlety. It can communicate affective dimensions and concepts that are impossible for the spoken word.”²⁵⁴ In fact, liturgical music helps to achieve an effective “*incarnation*” of God’s Word in the participants of liturgy.²⁵⁵

1.4.3.4 *Liturgical Text and Language*

Music and word are two complementary realities that always seek to enrich and complete each other. Having just mentioned above that music adds greater efficacy to its text, let us here underline the fact that the text of any music also determines to a great extent its effect on the listener. This is why it is pertinent to consider the basic principles guiding the selection and use of text for liturgical music. The quality of holiness as earlier stated means that liturgical music must have close connection with liturgical action. This forms the crux of the liturgical judgement, under which liturgical music must meet the textual requirement set forth by the liturgical books. Because music forms an integral part of the sacred liturgy, everything which the liturgical books prescribe to be sung, either by the priest and his ministers, or by the choir or congregation, must be strictly adhered to. According to Pope Pius X, it is illegal to alter the text to be sung and the order in which to sing it as is already determined for every liturgical ceremony.²⁵⁶ Pope Pius XII’s later promulgation is an elaboration on this.²⁵⁷

Other texts which are not contained in the liturgical books can also be used to compose liturgical music but their suitability must first of all be ascertained. The Canadian Episcopal Commission for liturgy has carefully outlined some key questions for assessing the suitability of such texts, for example: Is the text biblically inspired and theologically sound, expressing authentic Catholic faith? Is it in accord with the approved liturgical text and consistent with the language of liturgical prayer or is it too subjective and thus, more suited for private devotion?²⁵⁸ This kind of

²⁵³M. D. Kirby, “Toward a Definition of Liturgical Chant,” accessed on 12.09.2021, <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=9557>

²⁵⁴E. Kloppers, “Liturgical Music: Worship or War?” *HTS Theological Studies*, vol. 53, no 1/2, 1997, p. 178.

²⁵⁵Z. Janiec, *Wokół Liturgii na Łamach “Kroniki Diecezji Sandomierskiej” w Latach 1908 – 2007*, (Sandomierz: Wydawnictwo Diecezjalne I Drukarnia, 2008), p. 252.

²⁵⁶Pope Pius X, *TLS*, no 8.

²⁵⁷Pope Pius XII, *De Musica Sacra et Sacra Liturgia*, no 21.

²⁵⁸CCCB, *Guidelines for Composers of Liturgical Music*, Ottawa 2014, no 4.

assessment is very crucial because liturgical texts “provide the assembly with the language of their common prayer.”²⁵⁹

Some composers, unfortunately, are not well informed about matters concerning the doctrines of the Catholic faith. Giving a particular example, Bishop A. Serratelli mentioned that a song which refers to the Eucharist as bread and wine and not Body and Blood of Christ does not express the true reality we celebrate and thus, not worthy of Catholic worship.²⁶⁰ To tackle this kind of a problem, the diocesan or inter-diocesan Music Commission may constitute a committee of experts in liturgy, theology and scripture who can sit and compose sample texts for the different parts and seasons of the liturgy. The publication of such a work will surely help to upgrade the standard of liturgical music compositions.

Done with the brief discussion about texts, let us also briefly consider the language of liturgical music. According to *MS*, “the use of the Latin language, with due respect to particular law, is to be preserved in the Latin rites.”²⁶¹ In this regard, pastors of souls should endeavour to motivate the faithful to learn how to say or sing together in Latin, at least, those parts of the Ordinary of the Mass that pertain to them, using simple melodies.²⁶² The use of Latin language is particularly necessary at international and multicultural gatherings of different language groups where it serves as a symbol of Catholic unity and universality.²⁶³ Apart from Latin language in Roman Liturgy, the Fathers of SVC also deemed it wise to allow for the use of vernacular as it affords the people the great advantage of understanding better what the Church is praying.²⁶⁴ The extent of its use, however, is to be decided by the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority whose approval must be confirmed by the Apostolic See.²⁶⁵

Summary

In this chapter, we have tried to describe in a nutshell the people of Igboland before the advent of the colonial masters, highlighting their geography, origin, history, worldview, religion, language, social and political organizations. The interplay of Igbo culture with the culture of the colonial masters and the missionaries brought both positive and negative results. There was

²⁵⁹CCCB, *Guidelines for Liturgical Music*, 2015, no 166.

²⁶⁰A. Serratelli, “Music at Liturgy: Full Expression of Faith,” accessed on 18.09.2021, <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/column/53896/music-at-liturgy-full-expression-of-faith%C2%A0>

²⁶¹SVC, *MS*, no 47.

²⁶²Ibid.

²⁶³Cf. USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 62; Cardinal F. Arinze, “Latin and Vernacular: Language in the Roman Liturgy,” *L’Osservatore Romano* – the Weekly edition in English, accessed on 23.09.2021, p. 8, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/latin-and-vernacular-language-in-the-roman-liturgy-4238>; Pope Pius XII, *Musicae Sacrae*, no 45.

²⁶⁴Cardinal F. Arinze, *Latin and Vernacular: Language in the Roman Liturgy*, “L’Osservatore Romano,” p. 8.

²⁶⁵SVC, *MS*, No.47.

Western civilization but there was also colonialism; there was growth of Christianity but there was also shallowness of faith caused by lack of proper inculturation. In the area of liturgical music, for instance, “traditional Igbo music was one of these so-termed pagan practices which were not allowed to filter into Christian worship, much less challenge the pre-eminence of European tunes. Only the organ or harmonium was allowed in Church: no indigenous instrument, however suitable its tone quality might sound, could be used in Church.”²⁶⁶

Foreign missionary work continued by indigenous hands has spread Christianity to fourteen dioceses in Igboland with more potentials for expansion. We examined the various contributions and achievements of these missionaries – the French, the Irish and the Indigenous missionaries. And finally, we discussed the basic principles of liturgical music which continues to play a key role in this evangelical mission. We mentioned that music in liturgy has the same goal as liturgy itself and to achieve this set goal, such music must possess certain characteristics and perform particular functions which we tried to explain, one after another.

Music and text interact with each other and concurrently affect the listener. After discussing the goal, qualities and functions of liturgical music, we considered it necessary to highlight some principles guiding the use of texts for liturgical music. The language of the text is no less important for a follow-up discussion as it influences the choice of form and structure of the music that is best suited for the text. Latin language and Gregorian chant should be preserved for its foundational and continued usefulness in liturgical worship just as the advantage of vernacular language to the people should also be continuously promoted.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁶L. N. Ekwueme, “African Music in Christian Liturgy: The Igbo Experiment,” p. 13.

²⁶⁷Cf. SVC, *MS*, No.47.

CHAPTER TWO: Ministers and Genres of Liturgical Music

As the foundation and guideline for action, every principle proves more effective when put into practice. Having discussed the basic general principles of liturgical music in chapter one, we shall, in chapter two, focus on the practical applications of these principles, especially in the particular Church in Igboland. We shall see how the various ministers of liturgical music apply the knowledge of these principles in the proper execution of their functions within the compass of the existing genres of liturgical music. Thus, our discussion is thus twofold: The Ministers and Genres of Liturgical Music.

1.1 The Ministers of Liturgical Music

The researcher has written a published article on this topic and will frequently refer to it.²⁶⁸ In that work, he emphasized the fact that no liturgical action is a purely private action as clearly stated by the SCR. Every liturgical action is rather “a celebration of the Church as a society composed of different orders and ministries.”²⁶⁹ Liturgy and liturgical music could be compared to a symphonic orchestra in which each instrumentalist plays a specific role. While concentrating on his own line of musical notes, he is sometimes required to observe a pause or to play solo and at other times, he is meant to play in unison with other instruments. No single musical instrument plays all the music, all the time. There is similarly a clear division of function which each minister performs in the communal celebration of the liturgy.²⁷⁰ We shall now consider the various functions of each minister of liturgical music bearing in mind that “in liturgical celebrations each one, minister or layperson, who has an office to perform, should do all of, but only, those parts which pertain to that office by the nature of the rite and principles of liturgy.”²⁷¹

1.1.1. Individual Functions of the Ministers

1.1.1.1 The Faithful

In the past when one asked “*Who celebrates?*” the answer was “*the priest.*” Since Vatican II, however, the answer is “*the community.*” In the past when one asked “*Who sings?*” the answer was “*the choir.*” Today, after Vatican II, the answer must be “*the community...*” It is, therefore, the whole people of God who participate in liturgical song and music. We may even affirm that it is the only participant, since all who have a part in the music or song of the liturgy belong to the people of God... Likewise, the

²⁶⁸A. Umeh, “Ministers of Liturgical Music in Nigeria: Functions and Formation,” *Legnickie Studia Teologiczno-Historyczne*, vol 38, no 1, 2021, pp. 160-174.

²⁶⁹SCR, *Eucharisticum Mysterium (Instruction on Eucharistic Worship)*, no 3d.

²⁷⁰I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 224.

²⁷¹SVC, *SC*, no 28.

whole people sing, but each participates according to his or her charism and in a way that enhances the beauty and balance of the celebration.²⁷²

In line with the citation above, K. Harmon is strongly convinced that the most important minister of liturgical music is the whole congregation who, as members of the One Body of Christ, enacts the rite.²⁷³ The researcher, in his article, pointed out that the insistence on the active participation of the faithful in liturgy is mainly for this reason. For the same reason too, any musical decision concerning the kind and amount of music to be used in any liturgical celebration must be based on a pastoral criterion that judges its suitability to the needs of the faithful who sing it.²⁷⁴ Every minister of liturgical music is a constituent part of the liturgical assembly and should exercise his or her responsibilities in the service of the entire assembly, supporting it during acclamations, responses, psalms, antiphons and other songs to voice its song of praise to God.²⁷⁵

On Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation in majority of the parishes in Igboland, the solemn form of the Eucharistic celebration is mostly preferred and the faithful fully and actively participate. They unite their hearts and voices with the choir in singing the Ordinary parts of the Mass and the procession songs for the entrance, offertory, communion and dismissal. In a lively manner, they also respond to the greetings and prayers of the celebrant and other ministers. And depending on the nature of the song, they sometimes dance to the music as we shall later discuss. An Igbo author confirmed it when he wrote: “The Nigerian Eucharistic celebration could be described as a moving liturgy, filled with active participations by those gathered for the worship, in forms of dancing, singing, clapping, gospel and offertory processions, and a lively homily. All these factors make the Eucharistic celebrations lively.”²⁷⁶

1.1.1.2 *The Clergy*

By the term *clergy*, we mean the bishop, the priest and the deacon who, acting *in persona Christi*, are the chief celebrants and leaders in liturgical worship. In terms of symphonic orchestra, their work could be likened to that of the conductor as A. C. Dorner and A. M. Mongoven lucidly illustrated:

The presider at liturgy is not unlike a conductor. His orchestra is the entire worshipping community. He unifies, leads, sets the tempo, interprets and determines the style of celebration. If he is to be a successful

²⁷²L. Deiss, *Visions of Liturgy and Music for a New Century*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1996), pp. 27 – 29.

²⁷³K. Harmon, *The Ministry of Music*, p. 14.

²⁷⁴M. T. Winter, *Why Sing? Toward a Theology of Catholic Church Music*, p. 179.

²⁷⁵L. Deiss, *Visions of Liturgy and Music for a New Century*, p. 38; Cf. CCCB, *Guidelines for Composers...*, no 10.

²⁷⁶U. Aba, *The Reception of the Second Vatican Council's Liturgical Reforms in Nigeria (Nsukka Diocese)*, (Zurich: LIT Verlag, 2016), p. 172.

conductor, his work must also include planning, rehearsing and study. A good presider is the *sine qua non* of good liturgical celebration.²⁷⁷

Here we shall consider their specific functions with particular reference to liturgical music.

a) *The Bishop*

As the Chief Shepherd and Steward entrusted with the mysteries of God in his diocese, the bishop who is at the highest rung of the hierarchical ladder is the moderator, promoter, and guardian of the whole gamut of liturgical life.²⁷⁸ Leading by their own examples of the celebration of the Sacred Liturgy, many bishops in the dioceses of Igboland have helped to encourage sung participation in the liturgy. They have promoted liturgical music by paying serious attention to the practice of liturgical music in the cathedral and parishes of the diocese.²⁷⁹

In one diocese, the bishop indicated his personal involvement as he directed the Diocesan Music Commission to organize a special diocesan competition for xylophonists, aimed at resurrecting the use of xylophone which was originally fabricated in its wooden and metal forms by one of his priests.²⁸⁰ In many dioceses, the bishops are sending more priests to study music both in Nigeria and abroad in line with the recommendation of NACALIMCON.²⁸¹ The researcher is one of them. Occasionally too, some members of the Music Commission are also sponsored to attend international music seminars at home or abroad. In some places too, encouragement is given to parishes and good-spirited individuals to sponsor some highly talented choristers or choirmasters in the diocese to study music in tertiary institutions. The tremendous effect of these efforts will soon manifest when this crop of trained musicians begins to help out in the diocese and in the parishes. And in order that the diocesan seminarians might also be able to contribute to this bright future, their liturgico-musical formation urgently requires the attention of the bishop. More systematic programmes and professional hands are highly needed in these seminaries.

On the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Pope Pius X's *motu proprio*, Msgr. G. B. Montini wrote a letter to Cardinal Pizzardo at the instance of Pope Pius XII. The letter partly reads: "since Sacred music is an integral part of the liturgy, the Ordinaries shall give all their support, including financial – this being of the greatest usefulness to the Catholic apostolate."²⁸² In line with this letter, many bishops are making it a priority to improve liturgical music through their

²⁷⁷R. C. Dorner, A. M. Mongoven, "The Celebrant Must Be There," [in:] V. C. Funk (ed.), *Music in Catholic Worship – the NPM Commentary*, pp. 55 – 56.

²⁷⁸General Instruction of the Roman Missal, no 22.

²⁷⁹Cf. USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 16.

²⁸⁰J. Madueke, *Homily at the Funeral...*, p. 15.

²⁸¹CBCN, *Guidelines for Composers of Liturgical Music and Catholic Choirs in Nigeria*, p. 24.

²⁸²G. B. Montini, [in:] R. F. Hayburn, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music*, p. 96.

moral and financial support. Some of the members of the Diocesan Music Commission and Diocesan Liturgical Choirs' Association interviewed, expressed satisfaction with their bishop's support for the Commission and the Association but also added that there is a great need for more concrete support. The researcher who gathered from his interview in one diocese where the bishop approved monetary collections from all the parishes for the procurement of common uniform for all the diocesan choirs suggests that making this form of collection an annual event for the Music Commission and the Choirs' Association will help them to function maximally.²⁸³

As it is a clear fact, however, that the bishop does not have unlimited resources to execute all the essential projects in the diocese, the Music Commissions in full support of the bishop, must intensify their search for philanthropic individuals around the vicinity who are willing to sponsor music projects in the diocese. Historical records attest to such sponsorship which, augmenting the bishops' efforts, makes it easier to achieve higher goals in the area of liturgical music.

b) The Priest

In the order of hierarchy, the bishop is followed by the priest whose attitude, disposition, influence and participation in the Liturgy is a great force to reckon with. Like the bishop, the priest should encourage sung participation in the parish or institution where he is working by his own example. It is his duty to sing the presidential prayers and dialogues of the Liturgy and other parts of the Mass proper to him according to the rubrics, especially the parts that would contribute to the peoples' celebration.²⁸⁴ If he fails to sing them, the people will not sing either. By a thorough rehearsal that ensures effective performance, the priest treats his priestly ministry with seriousness and shows respect for the community for whom he celebrates.²⁸⁵ But in a situation where he lacks the musical talent and the good voice to execute this function, "he can render without singing one or more of the more difficult parts which concern him, reciting them in a loud and distinct voice. However, this must not be done merely for the convenience of the priest or minister."²⁸⁶ Excepting the Memorial Acclamation or the Great Amen, the priest joins with the congregation in singing the other acclamations, chants, hymns, and songs of the Liturgy; he refrains, however, from singing the congregational response of the dialogues. It is also necessary to regulate the use of the microphone when he sings with the congregation to avoid overshadowing their voice.²⁸⁷

²⁸³P. Alado, *Interview granted* on 23.02.2020.

²⁸⁴Music in Catholic Worship, no. 22, accessed on 25.10.2021, http://archive.ccwatershed.org/media/pdfs/13/12/17/11-37-54_0.pdf

²⁸⁵L. Deiss, *Spirit and Song of the New Liturgy*, (Cincinnati: World Library, 1970), p. 29.

²⁸⁶SVC, *MS*, no 8.

²⁸⁷USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 21.

Through financial assistance, physical presence or moral encouragement, many priests in Igboland foster the development of liturgical music. Up to date with the regulations and directives of the Music Commission, they help to communicate and enforce them in the various areas of their apostolate. The unflinching support given to the various ministers of liturgical music in their parishes or institutions bears abundant fruits in outstanding performance. Not all priests, however, do this; some are not adequately prepared for singing at Mass just as others do not even find much reason for it. In the affairs of the choir in some parishes, for instance, some parish priests manifest significant lack of interest. Though the services of these ministers of liturgical music are mostly rendered free of charge, such priests find it extremely difficult to appreciate their efforts even by words of encouragement. More energy is rather spent in picking faults and harshly castigating them. In the face of this nonchalant, unsupportive and discouraging behaviour towards these ministers and liturgical music as a whole, E. Umezina wisely calls for a change of attitude.²⁸⁸

c) *The Deacon*

After the priest in the hierarchical order comes the deacon whose duty pertaining to liturgical music includes: proclaiming the Gospel (singing the Gospel is rare in Igboland), chanting the prayer of the faithful, calling for the sign of peace, making the solemn Easter proclamation.²⁸⁹ One can also include singing the dialogues between deacon and people – those at the Gospel and at the dismissal and the third form of the Act of Penitence. To equip potential candidates with the necessary skills, “programs of diaconal preparation should include major and compulsory courses in the chant and song of the Liturgy.”²⁹⁰ And a compulsory examination should be fixed at the end of the program not only to test their capacity but also to make them realize its seriousness.

1.1.1.3 *The Cantor*

The function of a cantor is multidimensional not only as a singer, but also as a leader of congregational song. As a singer, on the one hand, he fulfils the function of the *schola* or choir where there is none, independently singing in dialogue or alternation with the assembly; but if there is a *schola* or a choir, he sings together with them.²⁹¹ He may “sing the invocations of the *Kyrie*, intone the *Gloria*, lead the short acclamations at the end of the Scripture readings, intone and sing the verse of the Gospel Acclamation, sing the invocations of the Prayer of the Faithful, and lead the singing of the *Agnus Dei*. The cantor may also sing the verses of the psalm or song

²⁸⁸Cf. E. C. Umezina, “The Changing Face of Catholic Liturgical Music in Igboland,” *Awka Journal of Research in Music and the Arts*, vol 7, 2010, p. 219.

²⁸⁹*Instrukcja Konferencji Episkopatu...*, no 10b.

²⁹⁰USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 23.

²⁹¹A. Umeh, “Ministers of Liturgical Music in Nigeria: Functions and Formation,” p. 164.

that accompany the Entrance, Preparation of the Gifts, and Communion. Finally, the cantor may serve as psalmist, leading and proclaiming the verses of the Responsorial Psalm.”²⁹² He can also intone the *Credo* and sing the sequence in place of the choir or *schola*.

As a leader, on the other hand, he fulfils the function of a director and a conductor. Intoning songs, he directs and co-ordinates the singing of the faithful with that of the celebrant, *schola* or choir.²⁹³ In a subdued voice, he also takes part in singing with the entire gathered assembly, positioning himself in a place that is away from the ambo (except in the case of the responsorial psalm or the prayer of the faithful) but visible to all without drawing attention away from the liturgical action. He may dress in an alb or choir robe, but not cassock and surplice as these are clerical attire.²⁹⁴

With the introduction of harmonized music sung by the choir, the duties of a cantor naturally fell to the choirmaster/conductor and this greatly contributed to the decline of the ministry.²⁹⁵ The implication of this must always be clearly spelt out during the training and formation of choirmasters in Igboland where the ministry of a cantor is not so popular as there is hardly any parish without the ministry of a choir directed by a conductor or a choirmaster (even if it is not a standard choir in the case of rural parishes). During the weekday Masses when it is difficult to have a full choir in attendance, a member or members of the choir present assume the duty of a cantor on voluntary basis. Therefore, even though there is hardly any officially trained cantor in Igbo territory, their major functions during liturgy are not lacking. The author also gathered some relevant information to the effect that at least one diocese is gradually introducing this separate ministry to co-ordinate the singing of the huge assembly always gathered at the diocesan liturgical celebrations. Hopefully, other dioceses will imitate their example as the need arises.²⁹⁶

1.1.1.4 *The Psalmist*

As the name implies, the psalmist or ‘cantor of the psalm’ performs the function of singing the Responsorial Psalm after the first reading and leading the congregation in singing the response or refrain. Even though the organist does this in most places in Europe and America, it is not his proper function just as the best position to execute the function remains the pulpit even though it

²⁹²USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 37.

²⁹³A. Filaber, *Prawodawstwo Muzyki Kościelnej*, (Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Archidiecezji Warszawskiej, 2011), p. 116.

²⁹⁴USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, nos 38 – 40.

²⁹⁵W. Shebbeare, “Cantor,” [in:] *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, accessed on 26.10.2021 from New Advent: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03306a.htm>

²⁹⁶A. Umeh, “Ministers of Liturgical Music in Nigeria: Functions and Formation,” p. 164.

can be performed from any other position considered suitable.²⁹⁷ The Responsorial Psalm is always meant to be sung but for cogent reasons, it can be recited.

If the need arises, the psalmist may sometimes intone the Gospel Acclamation and its verse.²⁹⁸ Though the ministry of a cantor and a psalmist are two different liturgical functions, they can, in practice, be performed by one and the same person. The distinction is, however, necessary to underscore the importance of both the responsorial psalm and the person of the psalmist.²⁹⁹ When performed by two different individuals, however, they always work in collaboration. For instance, the cantor can intone the antiphon to the psalm at Communion while the psalmist sings the verse.³⁰⁰ Apart from the skills of correct pronunciation and diction, proper musical and liturgical preparation enables the psalmist to execute his function with excellence. Necessary for him also, according to K. Harmon, is the personal and prayerful internalization of the message of the Psalm in connection with the readings and the ability to communicate this message to the assembly in his tone of voice, facial expression, body language, and gestures.³⁰¹

In Igboland, the functions described above is performed by a psalmist who is often a member of the choir. Before the liturgical celebration, the tradition in most choirs is to rehearse with the Psalmist the part he is to sing, especially the refrain. With the rehearsal, the choir is positioned to help the faithful during the celebration to grab it quickly. In the past, it was even the custom in some parishes to do a few minutes' singing rehearsal with the faithful gathered in the church before the beginning of the celebration. That tradition was helpful and needs to be resuscitated. Finally, there is need to form an association of all volunteers who wish to sing the responsorial psalm at the parish and diocesan level. Through the association, opportunities for occasional training and formation could be provided for them.

1.1.1.5 *The Schola*

Schola is the abbreviated form for the Latin *Schola Cantorum* – school of singers. Alongside the choir or the *Capella musica*, the liturgical ministry of *Schola Cantorum* is considered of great importance in *MS*. Its duty is to ensure the proper performance of the kind of music that belongs to it and to encourage the faithful to actively participate in the singing.³⁰² After intoning a song, the *schola*, as part of the whole congregation, sings in alternation or dialogue with

²⁹⁷Cf. Z. Janiec, *Jak Godnie Celebrować Mszę Świętą?* (Lublin: Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, 2020), p. 68.

²⁹⁸USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, nos 34 – 35.

²⁹⁹J. A. Zimmerman, K. Harmon, C. W. Conlon (eds.), *Living Liturgy: Spirituality, Celebration, and Catechesis for Sundays and Solemnities*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2010), p. 209.

³⁰⁰W. P. Cunningham, "Cantor, Psalmist and Cleric: The Pastoral Care and Responsibilities of the Solo Musician," accessed on 26.10.2021, <https://www.hprweb.com/2013/01/cantor-psalmist-and-cleric-the-pastoral-care-and-responsibilities-of-the-soloist-musician/>

³⁰¹K. Harmon, *The Ministry of Music*, p. 50.

³⁰²SVC, *MS*, no 19.

the people. It can as well sing independent of the external participation of the faithful. Belonging to a *schola*, children can learn early enough how to participate actively and properly in the liturgy. It is also from this group that cantors and psalmists are often recruited.³⁰³ The ministry of a *schola* just like that of a cantor is not also popular in Igboland for the same reason that the ministry of the choir is very strong.

1.1.1.6 The Choir

The choir and the *schola* perform, more or less, the same functions; in the absence of a *schola*, the choir can fully take over its tasks.³⁰⁴ However, there is one major distinguishing mark between them: a choir or *capella musica* principally performs polyphonic music while *schola cantorum* focuses primarily on Gregorian chants and other forms of liturgical monodies.³⁰⁵ Persons who possess the requisite musical skills and are willing to commit themselves to the established schedule of rehearsals and Liturgies are selected from the community to belong to the choir. Apart from singing together with the whole congregation, the choir is also meant to enrich the celebration with additional musical elements beyond the competencies of the congregation alone.³⁰⁶ Choir members must prove themselves worthy of the sacred office they perform by their piety, integrity, modesty and attitude of reverence during liturgical activities.³⁰⁷ These spiritual qualities, and not only technical skills, should form the basis for the recruitment and training of members.³⁰⁸ Though the music for the choir as mentioned above is, for the greater part, strictly choral, solos are permissible as “points of musical emphasis and accent bound up closely with the rest of the composition.”³⁰⁹

Ireneusz Pawlak explained three ways in which a choir can participate in the liturgy of the Mass:

1) The first lies in the use of the traditional repertoire, for example, the parts of the ordinary of the Mass. There is also the possibility of rendering suitable songs for offertory, communion, post communion and dismissal. These selections are performed by the choir alone, either *a capella* or with instrumental accompaniment.

2) The second way is through dialogue between the choir and the rest of the gathered assembly. In this case, the people sing its part in a monodic way whereas the choir sings

³⁰³I. Pawlak, “Muzyka Liturgiczna w Polskim Czasopiśmiennictwie Katolickim po Soborze Watykańskim II,” [in:] *Prasa I Książka Religijna*, (Olsztyn: 1990), p. 102.

³⁰⁴*Instrukcja Konferencji Episkopatu ...*, no 10g.

³⁰⁵I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 247.

³⁰⁶USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 28.

³⁰⁷Pope Pius X, *TLS*, no 14.

³⁰⁸Cf. I. H. Dalmais, P. M. Gy, P. Jounel, A. G. Martimort, *The Church at Prayer: Principles of the Liturgy*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1987), vol 1, pp. 108-109.

³⁰⁹Pope Pius X, *TLS*, no 12.

polyphonically. And this possibility is recommended where the songs are in the form of a litany, for example, Lord, Have Mercy and Lamb of God.

3) The third possibility is the simultaneous singing by both the people and the choir. Here, the faithful sings the main melody of the song or parts of the Mass while the choir polyphonically accompanies the melody at the background.³¹⁰ In this way, the choir supports and enhances the song “by adding harmonization and descants that enrich the melody line sung by the rest of the assembly.”³¹¹

One of the factors that may have led to the decline of church choirs, especially in Europe and America, is the wrongly understood idea of active participation of the faithful which laid a lopsided emphasis on congregational singing while creating the impression that choirs interfered with active participation.³¹² “The result has been an elimination of Sung Mass. Read Mass with hymns and psalms, and acclamation, has become the usual musical form... choral music has been downgraded, if not completely eliminated. Choirs have disappeared from many a church. Almost everyone is making music in the churches, except trained musicians.”³¹³ In Africa, on the contrary, choir ministry is still very strong as Lucien Deiss testified.³¹⁴

a) Types of Choir

We can distinguish various types of choir depending on two main criteria – the participating members of the group or the institution to which they belong. Depending on the participating members, we can identify these common types: mixed choir, male choir, women’s choir, men’s choir, children’s choir, boys’ choir and girls’ choir. But if we consider the institution, we can classify choirs as follows: church choir, chorale, university choir, community choir, school choir etc.³¹⁵ Since we are concentrating on types of liturgical choirs, our classification may differ a little. We shall describe these major types of choir easily identifiable in Igboland: Parish/Adult/Main choir, school choir, youth choir and children’s choir. All are mixed choirs, except the school choir which may sometimes be either boys’ or girls’ choir.

³¹⁰I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 260.

³¹¹J. Bullock, “Liturgical Matters – The Role of the Parish Choir,” accessed on 26.10.2021, <https://therecordnewspaper.org/liturgy-matters-the-role-of-the-parish-choir/>

³¹²Cf. R. Skeris, “Ordinary of the Mass,” accessed on 27.10.2021.

³¹³R. F. Hayburn, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music*, p. 408; Cf. I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna w Polskim Czasopiśmiennictwie Katolickim ...*, p. 103; E. McNamara, “What About 1967’s Musicam Sacram,” accessed on 27.10.2021, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/what-about-1967s-musicam-sacram-4355>

³¹⁴L. Deiss, *Visions of Liturgy and Music for a New Century*, p. 40 – 41.

³¹⁵“Choral Music and Importance of Choral Music,” accessed on 27.10.2021, <https://chorsymphonica.org/choral-music-and-importance-of-choral-music/>

i) Parish Choir

The parish choir is sometimes known as the Adult choir or Main choir or Parish Main choir. The reason for the multiple names could be attributed to various factors: in most cases, it is the choir that began with the creation of the parish, sings at the major Mass in the parish, is directed by the main choirmaster of the parish, and is mostly composed of adults. But there is a propensity for confusion with these nomenclatures, especially when there are other choirs existing and performing well in the same parish. To avoid this, it may be safer to identify choirs by the names of their patron saints, for example, St. Cecilia's choir, St. Anthony's choir, St. Augustine's, Our Lady of Assumption choir etc. And in terms of defining the parish choir, E. Umezina stresses that it is better to do so by its position and functions. A parish choir, abiding by the regulations of the Diocesan Liturgical Music Commission, performs its liturgical duties in the parish under the sustenance and supervision of the Parish Council. It is represented by two members in the Parish Liturgy Committee while belonging actively and fully to the Diocesan Choristers' Association.³¹⁶

A key factor that leads to excellence in the performance of parish choirs is the level of commitment of the individual choristers. One external sign of this commitment is regular attendance to choir practices in preparation for Eucharistic celebrations and other choral events. Usually, choir practices hold two or three days during the week. These selected days normally include Saturdays for final rehearsal for Mass on Sundays. On the average, the time duration for choir practice is 2 hours. Some major events like bishop's pastoral visit or diocesan competitions sometimes warrant daily practices for some weeks and even all-night practices before the actual day of the event. All this is in line with the document issued by the vicar of Rome, Cardinal Pietro Respighi, to the effect that "singers ought to meet periodically for as many practices as may be deemed necessary" in order to ensure "performance worthy of art and liturgy."³¹⁷ Other external signs include attendance at liturgical activities and choir programmes, punctuality, fulfilment of financial obligations, obedience to constituted authority, desire to learn, spirit of sacrifice, respect for others, dedication to duty, understanding of choir's ministerial function etc. No matter how competent a choirmaster is, nothing is achieved without total and unreserved commitment from the choristers. In such parishes where the choristers manifest absolute lack of commitment, choirmasters often complain and sometimes are demoralized.³¹⁸

At the diocesan level, there is the diocesan choir or better, the Bishop's choir which, consisting of choristers from the various parish choirs, performs at all diocesan functions like

³¹⁶For more explanations about the parish choir, see E. C. Umezina, "Principles and Objectives of Choir Competitions," *Nnadiabube Journal of Education in Africa*, vol 3, no 1, 2018, pp. 7-8.

³¹⁷Cardinal Pietro Respighi, [in:] R. F. Hayburn, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music*, p. 244.

³¹⁸P. Alado, *Interview granted* on 23.02.2020.

ordinations, funeral Mass of the clergy, Chrism Mass at the cathedral, diocesan jubilee celebrations, diocesan Christmas Carols etc. In its formation, organization, administration, practice, performance and indeed, in the totality of its activities, the Bishop's choir ought to be the ideal image of a liturgical choir. This is why, under the supervision of an able chaplain, talented and committed experts in liturgical music from the different parts of the diocese pull their resources together to build it up. And living up to its expectation, it joins the list of large choirs (*Capellae musicae*) which have "earned for themselves high renown by preserving and developing a musical heritage of inestimable value."³¹⁹

In choir ministry, on the one hand, there is constant need to guard against the tendency for choirs to forget that they are the peoples' representatives and thus, fall into the temptation of singing series of polyphonic and complicated songs during liturgy just to attract the peoples' attention and applause.³²⁰ To be avoided, on the other hand, is a misinterpretation of the Church's teaching on participation which results, according to R. A. Leaver, from the contemporary emphasis on a democratic theology with the basic premise that "true worship, and therefore all music of worship, if it is to be *for* the people, must be done *by* the people – *all* the people and *all* the time."³²¹ In the face of these two extremes, there is need to strike a balance. The choir has the right to occasionally select from their musical treasure some songs which can enrich and add beauty to the liturgical celebration even when the congregation is not familiar with them.³²² But it should always sing "in such a way that the listening assembly can say: 'We are happy with what you are doing in our place. We form a single choir with you.'"³²³

In a bid to maintain this balance, the Diocesan Music Commissions of different dioceses employ a number of measures. Firstly, they encourage composition of simple and congregational hymns. During Diocesan Singing Competitions, the ability to compose such hymns for 'own composition' merits the choir higher grade. Unfortunately, a great number of composers are yet to learn the technique of such simple but standard compositions. Secondly, they insist that parish choirs must endeavour to select familiar songs for the liturgy. In one diocese, each choir is obligated to select, at least, two hymns from the *NCIHB*. The Music Commission in this diocese presented a proposal to the bishop to be allowed to pay surprise visits to the parishes for the purpose of supervising and enforcing compliance to the instruction. And thirdly, they put in place deterrent measures for choirs that would continue to sing during liturgy merely to entertain.

³¹⁹SVC, *MS*, no 20.

³²⁰I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 261.

³²¹R. A. Leaver, "Liturgical Music as Homily and Hermeneutic," [in:] R. A. Leaver, J. Ann Zimmerman (eds.), *Liturgy and Music*, p. 341.

³²²M. A. Banjo, *The Use of Music in the Sacred Liturgy*, (Iperu-Remo: The Ambassador Publications, expanded edition 2017), p. 83.

³²³L. Deiss, *Visions of Liturgy and Music for a New Century*, p. 38.

ii) *Children's Choir*

Children's choirs gained recognition during the twentieth century as one of the recognised categories in Western choral music, which has subsequently evolved so dynamically that there is presently ample opportunity for artistic and scholarly investigation of the choral category. The phenomenon of the children's choir has attracted much attention in recent decades through increasing occurrence of competitions, seminars and workshops.³²⁴

A child of today is the leader of tomorrow and his impact on the society tomorrow depends on his formation today. History testifies to the fact that the Great Palestrina who became the hero of liturgical music in the area of classical polyphony was enlisted as a chorister of the Cathedral of the diocese of Rome at the age of 12 and became the organist of the Cathedral of St. Agapito at 19. His exposure to the best quality of musical training under distinguished and competent musicians as a member of the *schola puerorum* (junior choir for the boys) resulted in his numerous contributions to the Church. Speaking recently to the Church Music Association of America during the Sacred Music Colloquium at the Cathedral of the Madeleine, Salt Lake City, on June 19, 2013, the Archbishop of Portland in Oregon, Most Rev. Alexander King Sample, confirmed: "I sang in a Gregorian *schola cantorum*, and it was there that I experienced my first true formation in the sacred liturgy."³²⁵ One can, therefore, imagine the reason why Pope Pius XI was highly convinced that *scholae puerorum* "should be encouraged not only in the Cathedrals and large churches but also in the smaller parish churches."³²⁶ And there is no doubt that the existence of this centuries-old tradition of boys' choir has had an enormous influence on the movement for the establishment of children's choir, especially in America and Europe of the 20th century.³²⁷ Today, in Igboland of Nigeria, we have children's choirs where little boys and girls around the age of 12 or less are exposed for the first time to formal liturgical music, even though most of these choirs are not yet technically well-organised with formal programmes for voice training, sight-reading, conducting etc.

There are many talented children in music who could have become the future 'Palestrinas' and 'Mozarts' but whose talents, unfortunately, have remained untapped and undeveloped because

³²⁴H. Vester, M. Viljoen, R. Niemann, "Choral Techniques for Children's Choir: A qualitative Account," accessed on 10.11.2021, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/236577069_Choral_techniques_for_children%27s_choirs_A_qualitative_account

³²⁵A. K. Sample, "Celebrating the Spirit of the Liturgy," accessed on 10.11.2021, https://musicasacra.com/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/SacredMusic_ArchbishopSample.pdf

³²⁶Pope Pius XI, *Divini Cultus*, no 6.

³²⁷H. Vester, Viljoen, M, Niemann, R, "Choral Techniques for Children's Choir: A qualitative Account, accessed on 25.11.2020.

nobody helped them to discover these hidden talents. Belonging to children's choir, school or youth choir offers an easy avenue for such discovery in the first place. Again, these children and young people really need mentors, sponsors and friends who can devote quality time, energy and material resources to the development of their discovered musical talents. The researcher is today a composer of liturgical songs and remains grateful to his friend, A. Olisaeke, who then discovered this talent in him in the major seminary and encouraged him to develop it. In the minor seminary, E. Umezina who is now a professor of music had a similar experience. He wrote: "And when I left the piano lessons because it was disturbing my then greater passion, footballing, it was Fr. Dr. Emma Dim who brought me back and insisted that I learn to play. I thank him for not accepting my reasons."³²⁸ The fact is that these children and young people will remain grateful throughout their life because we insisted and helped them to discover, develop and use their musical talents for the good of humanity.

Let us start now, therefore, to harness their musical potentials and in future, be part of the solution to the colossal problem of lack of experts, competent teachers and directors of music who, in different capacities, will be zealous to serve the Church as ministers of liturgical music. Deserving commendation and worthy of emulation are the efforts of those who have helped to form a children's choir in our cathedrals, parishes and chaplaincies. Nothing should be spared in supporting and promoting these children so that they continue to wax strong. Singing competition which the Pontifical Mission Societies in conjunction with the Holy Childhood Association organizes for children both at the diocesan and provincial levels is a laudable step forward and must be sustained and augmented with occasional seminars and workshops in the area of music and liturgy.

iii) School Choir

As we already mentioned, establishment of schools has been a veritable means of evangelization starting from the missionary era. In Igboland today, the Catholic Church is the proprietor of many schools and the handover of schools back to the Church which happened in some of the States like Anambra helped to increase the number. Fortunately, majority of these schools from the nursery level to higher institutions of learning are doing excellently well, not only in academics but also in other extracurricular activities like music which is our area of interest here. It has become necessary to say a word about school choirs since "catholic schools are called

³²⁸C. Ebebe, [in:] E. C. Umezina, *Lee Nnukwu Ukochukwu (Ezenduka's Musical Experiments and Tradition)*, (Nimo: Rex Charles and Patrick Ltd., 2012), p. vii

to foster the joy of singing and making music.”³²⁹ The school manager and the choirmaster stand out among those who hold the key to success in choir ministry in the schools. The school manager is to school choir what a parish priest is to his parish choir as already discussed. As to the choirmaster, his task lies beyond teaching the students new songs; he also needs to introduce them bit by bit into the rudiments of music and liturgy and assist them to acquire elementary musical skills.

Particularly at the secondary level (12 – 18 years on the average), the standard of singing and choir formation in some of these schools is quite encouraging. In some dioceses, these school choirs perform in some important events in the diocese like Bishop’s Christmas Carols, Diocesan Education Summit etc. And to improve their performance skills, singing competitions at the diocesan level are organized for them in three groups – schools for boys only, schools for girls only and community schools for boys and girls. Occasionally, these competitions through which new and hidden talents could also be discovered and harnessed for the future are held at the provincial or inter-diocesan level. By all these activities, the students engage themselves usefully and spend their extra time and energy judiciously. Not only that, they stand to gain at the end as evidences abound that active participation in choir singing helps students to succeed in school, in work and in life.³³⁰ As A. M. Baker wrote: “Choral singing is an integral part of arts education which is a necessary component of a comprehensive and competitive education. Singing in choir promotes academic achievement and develops success skills.”³³¹ Beyond the secondary level of education, musical activities should also be promoted in the Catholic institutions of higher education. These institutions “should cultivate a high level of musical skill and a broad range of repertoire at campus Liturgies, and they should strive to make use of the talents of the entire academic community, especially music students and faculty, while taking care to include selections from the repertoire typically sung by the wider Church at Sunday Liturgies.”³³²

³²⁹USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 54.

³³⁰Chorus America, “Making the Case for your School Choir,” accessed on 12.11.2021, <https://www.murrieta.k12.ca.us/cms/lib/CA01000508/Centricity/Domain/3520/Making%20the%20Case%20for%20Choir.pdf>

³³¹A. M. Baker, “Making the Case for School Choirs,” accessed on 12.11.2021, <https://www.chorusamerica.org/advocacy-research/making-case-school-choirs>

³³²USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 56.

iv) *Youth Choir*

From school choirs, one can easily form a parish youth choir or boost the already existing one. When these students are musically good and well-formed, a robust youth choir is certain and no one can deny the huge difference the presence of a vibrant youth choir makes in a parish. With good voice training and youthful enthusiasm, a youth choir always lifts hearts and souls to God. In dealing with the youths, one has to remember that incentives and positive reinforcement are sometimes necessary for motivational purposes. Their high retentive memory and learning ability makes it naturally easier to teach songs to them. In teaching these songs, we must also bear in mind that “our youth are capable of much more than we realize.... The youth choir repertoire must not be based on gimmicks, but on proven, quality music from all periods, chant to contemporary. The musical nourishment that children receive when young affects their entire development.”³³³

In a relationship of mutual co-operation, the youth choir is meant to assist and strengthen the adult choir when and where necessary. In many parishes, however, this is not always the case as the relationship between them is rather defined by lack of understanding, acrimony, hatred, pride, jealousy and division. In places where this problem which is partially caused by generation gap is allowed to skyrocket, one of the choirs may decide never, for any purpose, to practise or sing together with the other. This is why the parish priest and the parish council need to wade in early enough to mediate and call for peace.

Another problem with the youth choir, apart from the issue of some parents who do not even permit their children to get involved, lies in the capacity to control youthful exuberances and behavioural excesses which manifest most times, especially during choir practices which some of them understand as the best moment to meet and chat with friends and use their phones. To deal with such problems requires a high moral, spiritual, intellectual and psychological maturity on the part of the management team whose work is to guide and encourage them.

Having separately discussed the different types of liturgical choir, let us now, in conclusion, highlight some of their general problems. In most places in Europe and the West, majority of choir members have some basic knowledge of music; in most African countries, on the contrary, majority are practically labouring under the yoke of musical, theological and liturgical ignorance which is basically at the root of all liturgical misconducts and aberrations by the choir. To remedy the situation in Igboland, occasional seminars and workshops for the purpose of formation are being organized. In a moment, we shall discuss more about this. Other problems militating against the outstanding performance and progress of the choirs vary in degrees

³³³G. D. Penkala, “A Youth Choir, Does Your Parish Have One?” [in:] *CanticaNOVA Publications*, accessed on 14.11.2021, <https://www.canticanova.com/articles/misc/art7jl.htm>

according to individual dioceses: lack of sufficient funding and sponsors, lack of adequate Ecclesiastical Support, lack of trained choirmasters and expert musicians and lack of absolute and total commitment on the part of the choir. Having proffered some solutions already, we call for diligent efforts from all quarters to supply for these lacks. The sooner, the better.

b) Choirmaster/Music Director

It is necessary here to say a few words about the choirmaster who “is the very soul of the choir, animating it and governing it.”³³⁴ His position is extremely important because “in the final analysis a choir is generally as good as, and no better than, its choirmaster.”³³⁵ Working closely with the bishop or the parish priest in liturgical affairs, he ensures that active participation of the faithful in singing is promoted and that suitable music is selected and prepared for every liturgical celebration. He is also in charge of coordinating the activities of all the ministers of liturgical music.³³⁶ In some places, thus, he is referred to as the music director.

In the choice of a choirmaster, therefore, special care must be taken by the appropriate authority. Fundamentally, he must be a good musician in theory and practice, a master in choral music as the name implies. As a second ‘*Master of Ceremonies*,’ he should also be conversant with the meaning of liturgy and the basic liturgical books. Apart from the knowledge of Gregorian chant, he also needs some knowledge of Latin language to effectively interpret the liturgical texts. As Haberl put it: “No matter how great his musical talents otherwise may be, the choirmaster who cannot identify his way of thinking with that of the Church as expressed in her Liturgy... is deficient in one of the most important qualifications for his position.”³³⁷ An ideal choirmaster, to be precise, must combine in himself “the musician, the liturgist, the rubrician.”³³⁸ Apart from the knowledge of music and liturgy, he must be well-trained in Christian virtues, possessing a respectable character with other essential qualities of a good leader. Above all, his obedience and faithfulness to the teaching of the Church must never be in question.

Choirmasters with the aforementioned qualities “are a crucial resource for the broader development of the church's liturgical life. By their example, collaboration and sharing of talents, such musicians assist and support other lesser-trained or part-time musicians in parishes and smaller communities.”³³⁹ In Igboland, unfortunately, professionally trained experts in liturgical

³³⁴F. X. Haberl, *Magister Choralis – A Theoretical and Practical Manual of Gregorian Chant*, (New York: Frederick Pustet, 1892), p. 223.

³³⁵G. Hyslop, *Since Singing Is So Good a Thing*, (Nairobi: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 6; Cf. E. Schaefer, *Catholic Music Through the Ages*, (Chicago: Hillenbrand Books, 2008), p. 200.

³³⁶USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 45.

³³⁷F. X. Haberl, *Magister Choralis*, p. 225.

³³⁸W. J. Finn, J. H. Wells, F. J. O’Brien (eds.), *Manual of Church Music*, (Philadelphia: Dolphin Press, 1905), p. 45.

³³⁹CanticaNOVA Publications, *The Snowbird Statement on Catholic Liturgical Music*, No.15.

music are hard to come by. In a research carried out among various choirs in Onitsha Archdiocese, the result showed that none of the choirmasters was a graduate.³⁴⁰ This situation is similar in other dioceses where individuals become choirmasters, more or less, by developing their natural talents through personal hard work. While we praise these choirmasters whose untiring efforts and diligence have borne abundant fruits in many dioceses, there is need to point out also that the ignorance of many of them concerning the principles and practice of liturgical music has continued to affect adversely not only their ministry, but the liturgy also. The blind cannot lead the blind! (Cf. Lk. 6:39)

One giant step to eliminating this debilitating ignorance is the possibility of founding a functional Institute of Music where choirmasters could have the opportunity to acquire the requisite integral formation and training. This does not exclude their individual efforts to update their theoretical and practical knowledge, outside of work or school. A second step is for the Music Commission (maybe through the executives) to provide audience, once or twice a year, to the forum of all the choirmasters where important issues relating to them could be dissected in an atmosphere of peace and harmony. This may take the form of workshops and seminars organized specifically for them. In this type of forum, solutions can be sought for even worse situations, especially in some rural areas, where some choirs don't even have the privilege of any type of choirmaster to direct them. One of such solutions could be to send capable choirmasters intermittently to assist them. Finally, group communication and sharing of ideas through social media is in these modern times advisable and can be very useful.

c) Diocesan Liturgical Choirs' Association

This is an association in every diocese that unites all the choirs under one umbrella with the aim of coordinating, promoting and creating uniformity in the liturgical activities of the choirs. Through the association which may also exist at the provincial or national level, a forum is formed where the choristers cordially interact among themselves, exchange ideas and experiences, and proffer solutions to their problems.³⁴¹ The association also thinks out, plans and executes programmes and projects targeted at promoting the general wellbeing of the member choirs and the smooth-running of the association.

The association is supposed to have a priest-chaplain who is a member of the Diocesan Liturgical Music Commission; he is to moderate the activities of the association and, most importantly, ensure that it is governed by a responsible and committed leadership. The president

³⁴⁰R. I. Chukwuneta, *Music in the Catholic Church of Nigeria: Its Evolution and Indigenization Processes in the Onitsha Archdiocese from 1887 – 2010*, Unpublished dissertation, p. 159.

³⁴¹P. Alado, *Interview granted* on 23.02.2020.

of the association, by virtue of his office, also belongs to the Commission. All this is necessary for proper synergy and intercommunication between the two groups in the context of which their objectives are more easily realizable. If, for any reason, a self-willed leadership that wishes to take instructions from nobody is enthroned, the association will definitely be ruined and the efforts of the Commission sabotaged. Such a costly mistake has happened in the past and should never be allowed to repeat.

d) Composer of Liturgical Music

Pope John Paul II, in his letter to the artists in 1999, acknowledged that the innumerable sacred works produced through the centuries by inspired composers have helped to nourish the faith of countless believers who heard them.³⁴² In his Chirograph in 2003, he gave them further encouragement for more compositions which the *Instrumentum Laboris* on the Eucharist in 2005 articulated in this manner:

Musicians and poets should be encouraged to compose new hymns, according to liturgical standards, which contain authentic catechetical teaching on the paschal mystery, Sunday and the Eucharist...

It is important to avoid ... a certain eagerness in composing new songs, to the point of almost yielding to a consumer mentality, showing little concern for the quality of the music and text, and easily overlooking the artistic patrimony which has been theologically and musically effective in the Church's liturgy.³⁴³

A composer is referred to in *SC* as one who is filled with the Christian spirit and whose "vocation is to cultivate sacred music and increase its store of treasures."³⁴⁴ From this description of a composer, let us emphasize two points. First of all, the fact that liturgical composition is a vocation implies that not all are called to it. Many make the mistake of thinking that being a choirmaster, a music director or an organist qualifies one automatically to be a composer as well. This is far from the truth and not to understand it is the primary reason why so many substandard compositions are smuggled into the liturgy in Igboland. You can aspire to compose, but do not force yourself. And when you have new compositions, endeavour to present them for evaluation and approval by duly constituted authority before its liturgical use. Although NACALIMCON has

³⁴²Pope John Paul II, *Letter to Artists*, Vatican 1999, no 12, accessed on 16.11.2021, http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/letters/1999/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_23041999_artists.html

³⁴³*Instrumentum Laboris: The Eucharist – Source and Summit of the Life and Mission of the Church*, nos 61&62: Cf. Pope John Paul II, *Chirograph for the Centenary of "TLS"*, no 12.

³⁴⁴SVC, *SC*, no 121.

penned down the procedure for this,³⁴⁵ re-evaluation may soon be necessary to shorten the vetting process. And while it may be difficult to enforce full compliance, the Diocesan Music Commission can achieve a lot through awareness campaign and working hand in hand with the Diocesan Choirs' Association.

Secondly, the agricultural term 'cultivate' is rightly used to describe composition which is an art of cultivation of sounds. Just like cultivating a piece of land involves a lot of processes, composition involves "a constant and consistent exercise of writing, revision and re-writing of music for worship in such a wise that the end product is the best music, best in terms of melody, harmony and counterpoint."³⁴⁶ While a good composer spends quality time to fine-tune his art work, an amateur is quick to display his bad job.

To be able to yield good harvest from their noble vocation, composers are supposed to meet up with certain requirements in the areas of liturgy, linguistics and music. They "should have a thorough knowledge of the historical, dogmatic or doctrinal, practical, and rubrical aspects of the liturgy... and finally they should be well trained in the art, and the history of both sacred, and secular music."³⁴⁷ But just like in the case of the choir and the choirmaster, ignorance remains a major problem that should be tackled headlong via frequent seminars and workshops. And coming to linguistics, composers need to understand whatever language to be used for composition in such a way that the musical settings respect its acoustic and accentual patterns.³⁴⁸

In the document, *Roman Missal – a Guide for Composers*, the ministry of the composer, like all ministries, is understood from the point of view of service – service to God, service to the word and service to the people of God. Because liturgy is the prayer of Christ and the Church, the composer, in his service to God, is called to be a person of prayer who responds with humility to the promptings of the Spirit.³⁴⁹ It is an incontrovertible fact that "the best compositions are written after the texts have been interiorized through prayer, particularly in the context of the liturgical assembly."³⁵⁰ The researcher, as a composer, bears witness to this through his personal experience. Secondly, in the work of setting the sacred text into music, the composer provides service to the word by making sure that the deeper meaning of the text is well communicated, proclaimed and prayed. He must endeavour to avoid bringing overtly personal sentiments into the liturgy which is

³⁴⁵For the vetting procedure, see CBCN, *Guidelines for Composers of Liturgical Music and Catholic Choirs in Nigeria*, pp. 18-19.

³⁴⁶J. T. Orakwe, *Composing Music for the Liturgy*, p. 11.

³⁴⁷Pope Pius XII, *De Musica Sacra et Sacra Liturgia*, no 98; Cf. J. M. Joncas, *From Sacred Song to Ritual Music*, p. 79.

³⁴⁸J. M. Joncas, *From Sacred Song to Ritual Music*, p. 79.

³⁴⁹Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, *The Roman Missal – a Guide for Composers*, no 5.

³⁵⁰CCCB, *Guidelines for Composers*, no 2.

the activity of the whole Church.³⁵¹ As already mentioned, biblical and liturgical texts should always serve as “the normative words from which liturgical music has to take its bearings.”³⁵² When this is so, the composer is properly positioned to articulate and express in melody the truth of the Mystery that is celebrated in the Liturgy.³⁵³ Lastly, in his service to the people of God, the composer must not limit himself to works meant only for large choirs; he must also consider the needs of small choirs.³⁵⁴ His music must be able to hit “the standard of noble simplicity – music that is so beautiful that you want to sing it, and so simple that you can.”³⁵⁵

e) *Liturgical Music Competition*

Liturgical Music Competition which started back in the 70s is an annual or bi-annual event or exercise through which choirs (conductors and instrumentalists included) interact with each other and compete for excellence. Most dioceses even prefer to organize this event once in three years and interspace it with music festivals and seminars for the other two years. This is reasonable as organizing a singing competition is always stressful both for the choirs and the organizers who also need time to attend to other personal and family issues. Liturgical music competition involves an award of prizes and trophies which all strive to win at the end of the programme, though it is far from being the primary objective. By positively challenging choirs to bring out the best in them, singing competitions aim at raising the general standard of liturgical music in the diocese. Writing in relation to late Msgr. Ezenduka, Fr. Cosmas Ebebe confirmed: “As chairman of the Awka Diocesan Liturgical Music Commission from 1978 to date, he and his Commission have improved the quality of liturgical music by the biennial church choir competitions organized by the Commission.”³⁵⁶

Liturgical music competition in Igboland has more benefits; it has immensely helped to spread and familiarize the faithful with newly composed songs.³⁵⁷ With time, as people got used to many songs, the idea to compile and publish the first Catholic Igbo Hymnbook was given birth to. More still, singing competition provides the best avenue for general correction of mistakes in old songs or in the manner of singing them in the different parishes. It also provides golden opportunities for choirs, conductors and instrumentalists to inspire and learn from each other. As

³⁵¹Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, *The Roman Missal*, no 5.

³⁵²Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Joseph Ratzinger Collected Works: Theology of the Liturgy*, p. 193; cf. *SC*, no 121.

³⁵³USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 83.

³⁵⁴SVC, *SC*, no 121.

³⁵⁵D. Clayton, “How to Compose Sacred Music that is New but Conforms to Tradition by Paul Jernberg,” accessed on 17.11.2021, <https://catholicexchange.com/how-to-compose-sacred-music-that-is-new-but-conforms-to-tradition-by-paul-jernberg>

³⁵⁶C. Ebebe, [in:] E. C. Umezina, *Lee Nnukwu Ukochukwu*, p. 7.

³⁵⁷I. R. A. Ozigboh, *Igbo Catholicism the Onitsha Connection 1967 – 1984*, (Onitsha: Africana-Fep Publishers, 1985), p. 35.

M. Griffin put it: “Great learners seek learning opportunities, and opportunities to learn about in competitions. Choir competitions and festivals allow participants to listen to one another.”³⁵⁸ By watching better performances during competitions, choirs and individual musicians are inspired to greater heights and those who are inspired today become inspirers tomorrow. Choirs are also stimulated to higher musical development when they assimilate and digest the feedbacks and corrections given by the judges and other competent authorities within the context of competitions.

Whether in the parishes or schools, the aftereffect of these competitions, especially on the choir, is evidently clear: they are better organized, new members are recruited and trained, old members acquire and deepen their musical skills and the overall voice production gets more refined. And “where the choir is good, whether on the musical level or on the liturgical level, there the people will sing well also; there, too, the community is usually alive and vibrant.”³⁵⁹

Liturgical music competition is a failure when the aim is defeated, that is, if the above objectives and benefits are not being realized. Emmanuel Umezina puts it emphatically: “When the competition is no longer healthy in the values it promotes, in the emotions it generates, in the rivalry it engineers, in the vanity it glamorizes, synergy it fails to provide in the musical life of a parish, yes in the faith it fails to deepen, then it has not only failed to serve as a sacred exercise, it may also lead to sins and ultimately away from God.”³⁶⁰ But when the objectives are being achieved, even failure to win a trophy is still to be considered a huge success.

Liturgical music competitions should be organized and executed guided by Christian principles. Competitors must bear in mind that it is never a do or die affair. A situation whereby, rather than recruit and train new members from the parish, professional mercenaries who are sometimes non-Catholics are hired and paid in a bid to win laurels defeats the purpose of this competition and runs counter to ethical values we should stand for. In a comprehensive article he wrote on the principles and objectives of choir competitions, E. Umezina did not mince words to state that choral competition is a holy exercise and so, “all foul plays and attempts to win at all cost by crook and sin should be abhorred and punished if discovered.”³⁶¹

Another anomaly during singing competition is the observed attitude of some choirs that feel dissatisfied with the announced results even when the selected judges have done justice to their assignment. Preferring to be judges in their own case, these choirs manifest palpable and severe anger towards the judges for not awarding them undeserved trophy. But by so doing, they

³⁵⁸M. Griffin, “Choir Competition,” accessed on 17.11.2021, <https://mdgriffin63.wordpress.com/2014/07/15/choir-competition-2/>

³⁵⁹L. Deiss, *Visions of Liturgy and Music for a New Century*, p. 43.

³⁶⁰E. C. Umezina, “Principles and Objectives of Choir Competitions,” p. 1.

³⁶¹*Ibid.*, p. 6.

simply showcase their ignorance of the basic elements that are considered altogether in judging the performance of a choir in a competition. Such elements which often have different marks allotted to them depending on their importance in choral music include: appearance, balance of voices, accuracy of musical interpretation and instrumentation. Others are dynamics, diction, sound production, change of key and conductor-choir relationship. Any choir that hopes to win trophy, therefore, must understand and measure very high in all these elements and not just in a few as is often the case with the protesting choirs. Spending a lot of energy and finance on non-essentials like costumes which, under the column of appearance, have only a few points attached to it is strongly discouraged. Finally, a big applause from the audience may be a sign of good performance, but the honourable judges are not intimidated by that. They do not and ought not to allow such an ovation to influence their final evaluation.

Coming to the selection of songs to be used for the competition, there are no hard and fast rules that apply for all the dioceses. The final decision depends on the Liturgical Music Commission (LMC) which must insist on the use of songs that are related to and can be used for the liturgy after the exercise. Such songs which ought to contribute to the musical tradition of the diocese should also, as much as possible, cover the different parts of the Mass, and if need be, the different feasts, solemnities and seasons of the liturgical calendar. In Igboland, the practice up till today often involves the selection of songs across the major languages used for the liturgy – Igbo, English and Latin. The selection list usually comprises English classical pieces from composers like Handel, Bach, Haydn and Beethoven, Igbo songs (often polyphonic) and Gregorian chants (especially the Ordinary of the Mass). The last is known as ‘own choice’ and as we earlier mentioned, it must be composed in accordance with the stipulated guidelines.

Singing competitions can be organized for different groups in the Church. We have the Main Diocesan Singing competition involving mainly the parish choirs. In most dioceses, it is organized under three groupings depending on the choral capacity of the parish choir: Grade A, Grade B and Grade C. The winners at the deanery level qualify for the finals at the diocesan level. A similar mode of competition is also organized, often biennially, for the youth choirs in the parishes. The next group are the students in the Catholic Secondary Schools. Though not regular due to the nature of the school curriculum, choir competition is sometimes held for them in collaboration with the school managers and Young Catholic Students (YCS) chaplains. Children are not left out; we have the Holy Childhood Association (HCA)/Block Rosary competition which takes place yearly at the parish level with the help of seminarians on apostolic work. Under the Pontifical Mission Societies (PMS) directorate, this competition can sometimes be taken to the

diocesan or national level.³⁶² Furthermore, singing competitions can as well be organized for groups such as the Catholic Women Organization, seminarians and students of higher institutions in the chaplaincies. Beyond the diocesan level, some of these competitions are occasionally held at the provincial and national levels with more enriching socio-cultural benefits. At whatever level, however, the basic principles and objectives are practically the same once it is a liturgical music competition. Finally, a big challenge still facing the LMC is the task of organizing diocesan music competitions for instrumentalists, especially organists and xylophonists, as already proposed by one of the diocesan bishops. The Commission needs to plan effectively for the realization of this proposal which will eventually promote proficiency in the use of these instruments.

1.1.1.7 *The Organists*

The function of the organist, according to *MS*, is basically twofold: accompaniment and solo performance.³⁶³ With regard to accompaniment, R. Terry maintains that “the function of the organ is to accompany the choir, not to lead it; to embellish the singing, not to smother it.”³⁶⁴ Here, the primary consideration is the worshipping community and what is suitable for them. Before the organist accompanies their singing, he ought to prepare them to join by introducing the song in a suitable key (not necessarily the key in which the music is written) with proper rhythm, tempo and voice selection. The same applies in the case of the celebrant whenever he has to intone a song to be sung in common or in dialogue with the faithful (for example, *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Our Father* etc).³⁶⁵ The organist must, however, note that he is not allowed to accompany the celebrant or a minister who proclaims aloud some parts of the Mass (for example, preface) by virtue of his role.³⁶⁶ For this ministerial function of the organist, “knowledge and technique must be perfect. Mediocrity is unforgivable.”³⁶⁷ In solo performance, the organist, selecting an appropriate piece from the repertoire, is more interested in playing exactly what the composer has written. He adheres strictly to all the musical elements of the composition without giving much consideration to their suitability for the listening community. Solo performance which can also be by way of improvisation is allowed at Mass during the Entrance, Offertory, Communion and Dismissal processions.³⁶⁸

The organist, whether playing as an accompaniment or as solo, must realize that he has an essential duty not to serve his reputation but the community and its prayer-life. The style of playing

³⁶²Cf. C. Umeojilinnaka, *Interview granted* on 20.02.2020.

³⁶³SVC, *MS*, no 65.

³⁶⁴R. R. Terry, *Catholic Church Music*, (London: Greening & Co. Ltd., 1907), p. 84.

³⁶⁵A. Filaber, *Prawodawstwo Muzyki Kościelnej*, p. 117.

³⁶⁶SVC, *MS*, no 64.

³⁶⁷L. Deiss, *Visions of Liturgy and Music for a New Century*, p. 54.

³⁶⁸SVC, *MS*, no 65.

the organ for liturgical music is different from that of Jazz, Disco, Hip-hop or Reggae music. An organist who does not draw the line but employs all sorts of styles in his playing often draws attention to himself and causes distraction in liturgy. The only preoccupation of the liturgical organist is to lead the community to God through the path of musical beauty, both in festive and penitential moments. Buttressing this point, L. Deiss gave the example of the great Baroque musician, Bach, who had the tradition of decorating his scores with the letters J. J. (*Jesu juva* – Jesus help) and signing them with the letters S.D.G. (*Soli Deo Gloria* – to God alone be glory).³⁶⁹ Like Bach, the organist must only and always seek the glory of God and lead others to it in his liturgical duty. As L. Deiss concluded: “Not every organist can imitate the greatness of Bach. Yet all must imitate his prayer.”³⁷⁰

Apart from playing the organ, the organist performs other duties in the parish according to I. Pawlak. He is most often in charge of organizing the parish choir, the *schola* and sometimes the team of instrumentalists. As the only church musician in the parish, he is not only responsible for instructing cantors and psalmists, but also for teaching the people songs necessary for liturgy.³⁷¹ And to perform these duties worthily and competently, of course, an organist requires a deep and comprehensive knowledge of liturgy, a sufficient understanding of Latin and a constant perfection of his musical skills.³⁷² In most places in Africa, Igboland inclusive, this aspect of the work of the organist is generally carried out by the choirmaster who is placed in charge of matters concerning music, choir and singing. From this perspective, B. A. Mills correctly wrote that “very often the duties of organist and choirmaster will be fulfilled by one person.”³⁷³ If, however, the situation warrants that they be performed by different individuals, both of them must strive to work in mutual co-operation with each other.

In Igboland, due to the high cost of building a pipe organ, electronic organs are mostly in use. Nonetheless, because of its strategic importance and the difference it makes in liturgy, every diocese should aspire to procure, at least, a small-scale pipe organ and train a professional to handle it for liturgical celebrations at the cathedral. Ordinarily, such professionally trained liturgical organists are very rare in the dioceses; what we have are few talented individuals who, on their own, have struggled to learn and play the organ. Unlike in Europe, Asia or America, organists are not professionally employed and thus, do not earn official salary or stipend for their job. Just for the love of it and with some sense of sacrifice, they volunteer to assist the choir they belong to or

³⁶⁹L. Deiss, *Visions of Liturgy and Music for a New Century*, p. 56.

³⁷⁰Ibid.

³⁷¹I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna...*, p. 273.

³⁷²Pope Pius XII, *De Musica Sacra et Sacra Liturgia*, no 98b.

³⁷³B. A. Mills, *Psallite Sapienter – A Musician’s Practical Guide to the 1962 Roman Missal*, (Virginia: Church Music Association of America, 2008), p. 13.

any other choir that needs their assistance. Considering their given circumstances, one must acknowledge that a good number of them are doing well; however, it is also undoubtable that majority are found wanting. And when these amateurs play by way of improvisation, with their low level of skill acquisition and ignorance of the concept of liturgy coupled with lack of serious practice, their style leaves much to be desired as far as liturgy is concerned.³⁷⁴

For this reason, it is also very crucial to organize intermittent musical programs and workshops specifically for organists as in the case of choirs and choirmasters. The musical and liturgical knowledge to gain in this process and the skills to acquire and develop will help to upgrade the general standard of organ playing for liturgy which differs from playing for mere entertainment or concert.³⁷⁵ To further promote exchange of ideas as already mentioned in the case of psalmists, an association of organists in the different dioceses could be formed and common chat in social media created.

A worse situation occurs especially in rural places where some choirs do not even have an electronic organ and where they do, there is no organist at all. In such places, they use a melodica often played by the choirmaster or any other member who has got the know-how. The situation will, however, improve in the near future as more people today are getting interested in music; more students apply to study music at the university and more parents desire to send their children to music schools/academies.

1.1.2 Common Issues Concerning the Ministers

1.1.2.1 Formation of the Ministers

In the above discussion on the functions of the individual ministers of liturgical music, one major problem that runs through and which adversely affects performance and effectiveness in Igboland is ignorance.³⁷⁶ In the Scripture, God laments the destruction of His people due to lack of knowledge and rejects His priest (and by extension, other ministers) for rejecting knowledge (Cf. Hosea 4:6). Here, therefore, we shall focus on formation in its various aspects as the key solution to this endemic problem. This is also part of what the researcher discussed in his article mentioned above.

a) Basic Instructions to Lay Ministers

“It is easy to conclude that instructions on sacred music and on sacred liturgy cannot be separated; both are necessary to the Christian life, in varying degrees, according to the different

³⁷⁴A. Umeh, “Ministers of Liturgical Music in Nigeria: Functions and Formation,” p. 168.

³⁷⁵Ibid.

³⁷⁶CBCN, *Guidelines for Composers of Liturgical Music and Catholic Choirs in Nigeria*, p. vi.

positions and ranks of the clergy and the faithful.³⁷⁷ For these general and specific instructions, as already suggested, opportunities for frequent seminars and workshops should be provided for the leaders and members of the various ministries. As SCR even recommends, each diocese should provide a higher level of this opportunity for educational training by founding an “institute or school of voice and organ, in which organists, choir masters, singers, and even the instrumental musicians, receive good instruction.”³⁷⁸ At least, one diocese has already achieved this feat; others can do the same. It is even better if two or more dioceses could combine efforts to found such an institute to which pastors or rectors of Churches should endeavour to send qualified candidates with every necessary encouragement for their studies.³⁷⁹

As W. A. Mozart who became one of the greatest musicians in history and Maria Anna Mozart, his elder sister, began their musical and academic education under the tutelage of their father, Leopold, it will be good to emphasize here the unique significance of the Christian family as “the natural and first school of Christian education.”³⁸⁰ Music and liturgy should begin from one’s immediate family; learning from the parents the meaning of and how to participate in the Eucharistic Sacrifice and other pious exercises, children progress to a more theoretical and practical knowledge of liturgical music at their youthful age.³⁸¹ For this continuity, NACALIMCON suggests a compulsory study of sacred music in the mission schools at the primary and secondary levels.³⁸² The program for the basic knowledge of liturgy should also be structured into the scheme of work for the catechism classes both for the First Holy Communion and the Sacrament of Confirmation. A Latin adage says: *Nemo dat quod non habet* – no one gives what he has not. In view of this, it is expedient and expected that teachers at these different stages of learning be sufficiently knowledgeable in these fields.

This knowledge is not meant only for children, youths and their teachers; all the faithful, in fact, are required to possess a certain degree of it also. Since the faithful are the primary minister of liturgical music, pastors of souls must consider it a case of urgent necessity to map out some days in a calendar year for seminars during which invited experts will educate the people concerning the basics of sacred liturgy and music. Certainly, this process of enlightenment will enable the faithful to master and effectively play their own part in liturgy and be able also to distinguish good liturgical celebration from bad.³⁸³

³⁷⁷SCR, *De Musica Sacra et Sacra Liturgia*, no 104.

³⁷⁸Ibid., no 115; Cf. CBCN, *Guidelines for Composers of Liturgical Music and Catholic Choirs in Nigeria*, p. 24.

³⁷⁹A. Umeh, “Ministers of Liturgical Music in Nigeria: Functions and Formation,” p. 169.

³⁸⁰SCR, *De Musica Sacra et Sacra Liturgia*, no 105.

³⁸¹Ibid., nos 105 – 108.

³⁸²CBCN, *Guidelines for Composers of Liturgical Music and Catholic Choirs in Nigeria*, p. 25.

³⁸³A. Umeh, “Ministers of Liturgical Music in Nigeria: Functions and Formation,” p. 169; Cf. SVC, *SC*, no 19; CBCN, *Guidelines for Composers of Liturgical Music and Catholic Choirs in Nigeria*, p. 26.

b) *Basic Instructions in the Houses of Formation*

If a certain degree of knowledge of the sacred liturgy and sacred music is required of all the faithful, *young men who aspire to the priesthood* must achieve a complete and sound instruction on the whole of the sacred liturgy and of sacred chant.³⁸⁴

“It can rightly be said that Our predecessor of immortal memory, St. Pius X, made as it were the highest contribution to the reform and renewal of sacred music.”³⁸⁵ This is a written testimony of Pope Pius XII about his predecessor’s unsurpassable contribution to liturgical music. According to Hayburn, this great reform which has immensely benefitted the Church did not start after Pope Pius X assumed the post of a Supreme Pontiff; it was rather dear to his heart right from his early youthful years. He wrote: “The reforms which he undertook were the result of his own personal experience as a seminarian, an assistant pastor, a pastor, a seminary rector, a bishop, and the cardinal-patriarch of Venice.”³⁸⁶ With first-hand and lifelong experience, Pope Pius X was in a position to fully understand the great necessity of early musical education for children and young people and more so, for seminarians preparing for the priesthood. And all the popes who succeeded him and SVC Fathers, based on his ‘legal code of sacred music,’ have emphasized the paramount importance of sacred music in the houses of formation and its scientific study under well-trained teachers.³⁸⁷

In the document *Instruction on Liturgical Formation in Seminaries* prepared by the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, the section on sacred music clearly directs that seminarians, as future presidents and moderators of liturgical celebrations, should be given both practical and theoretical training in music by experts. In greater details, the same document discusses liturgical formation, highlighting that all genuine liturgical formation must have both the practical (mystagogical) and the theoretical (doctrinal) aspects. The formation we derive from or through the common celebration of the liturgy is reckoned as the foundation of the formation we derive from all liturgical study which prepares us for the liturgy.³⁸⁸ Pope John Paul II gives an idea of this mystagogical formation in *Pastores Dabo Vobis*.³⁸⁹

In Igboland, it is sad to note that sacred music is not studied as a course in the seminaries and much is not even said about it as part of liturgy. The experience is the same in both religious and secular institutes. It is thus necessary that the bishops of the dioceses should ensure that

³⁸⁴SCR, *De Musica Sacra et Sacra Liturgia*, no 109.

³⁸⁵Pope Pius XII, *Musicae Sacrae*, no 20.

³⁸⁶R. F. Hayburn, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music*, p. 195.

³⁸⁷A. Umeh, “Ministers of Liturgical Music in Nigeria: Functions and Formation,” p. 169; Cf. Pope Pius XII, *Musicae Sacrae*, no 75; Pope Pius XI, *Divini Cultus*, no 1; SC no 115.

³⁸⁸Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, *Instruction on Liturgical Formation in Seminaries*, nos 2 & 7.

³⁸⁹Pope John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, no 48.

sufficient knowledge of sacred music is provided to all the seminarians; the superiors ought to do likewise for all the members of their communities, from the time of probation and the novitiate.³⁹⁰ In this respect, NACALIMCON even proposes that “sacred music should be made compulsory in the seminaries (both minor and major), convents, and other formation houses.”³⁹¹

In providing these music programmes, efforts must be made so that they are not experienced as obnoxious or a punishment as observed in some of the formation houses. The researcher who was a music director for eight years in a minor seminary discovered, for instance, that many of the young seminarians desired not to join the choir for the fear that doing so would frequently deny them much of other important activities like studies and sports. There is no doubt that these young people in the formation houses are lovers of music and would be willing to improve their musical skills, but the music programme or choir practices must also be designed in such a manner as to catch their interest and sustain their commitment. And given the ample opportunities provided in these houses of formation to exercise the functions of the different ministers of liturgical music – organist, psalmist, choristers etc., these candidates for the priesthood and religious life are better equipped, wherever they find themselves in future, to contribute to the development of liturgical music.³⁹²

When some of these candidates are discovered to be musically talented, they can be sent to respectable institutes of sacred music for studies in line with the exhortations of the Holy See.³⁹³ Finishing and coming back as musical experts, they will help to “preserve the heritage of sacred music and genuinely promote the new forms of sacred singing”³⁹⁴ as intended by the Fathers of SVC. And since lack of well-trained teachers is part of the reasons why sacred music is not formally studied in the seminaries and in other Catholic institutes and schools, their teaching assignment will be part of the solution. Their musical expertise will also help to upgrade the practice of liturgical music in the cathedrals and parishes.³⁹⁵

c) Spiritual Formation

Having emphasized both musical and liturgical formation which are inseparable, we wish to complete the circle by dwelling on the need for spiritual formation also.³⁹⁶ To whom much is given, much is also expected (Luke 12:48). The great privilege of participating in the liturgy as the presider, a member of the choir, an organist or a psalmist goes with the responsibility of

³⁹⁰SCR, *De Musica Sacra et Sacra Liturgia*, no 110; Cf. SVC, *MS*, no 52.

³⁹¹CBCN, *Guidelines for Composers of Liturgical Music and Catholic Choirs in Nigeria*, p. 25.

³⁹²A. Umeh, “Ministers of Liturgical Music in Nigeria: Functions and Formation,” pp. 170-171.

³⁹³Cf. SCR, *De Musica Sacra et Sacra Liturgia*, no 76.

³⁹⁴SVC, *MS*, no 52.

³⁹⁵A. Umeh, “Ministers of Liturgical Music in Nigeria: Functions and Formation,” p. 171.

³⁹⁶Cf. *Ibid.*, no 24.

bequeathing the faithful a shining example of good moral and spiritual comportment. Succinctly, SCR puts it thus: “All those who take part in sacred music, as composers, organists, choir directors, singers, or musicians should above all give good example of Christian life to the rest of the faithful because they directly or indirectly participate in the sacred liturgy.”³⁹⁷ What is more, these ministers who are permeated and transformed by the sacred mysteries they celebrate can easily become agents of evangelization as new members can easily be attracted by their exemplary lives to join their ministry.³⁹⁸

In Igboland, it is quite encouraging that most choirs, if not all, occasionally organize for themselves a few days of spiritual retreats with prayer sessions and spiritual talks in a bid to uplift their spiritual life. The various ecclesiastical authorities should endeavour to encourage and support such efforts and may sometimes widen the scope to accommodate other ministers of liturgical music in the parish or institution.³⁹⁹ The diocese of Saginaw in USA inscribed it in their guidelines for ministers of music that “the pastor/pastoral administrator or music director might consider offering a yearly day of reflection for musicians which would be an avenue for spiritual enrichment and an opportunity for them to reflect upon their ministry.”⁴⁰⁰

If spiritual formation is applicable to all the Christian faithful, it is even more relevant to candidates for the priesthood. Applying the propositions contained in the *Instrumentum Laboris* on the Formation of Priests in Circumstances of the Present Day, Pope John Paul II wrote his post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis* where, inter alia, he examined the key areas of priestly formation – human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral – and emphasized the centrality of the spiritual formation. He mentioned that human formation which is the basis of all forms of priestly formation leads and finds its completion in spiritual formation. Deep-rooted in the experience of the cross and of the totality of the Paschal mystery, spiritual formation is the core that unites and gives life to priestly identity and ministry. It is the key element of a priest’s education without which his pastoral formation too will be left without a solid base.⁴⁰¹ The essential elements of this spiritual formation are contained in the Decree on Priestly Training *Optatam Totius* which was proclaimed by Pope Paul VI in 1965.⁴⁰²

³⁹⁷SCR, *De Musica Sacra et Sacra Liturgia*, no 97.

³⁹⁸A. Umeh, “Ministers of Liturgical Music in Nigeria: Functions and Formation,” p. 172.

³⁹⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰⁰Catholic Diocese of Saginaw, “Guidelines and Protocols for Liturgical Ministers,” p. 43, accessed on 20.11.2021, https://saginaw.org/sites/default/files/2018-01/EMHC_final_from_Tim.20140218-GLM.pdf

⁴⁰¹Pope John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, no 45.

⁴⁰²SVC, *Optatam Totius*, no 8 - Part of it directs that candidates to the priesthood “should be taught to seek Christ in faithful meditation on the word of God and in active participation in the sacred mysteries of the Church, especially the Eucharist and the Divine Office, to seek him in the bishop by whom they are sent and in the people to whom they are sent, especially the poor, little children, the weak, sinners and unbelievers. With the confidence of sons, they should love and reverence the most blessed Virgin Mary, who was given as a mother to the disciple by Jesus Christ as he was dying on the cross.”

Obviously, the clergy who, by the grace of holy orders, ought to give better example as ministers participate in spiritual formation too. Key spiritual aids to priestly life which every clergy is meant to internalize and practicalize are summarized in detail in the conciliar document *Presbyterorum Ordinis* by Pope Paul VI. Some of the highlights include the sacraments, adoration, the Office, spiritual reading, meditation, mental and vocal prayer, spiritual direction, study and pastoral knowledge, and Mary.⁴⁰³ A more recent document *Ratio Fundamentalis* (2016) by the Congregation for the Clergy stresses that sacramental fraternity, considered as a valuable help for the ongoing phase of the formation of clerics, is to be expressed in concrete ways such as fraternal meetings, spiritual direction and confession, retreats, a common table, common life and priestly associations.⁴⁰⁴ By these avenues, the spiritual life of the clergy is constantly nurtured and perfected.

1.1.2.2 Remuneration

“It is desirable that the organists, choir directors, singers, musicians and all others engaged in the service of the church offer their works of piety and of zeal for the love of God, without any recompense.”⁴⁰⁵ This stipulation of the Church about service which falls in line with St. Paul’s admonition to the Colossians⁴⁰⁶ remains the governing principle of service till today in Igboland. Out of love for God, the ministers of the liturgical music devote a lot of time and energy and sometimes, money in order to prepare and make the liturgy as solemn and dignified as it should be. Freely making this sacrifice, they firmly believe that their reward will be abundant in heaven. While this mentality is highly commendable, it may also be worth doing for the ecclesiastical authorities at all levels to find suitable ways to appreciate the efforts of these individuals or groups according to their degrees of involvement and self-commitment. Appreciation, of course, takes many forms: words of encouragement, material gift or a celebration of thanksgiving party etc. For instance, a music director annually celebrates a group party for the choirmasters in the diocese. Most often, this show of appreciation which is tremendously cherished can in turn re-energize and reposition the ministers involved for greater co-operation and efficacy. In moments of adversity, to show concern and concrete support can also be heart-warming and inspiring.

⁴⁰³Cf. Pope Paul VI, *Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, Presbyterorum Ordinis*, nos 18-21.

⁴⁰⁴For details, see Congregation for the Clergy, *The Gift of the Priestly Vocation, Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*, no 88.

⁴⁰⁵SCR, *De Musica Sacra et Sacra Liturgia*, no 101.

⁴⁰⁶Bible NIV (New International Version) Col. 3: 23 – 24: “Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving.”

Besides the ecclesiastical authorities, we also find places where individuals and associations in the church join in appreciating those who render selfless service to them. The personal experience of the researcher's biological father, Mr. Paulinus Umeh, is relevant here. He was a renowned choirmaster and served for many years as the first chairman of the Diocesan Choristers' Association. Before his sickness and death, he efficiently groomed the parish choir in his village while living in the city. This responsibility posed a lot of challenges which he willingly accepted as his personal sacrifice to God for the liturgical growth of the parish. For the many years he carried out this assignment, the Catholic Women Organization of the parish annually presented some material gifts to him as a symbol of their sincere appreciation for his generous service. This little token which he saw as a great honour and valued as a big treasure always contributed in spurring him on to greater heights. Concerning his choir, their patron and other well-meaning individuals occasionally appreciated them for good liturgical renditions and for trophies won during diocesan singing competitions. This appreciation, often in monetary value, helped the choir to sustain itself, being a non-profit association. Apart from a choirmaster or the choir, people have also appreciated and commended in other places the soul-lifting performance of the psalmist, the organist or even, the composer of a particular liturgical song devoutly rendered.

At this point, let us recall that cultures are different and changing. In most places in Europe and America, it is observed that individuals receive cash remuneration for their part-time or full-time services in the church which is also in accord with the Church's legislation: "Should it be that they (*ministers*) are unable to offer their services gratuitously, Christian justice and charity demand that ecclesiastical superiors give them just pay, according to the various approved customs of the place and also in observance of the ordinances of civil laws."⁴⁰⁷ Considered in this light, it has also become extremely important in Igboland to re-evaluate the condition of service for some ministers, particularly the choirmasters. Given the amount of devotion to duty and the situation of life for some of them, it may be good for the diocese through the parish priests and the parish councillors to use discretion to consider placing them on the payroll of the parishes where they serve in order to lessen their worries and enable them to serve the Church with greater focus and more efficiency.⁴⁰⁸

⁴⁰⁷SCR, *De Musica Sacra et Sacra Liturgia*, no 101.

⁴⁰⁸Cf. E. Schaefer, *Catholic Music Through the Ages*, p. 200; Cf. "Application of the Principles of Celebration to Music in Eucharistic Worship," [in:] V. C. Funk (ed.), *Music in Catholic Worship – the NPM Commentary*, no 77, pp. 95-96.

1.1.2.3 *Grooming Successors*

In any organization, religious or business, profit or non-profit, governmental or non-governmental, *succession planning* is a familiar term. Succession planning and management is best defined “as any effort designed to ensure the continued effective performance of an organization, division, department, or work group by providing for the development, replacement, and strategic application of key people over time.”⁴⁰⁹ This strategic process for the training and development of potential successors, at moments of retirement or resignation, guarantees a smooth handover of power in vital leadership roles. Any organization that fails to do succession planning is surely planning to fail. In case of emergency like death or sickness, for instance, such an organization may find it absolutely difficult to properly manage the sudden absence of its prominent leaders in such a manner as to ensure sustainability and continuity without any crisis. Put succinctly by J. C. Maxwell, there is no success without a successor; a great leader must be able to groom capable hands to succeed him.⁴¹⁰

Succession planning is also important in the area of liturgical music. We take the choir as a practical example. Of course, with the adult choir whose members are, more or less, permanently resident in a locality, this is less an issue as in the case of the youth choir whose members are constantly on transit in a bid to achieve their purpose in life. In the parish, for example, a successfully trained soprano voice in the choir may marry tomorrow and leave for another city with the husband just as the best bass singer you boast of today may leave the choir any moment in search of greener pastures. The story is the same in the schools and institutions of higher learning where students keep graduating and passing out. In this type of unavoidable situation, progress is retarded and continuity affected.

To forestall the danger, therefore, there is an urgent need to groom successors in imitation of a football coach who understands the necessity of having good players on the reserve bench. Key individual ministers like the choirmaster, organist, other instrumentalists, conductor or psalmist must each strive to identify those in their group with the requisite qualities and talents and begin in time to assist them by way of training to be able to stand in for them in time of need. As the key person, for example, a knowledgeable choirmaster ought to work out strategies to train interested choristers from each part on the rudiments of singing musical notes independently. He must wisely select those with the capacity to understudy him as assistants and offer them opportunities, after series of trial performances during choir practices, to conduct and handle the

⁴⁰⁹W. J. Rothwell, *Effective Succession Planning*, (New York: AMACOM, 2010), p. 6.

⁴¹⁰Cf. Peter Ebere Cardinal Okpaleke, “Address to the CADEK Presbyterium on September 6, 2022, at the Second Plenary Meeting for Pastoral Placement,” p. 7.

choir during liturgical celebrations. Proffering useful corrections and suggestions at such attempts will strengthen their confidence and perfect their ability. Other ministers are to do likewise in their areas of function.

1.1.2.4 *Inculturation of Liturgical Music*

Any discussion on liturgical music is always better understood from the point of view of liturgy with which it forms an integral part. We shall discuss, therefore, the concept of inculturation in liturgy before its application in the area of liturgical music. This discussion is germane here as an introduction to our later discussion on active and conscious participation in the liturgy which A. J. Chupungco considers as “the ultimate aim of inculturation.”⁴¹¹ Liturgical inculturation, in reality, was an existing practice as old as the Church of Jesus Christ; what *SC* did was to use the term *adaptation* to articulate, formalize and codify it.⁴¹² It was actually Pope John Paul II who, in his address to members of the Pontifical Biblical Commission on 26th April, 1979, employed and popularized the use of the term *inculturation* or *acculturation* to express an element of the great mystery of the incarnation.⁴¹³ Expatriating on the neologism in the context of catechesis in particular and evangelization in general, he explained on 16th October of the same year in his Apostolic Exhortation, *Catechesi Tradendae* that the power of the Gospel, by taking flesh in the various cultures and milieu, must be able to enrich these cultures “by helping them to go beyond the defective or even inhuman features in them, and by communicating to their legitimate values the fullness of Christ.”⁴¹⁴ From this perspective, according to Cardinal Arinze, “the mystery of the Incarnation offers a model, an image to inculturation.”⁴¹⁵

Because it occupies the pride of place in liturgy, liturgical music is one major area where the process of inculturation can be actualized. Our attempt here is to consider briefly the journey towards the achievement of this goal in the local culture of Igboland. Emphasis is laid in *SC* on the urgent necessity for musical training of missionaries who need to recognize and appreciate the musical tradition which plays an important role in the religious and social life of the people in foreign mission lands. As far as may be practicable, diligent care must be taken to promote this musical tradition both in the schools and in sacred services.⁴¹⁶ Even from the seventeenth century

⁴¹¹A. J. Chupungco, “Inculturation of Worship: Forty Years of Progress and Tradition,” p. 2, accessed on 18.11.2021, https://scholar.valpo.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1004&context=ils_papers

⁴¹²*Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁴¹³Pope John Paul II, “Address of His Holiness John Paul II to Members of the Pontifical Biblical Commission,” accessed on 9.11.2021, http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1979/april/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19790426_pont-com-biblica.html

⁴¹⁴Pope John Paul II, *Catechesi Tradendae*, no 53.

⁴¹⁵Cf. Francis Cardinal Arinze, “Christianity Meets Igbo Traditional Religion,” p. 16.

⁴¹⁶SVC, *SC*, no 119.

already, missionaries received papal permission for the use of vernacular in mission lands in Asia, Europe and America. This was the case, for instance, at the first Diocesan Synod of Baltimore held in November 1791 when, instead of Latin, Bishop John Carroll (d.1815) allowed some use of English within liturgical celebrations and recommended the use of vernacular hymns as well.⁴¹⁷

Against this background, the history of liturgical music in Igboland exposes a remarkable deficiency in methodology of the first missionaries who came to evangelize the land. Their attitude was more of rejection and condemnation of the local culture. Even though the territory then was a mission land, the use of the vernacular was forbidden in liturgy and “attempts to evolve Igbo music and adapt them to the liturgy were considered a profanity.”⁴¹⁸ All the liturgical texts were in Latin which was the only permissible language just as the people sang the Gregorian chant as the only music of the Church. This situation which spanned from the missionary era in the late 19th century began to change progressively after the Nigerian Independence in 1960 up to 70s, thanks to the likes of Fr. Arazu and late Msgr. Cyril Ezenduka who became the pioneer vanguards of liturgical inculturation in the area of music. They made frantic attempts to translate biblical and liturgical texts into the vernacular and to put them into musical forms and expressions that reflected African originality and idioms. As Fr. B. Agbo wrote, theirs “was the earliest effort to put into practice Vatican II’s recommendations on inculturation, use of the vernacular, and local instruments to enhance the people’s active participation in the liturgy.”⁴¹⁹ With a host of other native composers like Fr. S. Azuka, Fred. V. C. Uche, Dorothy Ipere, G. Muo, Fr. S. Anih, P. N. Umeh, L. Ekemezie, Felix Ebewu, Ambrose Madu, M. Eze, Peace Val, Sam Ojukwu, Isaac Okonkwo, A. Egbo etc. who joined in their footsteps, they “have uniquely and rapidly given Igboland a rich source of liturgical hymns quite distinct from any foreign adaptations in both wording and melody.”⁴²⁰ The progress has continued till date as younger generation of composers, with or without formal education in music, are increasingly contributing to the development of ‘inculturated’ liturgical music in Igboland.

As in vocal music, the approach of the missionaries to instrumental music was not also very encouraging. Following their ordinance, “the use of local instruments was completely

⁴¹⁷J. J. Priest, “Forbidden Translation? A Brief History of How the Mass Came to be Rendered in the Vernacular,” accessed on 19.11.2021, <https://adoremus.org/2019/01/forbidden-translations-a-brief-history-of-how-the-mass-came-to-be-rendered-in-the-vernacular/>

⁴¹⁸Preface in E. C. Umezina, *Lee Nnukwu Ukochukwu*, p. xi.

⁴¹⁹B. N. Agbo, “Inculturation of Liturgical Music in the Roman Catholic Church of Igbo Land: A Compositional Study,” *Journal of Global Catholicism*, vol 1, Iss 2, Art 2, 2017, p. 10, accessed on 19.11.2021, <https://crossworks.holycross.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.pl/&httpsredir=1&article=1013&context=jgc>

⁴²⁰H. N. Chigere, *Foreign Missionary Background and Indigenous Evangelization in Igboland*, p. 531.

forbidden as they were considered “*fetish*” objects and hence belonging to the devil.”⁴²¹ With this kind of indoctrination, some people began to believe that the destruction of these indigenous instruments was itself “a symbol of conversion to Christianity.”⁴²² One could, therefore, understand the difficulty and strong opposition which advocates of these musical instruments faced when they began to experiment with the idea of introducing them into the liturgy. Msgr. C. Ezenduka who was particularly and strongly convinced that local instruments can be safely appropriated into God’s service went ahead to personally construct metal-gong, wooden xylophone and other local instruments for church worship. From 1970 – 1974 at Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Church, Igboekwu, St. Cecilia’s parish choir which served as his laboratory for musical experimentation marvellously performed his compositions with instrumentation that the then Archbishop of Onitsha Archdiocese, Francis Arinze, who initially restricted him only to his parish church now authorized him to extend the innovation to other parishes. Today, the use of different local instruments in the liturgy has become a widespread phenomenon and for that, the entire Catholic Church in Igboland will ever remain indebted to the genius of Msgr. Ezenduka.⁴²³

Apart from musical forms, melodies and musical instruments, inculturation can also be applied in the area of gestures and bodily postures.⁴²⁴ We shall discuss more about this later under the subtopic – liturgical music and dance. But let it be noted in all this that the work of inculturation is a rigorous and continuous process which calls for necessary prudence.⁴²⁵ In the history of European culture, for instance, not all musical genres and forms were suitable or could be made suitable for liturgical celebrations. Some of them served best in public houses, chamber music halls, concert halls and theatre houses. Till today in Europe as in other parts of the world, there is constant vigilance against grave abuses that creep into the liturgy in the name of inculturation. In the summary of the article he entitled ‘the limits of inculturation in liturgical music,’ a European professor in musicology, P. Wiśniewski, drew attention to the fact that:

Liturgical music is nowadays experiencing a serious crisis. Many various attempts are made to introduce various substitutes for true musical art into the liturgy, often without control. Incorrectly understood inculturation in this area causes a fear of the future. We are now witnessing occurrences of

⁴²¹Preface in E. C. Umezina, *Lee Nnukwu Ukochukwu*, p. xi.

⁴²²B. N. Agbo, “Inculturation of Liturgical Music in the Roman Catholic Church of Igbo Land: A Compositional Study,” p. 7.

⁴²³Cf. J. Madueke, *Homily at the Funeral of Very Rev. Msgr. Cyril Ezenduka*, (Okpuno: Fides Communications, 2013), pp. 14-15.

⁴²⁴CDWDS, *Instruction: Inculturation and the Roman Liturgy*, no 41.

⁴²⁵*Ibid.*, nos 46-51.

performance of popular music in the liturgy, even though it bears no connection to the liturgy of the Church.⁴²⁶

In Nigeria as well as other African countries, there is need for such vigilance and for continuous dialogue and research studies in order to discover the best musical forms in our culture that can help to express our deep religious sentiments and uplift our minds to God in liturgy. The way it may look absurd to sing a liturgical song in a disco party or folk music festival is the same way it is unacceptable to bring hip-hop, disco, jazz or other forms of secular music into the liturgy. The increasing influence of Pentecostalism on the style of singing during the liturgy portends grave danger; it has led to the use of inappropriate songs and ‘choruses’ in a way that sometimes turns the church into a dance hall.⁴²⁷ Emmanuel C. Anagwo thus agrees that theologians have a task to partner with music composers to make sure that the standard of liturgical music is never sacrificed on the altar of inculturation.⁴²⁸ In spite “of their appetizing lyrics and stimulating sound tones,” what Bishop A. Ukwuoma has also described as a “form of singing that knows no rule or guidelines”⁴²⁹ must not be allowed to water down or destroy the practice of liturgical music in Igboland.

Basic prudence applies even more in situations as we have in different parts of Nigeria where different cultures and languages coexist and influence each other. In the institutions of higher learning, for example, where students from different ethnic groups and languages gather for worship, care must be taken to respect the riches of even the minority culture “but without carrying to extremes the localization of the liturgical celebrations.”⁴³⁰ When necessary and possible, especially in celebrations like the feast of the Pentecost, singing in the languages of the different cultures that make up a given community is to be encouraged. At other times, however, more universal languages like English or even Latin may be preferred to underscore the unity and universality of the worshipping community.

⁴²⁶P. Wiśniewski, *Granice Inkulturacji w Muzyce Liturgicznej*, p. 59.

⁴²⁷M. N. Anibueze, “Liturgical Music and Dance: Implications for the Church in Nigeria,” [in:] E. C. Anagwo, B. E. Ukutegbe (eds.), *Dynamics of Inculturation in Africa: Celebrating the Priest, Teacher and Mentor*, (Benin City: Floreat Systems Publications, 2021), p. 149.

⁴²⁸E. C. Anagwo, “Liturgical Music and Dance: Possible Areas of Inculturation among Igbo Christians of Nigeria,” [in:] L. E. Ijezie, S. Audu, A. I. Acha (eds.), *Theology and Liturgy in the Life of the Church*, (Lagos: Clear Impact Services, 2012), p. 242.

⁴²⁹CBCN, *Guidelines for Composers of Liturgical Music and Catholic Choirs in Nigeria*, p. vi.

⁴³⁰CDWDS, *Instruction: Inculturation and the Roman Liturgy*, no 50.

1.1.2.5 Liturgical Music Commission

A special Commission for Sacred Music must exist in every diocese, as has been required since the time of St. Pius X. The members of such commissions, priests and laymen, are named by the local ordinary. He should choose men who have training and experience in the various kinds of sacred music.⁴³¹

In line with canon 838 §4 of the Code of Canon Law (CCL), CDWDS, in article 19 of the Instruction *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, stipulated that to moderate, promote and guard the liturgy of each diocese belongs properly to the office of the bishop as the custodian of the whole liturgical life. To carry out this onerous task, the instruction continues, the bishop has to establish commissions as well as councils or committees who, relying on his authority and approval, must act in accordance with his intentions and norms in order to perform their duties in a suitable way and so that the Bishop's effective administration in the diocese will be preserved.⁴³² One of these commissions is the Music Commission whose professional and advisory assistance the bishop needs "in promoting sacred music together with pastoral liturgical action in the diocese."⁴³³ To this commission, Pope Pius X assigned the principal task of vigilance in two major ways: "to watch over (1) the quality of the music used in churches and (2) how the music was used in the liturgy."⁴³⁴ The commission, as the SCR mentioned above, must be made up of experts who deeply understand the liturgical laws and the principles of sacred music. This is important as it belongs to them as consultors to pass judgement in matters relating to sacred music such as giving approval before the use of new compositions. They have also serious responsibility towards the choirs and other ministers of liturgical music.

Under the Bishops' Conference, as decreed in article 69 of *MS*, countries are to have a Liturgical Commission to take care of sacred music also. Names and structures of this commission could differ in different countries but the function is always identical. In Canada, for instance, there is the Episcopal Commission for Liturgy and the Sacraments with several committees to assist, one of which is the National Council for Liturgical Music. In Australia, the office which advises the Bishops' Commission for Liturgy on matters pertaining to liturgical music is similarly called the National Liturgical Music Council.⁴³⁵ In Nigeria where CBCN operates under various

⁴³¹Ibid., no 118.

⁴³²CDWDS, *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, no 25.

⁴³³SVC, *MS*, no 68.

⁴³⁴J. J. M. Foster, "Diocesan Commissions for Liturgy, Music, and Art: Knowing the Past to Prepare for the Future," accessed on 20.11.2021, p. 7, <https://fdlc.org/sites/default/files/files/Foster-FDLC%20address%20re%20Diocesan%20Commissions%20FINAL%2010-8-15.pdf>

⁴³⁵P. Taylor, "National Liturgical Music Council," accessed on 28.11.2020, <https://www.catholic.org.au/advisory-bodies/national-liturgical-music-council>

departments and committees, a little difference is noticed; NACALIMCON does not fall under the Liturgy Committee but is an organ set up in 2008 under the CBCN Committee for Inculturation and Translation. Just recently, in 2021, after a series of national conferences to discuss issues bordering on liturgical music in Nigeria, it has come up with a general manual that will serve as the basic guideline for music composers and choristers.

1.2 Genres/Types of Liturgical Music

1.2.1 Vocal Music

Because of its close association with sacred texts, sacred music is primarily a vocal music the world over.⁴³⁶ The human voice is the most privileged and fundamental musical instrument, radically different from any other man-made instrument that extends and supports it.⁴³⁷ As part of the human body, “it *intimately engages the entire human person* – mind, heart, soul, and strength – in a way that allows communication of the deepest and most subtle movements of one’s soul.”⁴³⁸ Corroborating this idea, Pope Pius XI wrote:

Voices, rather than instruments, ought to be heard in the church: the voices of the clergy, the choir and the congregation. Nor should it be deemed that the Church, in preferring the human voice to any musical instrument, is obstructing the progress of music; for no instrument, however perfect, however excellent, can surpass the human voice in expressing human thought, especially when it is used by the mind to offer up prayer and praise to Almighty God.⁴³⁹

Let us consider the two forms of vocal music that, for centuries, have contributed to the solemnity of liturgy: monody and polyphony. These forms of singing executed in the Church without musical accompaniment is known as *a capella* which etymologically means ‘in the style of the church,’ ‘as done in the church.’⁴⁴⁰

1.2.1.1 Liturgical Monody

The term monody is a derivative of two Greek words *monos* (one) and *ode* (song) which denotes a song meant for one person. Liturgical monody, according to P. Wiśniewski, “comprises a number of different musical genres created over the centuries for the needs of the Mass liturgy

⁴³⁶J. P. Swain, *Historical Dictionary of Sacred Music*, (London: Scarecrow Press, 2016), p.126.

⁴³⁷USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 86.

⁴³⁸Magnificat Institute of Sacred Music, “What is “Sacred Music”?” accessed on 21.11.2021, <https://magnificatinstitute.org/blog/2018/11/30/philosophy-of-sacred-music>

⁴³⁹Pope Pius XI, *Divini Cultus*, no 7.

⁴⁴⁰A. L. Camp, “Music in Christian Worship,” p. 5, accessed on 21.11.2021, <https://foracappella.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Music-in-Christian-Worship-4acappellaorg-revised.pdf>

and the Breviary. Alongside Gregorian chant, it also includes post-Gregorian compositions, some church songs and contemporary one-voice liturgical songs in national languages.”⁴⁴¹ The practice of fixing Gregorian melodies to texts in national languages was popular only for a brief moment in Igboland because of the tonal structure of the language. We shall, therefore, limit our discussion here to Gregorian chant.

In line with the definition of a chant by W. Apel,⁴⁴² Gregorian chant has the following essential characteristics: liturgical, vocal, monophonic, unaccompanied, rhythmically supple and modal.⁴⁴³ Its artistic value as a chant of the community and its power as prayer accords it a pride of place in Catholic liturgical worship.⁴⁴⁴ While not intending to give a detailed explanation of the historical development of Gregorian chant, we shall, nevertheless, mention the great job done in this regard by Sr. Marietta in her book, *Singing the Liturgy: A Practical Means of Christian Living*. Her five-point categorization system of the historical periods of this liturgical music summarizes the upward and downward movements of its development. The periods are as follows:

First Period – Formative Period – From the Year A.D. 33 – 600.

Second Period – Period of Diffusion and Perfection – 600 – 1300.

Third Period – Period of Decadence of the Chant – 1300 – 1517.

Fourth Period – Period of Loss of the Chant – 1517 – 1850.

Fifth Period – Period of Restoration of the Chant – 1850 – the Present.⁴⁴⁵

After its periods of perfection, decadence and loss, it was really at the beginning of the 20th century, during the reign of His Holiness Pius X, that the restoration of Gregorian chant flowered and blossomed. He sought to maintain the ‘incorruptibility’ and continuity of the chant tradition which he regarded as “the supreme model for sacred music.”⁴⁴⁶ By expanding and reinforcing the basic principles and decrees of Pope Pius X, all the popes who succeeded him continued with the effort to restore the ancient dignity and splendour of Gregorian chant. A decade after Vatican II Council, on April 14, 1974, Pope Paul VI, in compliance with the recommendations of the Council, sent to all the bishops and heads of religious orders through the CDWDS a minimum selection of Gregorian chants entitled *Jubilate Deo* in order “to make it easier for Christians to achieve unity

⁴⁴¹P. Wiśniewski, “Liturgical Monody as a Subject of Musicological Research – an Attempt at a Synthesis,” *Seminare*, no 4, vol 39, 2008, p. 209. Cf. I. Pawlak, “Metologia Badań nad Monodią Liturgiczną,” *Studia Nauk Teologicznych*, vol 2, 2007, p. 353.

⁴⁴²See the definition in W. Apel, *Gregorian Chant*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1958), pp. 3-4.

⁴⁴³E. Schaefer, *Catholic Music Through the Ages*, p. 34.

⁴⁴⁴Pope Pius X, [in:] R. F. Hayburn, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music*, p. 196.

⁴⁴⁵Sr. Marietta, S. N. J. M., *Singing the Liturgy*, p. 69.

⁴⁴⁶Pope Pius X, *TLS*, no 3.

and spiritual harmony with their brothers and with the living traditions of the past.”⁴⁴⁷ At the centenary of Pope Pius X’s first *motu proprio*, Pope John Paul II expressed his strong preference for the Gregorian chant.⁴⁴⁸ The USA Conference of Catholic Bishops did likewise.⁴⁴⁹ Justine B. Ward, renowned for her zeal in promoting the liturgical and musical reforms of Pope Pius X, pushes forth an argument why Gregorian chant which uses eight scales or modes may be preferable over modern music which has only two. According to her, “it is evident that eight modes give greater variety of expression than two – an advantage for which even our modern indiscriminate use of the chromatic does not fully compensate.”⁴⁵⁰

1.2.1.2 Polyphony

Sacred polyphony in its various forms is the second kind of vocal music which the church allows in her liturgy. From its Greek etymology, polyphony means ‘many sounds.’ It is the simultaneous movement of two or more independent melodies. Because of its complex nature which differentiates it from plain chant, it cannot be sung by a congregation but rather by a highly trained choir and the problem of the unintelligibility of its text is also a matter of great concern.⁴⁵¹ By the 16th century, the problems had changed gear; some composers incorporated vernacular texts into the Latin and sometimes, used worldly and even amorous texts. Secular musical themes were also used with mundane and even immoral associations.⁴⁵²

In the midst of these problems, the Church, up to the 20th century, strongly recommended the classical form of polyphony sung without instrumental accompaniment which, closely connected and deriving from the motifs of Gregorian chant, possesses the three requisite qualities of sacred music in a high degree.⁴⁵³ With their artistic purity and richness of melody, thus, they can worthily accompany and beautify the Church’s sacred rites.⁴⁵⁴ This polyphony which began to flourish in the Middle Ages reached the level of perfection in the Roman school with Giovanni

⁴⁴⁷CDWDS, “Letter to Bishops on the Minimum Repertoire of Plain Chant,” accessed on 14.12.2020, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/letter-to-bishops-on-the-minimum-repertoire-of-plain-chant-2204>

⁴⁴⁸Pope John Paul II, *Chirograph for the Centenary of “TLS”*, no 12 – “With regard to compositions of liturgical music, I make my own the ‘general rule’ that St Pius X formulated in these words: ‘The more closely a composition for church approaches in its movement, inspiration and savour the Gregorian melodic form, the more sacred and liturgical it becomes; and the more out of harmony it is with that supreme model, the less worthy it is of the temple.’”

⁴⁴⁹USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 72 - “Gregorian chant is uniquely the Church’s own music. Chant is a living connection with our forebears in the faith, the traditional music of the Roman rite, a sign of communion with the universal Church, a bond of unity across cultures, a means for diverse communities to participate together in song, and a summons to contemplative participation in the Liturgy.”

⁴⁵⁰J. B. Ward, “The Reform of Church Music,” accessed on 20.02.2021, p. 5.

⁴⁵¹R. F. Hayburn, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music*, pp. 392 – 393.

⁴⁵²Ibid.

⁴⁵³Sr. Marietta, S. N. J. M., *Singing the Liturgy*, p. 57.

⁴⁵⁴Pope Pius XII, *Musicae Sacrae*, no 53.

Pierluigi da Palestrina as the principal promoter.⁴⁵⁵ In this great composer, Pope Benedict XVI sees a model that provides orientation.⁴⁵⁶

In recognizing and favouring the progress of the arts, the Church also accepts in liturgy those compositions which succeeded the classical polyphony of the 16th century and which the popes grouped together as ‘modern music.’⁴⁵⁷ These compositions are characterized by the use of the organ and other orchestral instruments, a fuller harmonic resource and a wider emotional range.⁴⁵⁸ Because of its secular birth in profanity, originating in the theatre and for the theatre, modern music, especially the theatrical style of the 19th century, by its nature, rhythm and conventionalism is completely opposed to the plain chant and the classic polyphony. Hence, the Church advises caution in admitting them into the liturgy and before doing so, they must be free from theatrical reminiscences and profane associations even in their external forms.⁴⁵⁹ In Igboland, we are not threatened by this form of music in the liturgy. However, to be forewarned is to be forearmed since history repeats itself.

The Church further demands that such modern music meets up with the same requirements legislated for Classical Polyphony, that is, “the texts must be treated correctly, without needless repetitions and inversions. The forms must agree with the traditional settings for Masses, motets, and other pieces of sacred music. The length must conform to the needs of the liturgy. The style must exclude worldly motives and must breathe forth reverence and dignity.”⁴⁶⁰ Finally, the Church also proposes the polyphonic works of ancient composers which have been thoroughly examined and certified to have balanced artistic excellence with liturgical needs as models to be imitated by modern composers.

1.2.1.3 Vocal Music in Igboland

a) Historical Background

As already mentioned under the inculturation of liturgical music, the musical atmosphere of liturgical worship in Eastern Nigeria, at least, from the advent of the missionaries in 1885 to Nigerian Independence was pervaded with Latin as the official language of the Church and Gregorian chant as the proper liturgical music. According to the classification of E. Umezina, this first period of liturgical music in Igbo Catholic liturgy which is described as ‘Latin period’ stretched, at least, from the beginning of the missionary era in 1885 up to the Nigerian

⁴⁵⁵SCR, *De Musica Sacra et Sacra Liturgia*, no 6.

⁴⁵⁶Pope Benedict XVI, *A New Song for the Lord*, (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1996), p. 158.

⁴⁵⁷R. F. Hayburn, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music*, p. 395.

⁴⁵⁸Ibid.

⁴⁵⁹Pope Pius X, *TLS*, no 5.

⁴⁶⁰R. F. Hayburn, *Papal Legislation on Sacred Music*, p. 397.

independence in 1960. In the second period identified as the ‘imitative period,’ courageous attempts at fixing translated Igbo texts into Western hymn tunes began.⁴⁶¹ This period saw the existence of hymns like ‘*Bianu solu m bee akwa nwoye*’ adopted from ‘*O come and mourn with me awhile*’; ‘*Bianu ndi kwelunu*’ from ‘*Adeste Fideles*’; ‘*Ife nke kpakpando*’ from ‘*Ave Maris Stella*’ and ‘*Onyinye mara mma*’ from ‘*Praise to the Lord*’. More of these hymns can be found in the *NCIHB* which we shall discuss in a moment. The third and the last of the historical moments of Igbo liturgical music known as the ‘innovative period’ began towards the end of the Nigerian civil war in 1970 and “heralded the genius of Igbo liturgical musicians, original compositions and adaptation through experimentation.”⁴⁶²

The key factor that encouraged Igbo liturgical compositions at this period was the SVC (1962-1965) which issued strong recommendations concerning the inculturation and indigenization of liturgy and sacred music.⁴⁶³ As a major contributor to the advancement of vocal music in Igboland, Msgr. Ezenduka translated liturgical texts into the vernacular language and composed series of musical settings for the different parts of the Mass, various feasts and seasons of the liturgical year and for different liturgical celebrations. On different occasions, Msgr. T. Okere, his classmate and chairman of the Inter-diocesan Liturgical Music Commission and Msgr. J. Madueke who worked closely with him bore eloquent testimony to his musical ingenuity and compositional style which was nothing short of the recommendation of SVC and which radiated as he adapted and blended Gregorian melody to the Igbo rendering of the liturgical texts.⁴⁶⁴

Apart from Msgr. Ezenduka, some other notable personalities in this region, especially during the innovative period, made great contributions in the area of liturgical music in general and vocal music in particular. Among them are: Fr. Bede Onuoha, Fr. Theophilus Okere, Fr. I. P. Anozie, Fr. S. Azuka, Fr. J. B. Akam, Godwin Muo, Felix Ebewu, Paulinus Umeh, Fred. V. C. Uche, Dorothy Ipere, Peace Val. Ihim, Martin Eze and Joe Onyekwelu. It was to unite and harness the individual and isolated efforts of these musicians and composers from the different dioceses that made up this region that the Inter-Diocesan Liturgical Music Commission was formed from the early 1970’s.⁴⁶⁵ For lack of space, the researcher does not intend to discuss these individuals one by one or to enumerate a host of other liturgical musicians, both of the older and younger generation, whose enormous contributions have given Igboland a lot of beautiful songs with which to celebrate the liturgy.

⁴⁶¹E. C. Umezina, *The Changing Face of Catholic Liturgical Music in Igboland*, p. 214.

⁴⁶²Ibid.

⁴⁶³SVC, *MS*, no 47, 56, 63.

⁴⁶⁴J. Madueke, *Homily at the Funeral of Very Rev. Msgr. Cyril Ezenduka*, pp. 15 – 16; Cf. E. C. Umezina, *Lee Nnukwu Ukochukwu*, p. ix – x.

⁴⁶⁵E. C. Umezina, *Lee Nnukwu Ukochukwu*, p. ix.

Although most of these songs are in the vernacular language, one can also find a lot of English songs, especially in cities, schools and institutions. This is because the official language in Nigeria is English. More so, Nigeria is multilingual country with more than 250 different ethnic languages; sequel to it, one occasionally too hears some songs in other ethnic languages, especially Hausa and Yoruba. In spite of these factors, Igboland still respects the use of Latin Language and Gregorian Chant in liturgy; Masses are to be celebrated in Latin every first Sunday of the month according to the liturgical custom. The Entrance, Offertory, Communion and Dismissal hymns on this day may be in vernacular or English language, but quite often, the Ordinary of the Mass and the responses at Mass are in plainchant. At the burial Mass of any of the clergy in the cathedral, some *Ordinarium* and *Proprium* of the Mass in plainchant are sung by the choir together with the people. The Liturgy of the Hour for the dead is sung in the vernacular but in plainchant style also. To keep the tradition of Gregorian chant alive, the Ordinary of the Mass in Latin are often selected for choirs' competitions once in two or three years at the diocesan level. Such competitions are also organized for children and youth at the school or diocesan level and sometimes, for women under the auspices of Catholic Women Organization (CWO). In both major and minor seminaries in the dioceses, the effort to incorporate Latin is even more serious; it is normally used for the prayers and liturgical celebrations on the first Sunday of the month and twice during the weekdays.

b) *New Catholic Igbo Hymn book*

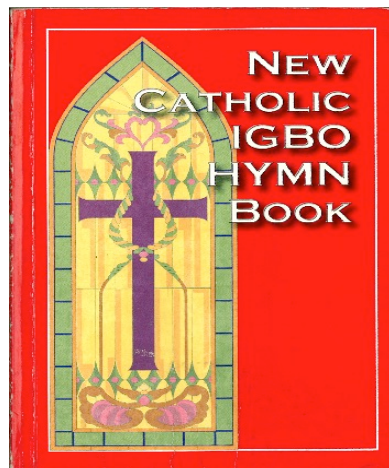


Fig. 5 – New Catholic Igbo Hymn Book

Liturgical songs used in various parts of Igboland are too numerous to count. Many are contained in a hymn book while many others are not. Some of the hymn books contain only the compositions of an individual composer; others are edited compilations of songs by various composers produced for a common use. Examples of the latter are *NCIHB*, Catholic Hymn Book or St. Martin De Porres but for the sake of this doctoral work, we shall only concentrate on *NCIHB*

which is the common official hymnbook for the whole dioceses in Igboland. It was first published by the Inter-Diocesan Liturgical Music Commission of Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province in 1982 and revised in 2005. Praising the effort of the Commission that worked hard for years to make it see the light of day, ArchBishop A. K. Obiefuna added that “the appearance of this Igbo Hymn Book has fulfilled a long-felt need. For more than ten years Catholics throughout the Igbo-speaking dioceses of Nigeria have desired a book of this type.”⁴⁶⁶

Apart from the Latin text for benediction and burial at the end of the hymn book, the remaining 363 songs are all in Igbo language. Of these 363 songs, the first 296 have solfa notations whereas the last 67 older hymns have none (only texts). In Africa as much as in Igboland, the use of solfa notations is more common except in music schools or departments of musicology in the universities where they also use staff notations. Getting accustomed to the use of staff notations in singing songs or playing musical instruments by sight reading is, therefore, one of the challenges an Africa coming newly to the Western world for a music career or studies may initially face.

Whereas majority of the songs in this hymn book are in the form of chorus and verse, some are in strophic form and a few others in the form of verse and refrain. The chorus or refrain of most of these songs is basically homophonic in texture and often harmonized in four parts (SATB) but the verses are written only for the soprano or sometimes harmonized in an interval of third for the alto part. The average number of the verses is 4 or 5, even though there are few exceptions with verses sometimes numbering up to ten. One must also mention that there are a few songs in polyphonic texture both in the chorus and in the verses. The ambitus for most of the songs is more or less an octave and the movement of the pitches is generally a conjunct or step motion. In some instances of adjunct or skip motion, the interval is often a third or a fourth and less often, a fifth or a sixth.

With the exception of 19 songs, especially from the section of the psalms, which are written in free rhythm with ten of them combining rhythmic choruses and non-rhythmic verses, the rest of the songs are metro-rhythmically composed in 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4 time signatures. Other time signatures which can be found in very limited numbers include four-two (3 songs), three-eight (4 songs), six-eight (5 songs), three-two (5 songs) and two-two (8 songs). As it concerns tempo, the songs are generally moderate. Nevertheless, songs in 2/4 or 4/4 time signature are a little faster than those in 3/4. The more frequently used rhythmic notes are the crotchets and the quavers and sometimes, the minims.

Another characteristic feature of these songs is the fact that they are all written in major keys, except one or two in minor keys. More interesting still is the fact that Igbo language, just

⁴⁶⁶*New Catholic Igbo Hymn Book*, (Onitsha: Africana First Publishers Limited, 1982, revised 2005), p. 0.

like many other African languages, is a tonal language. As an author rightly observed, “the setting of African words to European tunes surely raises insuperable difficulties. The meaning of a word can be changed if the melody rises, when the natural intonation of the words demands a fall.”⁴⁶⁷ In the *NCIHB*, there was a clear and serious attempt by local composers to respect the requirements of tonality of Igbo language. However, those songs that were adapted to foreign tunes did not generally meet this requirement.

The various Diocesan Music Commissions promote and encourage the use of this hymn book which enhances active participation of the faithful during liturgical celebrations. Today, unfortunately, many choirmasters regard most of the songs as old-fashioned and prefer to use the more current ones outside the published hymn book. Obviously, this is not the best of approach to the use of the hymn book as those ‘old hymns’ are still necessary as part of our musical treasury. Nevertheless, it has pointed out the urgent necessity to plan towards the production of another volume of the hymnbook to accommodate these newer compositions and possibly, correct typographical errors and anomalies found in the first volume.⁴⁶⁸

c) Charismatic Songs/Choruses

Another aspect of vocal music which constitutes a source of worry in Igboland is the so-called ‘charismatic songs or choruses or praises’ that have dangerously crept into Catholic liturgy from the Pentecostals as we earlier mentioned. While most parishes use these songs only for the Offertory procession, other parishes even extend them to the Entrance, Communion or Dismissal procession. Although these songs favour clapping of hands, dancing and evocation of high emotions and people enjoy their rhythms, their musical quality falls below the liturgical expectation. Moreover, their texts or lyrics are sometimes neither scriptural, liturgical nor theological. They can, if uncontrolled, create such a noisy environment that can only be experienced in a marketplace. According to E. Umezina, these songs “do not and cannot by any means give identity to the church. They are not written or made up with the liturgy in mind. Liturgical music derives from and originates within the context of the liturgy.”⁴⁶⁹ Liturgy operates on a different level away from the realm of devotion or piety. In liturgy, the focus is Jesus Christ. We contemplate his birth, life, passion, death and resurrection. Liturgical songs, therefore, must be able to develop these mysteries and insert us into them. These ‘charismatic songs’ belong strictly to what *MS* calls religious music. During pious devotions, we can sing ‘praises’ and “choruses” and through them, express other sentiments that relate us to God.

⁴⁶⁷G. Hyslop, *Since Singing Is So Good a Thing*, p. 32.

⁴⁶⁸J. Ezeuzo, *Interview granted* on 28.02.2020.

⁴⁶⁹E. C. Umezina, *The Changing Face of Catholic Liturgical Music in Igboland*, p. 218.

But should we throw away these songs completely? Jude Orakwe, during an interview session, expressed the opinion that there is a way we can readapt some of these songs and appropriate them into the liturgy. He used the term ‘Pop goes choral’ to explain his idea.⁴⁷⁰ Even Pope Benedict XVI had earlier shared a similar view when he wrote:

Popular spiritual music will be enriched and purified by liturgical music on the one hand but will also prepare new styles of liturgical music. From the freer popular forms there can then mature what can join the common ground of the universal worship of the Church. This is also the area in which the group can test its creativity in the hope that what grows from this may one day belong to the whole.⁴⁷¹

The achievement of this goal in practical terms, however, requires a further and more in-depth studies of these numerous songs both from the theological, musical and liturgical perspectives. And this can really form a good theme for another research work.

1.2.2 *Vocal-Instrumental Music*

Vocal-instrumental music is generally understood as any form of vocal music accompanied by or combined with the use of musical instruments. A subtle distinction could be made between instrumental accompaniment and vocal-instrumental music. When the use of instruments is just an addition to singing which can go on perfectly if it were not added, we talk of instrumental accompaniment; when, however, the removal of instrumentation makes the performance of the music impossible, such music is purely regarded as vocal-instrumental.⁴⁷²

Generally, in Igboland, the use of musical instruments for liturgy is only to accompany singing. There is hardly any parish where vocal-instrumental music in the strict sense of it applies. There is hardly any diocese that affords the huge cost of building a pipe organ with its meagre income. Most common, therefore, is the use of electronic organs and the traditional local instruments to accompany the choir and the singing. We look forward to getting more accustomed to the use of the Western orchestral instruments during liturgy.

⁴⁷⁰J. Orakwe, *Interview granted* on 03.03.2020.

⁴⁷¹Pope Benedict XVI, *A New Song for the Lord*, p. 159.

⁴⁷²I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna...*, p. 172.

a) *Singing with Local Instruments*

We had mentioned already that Msgr. Ezenduka was highly instrumental to the use of local musical instruments during liturgical worship in Igboland. Fr. V. Ekezuike, a native of Igboukwu where he began to experiment with those instruments confirmed that “every bit of his person, time, energy, personal resources, and, in fact, every object around him was a potential material or instrument for liturgical music - oja, ubo, opi, ogene, une, ekele, xylophone.”⁴⁷³ These instruments which are also used for music and dance in various socio-cultural events are basically made from local materials like tree logs, hides and skin, gourds, animal horn, clay, ropes, bamboo, iron, brass etc. The owners or the producers of these instruments sometimes carve or design symbolic artworks on them that could be interpreted beyond music. And just like some Western instruments such as flute, clarinet and violin are regarded as feminine and trumpet, drums and trombone as masculine, there is also some kind of sex-stereotyping on musical instruments in Igboland. Even though the culture is fast-changing, Igbo women, in some places, were not allowed to play some instruments just as some instruments were reserved only for men. Some instruments were also distinguished on the basis of sex: male drum (*Oke Igba*) and female drum (*Nne Igba*).⁴⁷⁴

There are different systems of classification of Igbo musical instruments. Joy. N. Lo-Bamijoko’s system is based on two factors: firstly, how they are played and secondly, the various functions they perform in the indigenous context. Considering how they are played, he enumerated five categories: 1) *Iyo* – to shake, rattle or clap together; 2) *Iku* – to strike a hard surface with a beater; 3) *Iti* – to strike a membrane with hand or beater; 4) *Ikpo* – to pluck or bow; and 5) *Ifu* – to blow. And with regards to their functions in Igbo music, he divided them into three groups: 1) the rhythmic, 2) the melodic, and 3) the rhythm-melodic.⁴⁷⁵

The most widely accepted system of classification of musical instrument used today is the Hornbostel-Sachs (H-S) system which is based on the method of vibrations to produce sound. According to this system, there are four categories – idiophones, membranophones, chordophones and aerophones – to which electrophones have been added since the 20th century as the newest category.⁴⁷⁶ Igbo traditional musical instruments can also be classified according this system but we shall focus only on idiophones and membranophones which are mainly used in Igbo Catholic Liturgy.

⁴⁷³J. Madueke, *Homily at the Funeral...*, p. 14.

⁴⁷⁴Cf. E. C. Umezina, E. Orajaka, “The Making of an Igbo Musical Instrument: Interview with Anakwenze Nwude,” *Nnadiabube Journal of Social Science*, vol. 2, no 2, 2019, p. 2.

⁴⁷⁵J. N. Lo-Bamijoko, “Classification of Igbo Musical Instruments, Nigeria,” accessed on 24.11.2021, https://www.jstor.org/stable/30249789?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents

⁴⁷⁶SlideShare, “Classification of Instruments,” accessed on 24.11.2021, <https://www.slideshare.net/sandramorgan16547/classification-of-instruments-revised-nov2013>

Idiophones which are the most commonly used instruments in Igbo liturgy generate sound through the vibration of a solid material. There are two major categories: a) those used as rhythmic instruments and b) those played as melodic instruments. The former is more commonly used in the liturgy than the latter and is of two types: i) Shaken idiophones or rattles and ii) Struck idiophones.⁴⁷⁷ Shaken Idiophones include the ‘Iyo’ category of Lo-Bamijoko’s classification and a typical example is the ‘Ichaka’ (Igbo rattle instrument). To the Struck Idiophones belongs the ‘Iku’ category which includes, as examples, the metal gongs (‘ogene’, ‘alo’), wooden slit drums (‘okpokolo’, ‘ekwe’) and the earthenware pot drums (‘udu’). Xylophone belongs to the latter category which is played as a melodic instrument. For liturgical use, it is yet to be popularized in Igboland.

Membranophones are percussive instruments which produce sound when their stretched membranes are caused to vibrate by the use of bare or cupped palm, special stick or a combination of both. A typical example is the *Igba* (cylinder-drum). According to J. C. Okoro, membranophones can be classified and described “according to their shapes, method of sound production, techniques of manipulation, number of membranous coverage, pattern of lacing, method of tuning, the way the membrane(s) is/are fastened, method of beating and playing position.”⁴⁷⁸

In terms of instrumentation during liturgy, there are yet no written standard patterns on how to play these instruments. While some believe it is a possibility to work out this uniformity through strenuous effort, others express the difficulty of such a venture as improvisation lies at the root of African music with its peculiar rhythmic pattern. Presently, there are basically two styles of local instrumentation that can be used during liturgy: The *Etilogu* style which is more easily and widely used and the *Igbaeze* style which requires a higher level of training and expertise.⁴⁷⁹ To have the capacity for both styles is an added advantage to any choir as variety is the spice of life.

It is the function of the choirmaster or music director to coordinate and ensure that the instrumentalists, having practised well on their own and with the choir, are guided in their liturgical performance by the basic rules. They must avoid unnecessary improvisations and the tendency to overshadow either the voices or texts of the music.⁴⁸⁰ Certainly, when these musical instruments

⁴⁷⁷M. A. Ozah, “Traditional Instruments and Liturgical Music Among the Western Igbos of Issele-Uku Diocese,” *Encounter: A Journal of African Life and Religion*, vol. 2, 1993, p. 74.

⁴⁷⁸J. C. Okoro, “Globalization Move Towards Igbo Music Instruments Construction and Performance for Communication Utility,” accessed on 29.12.2019, <https://www.icidr.org/regd/Globalization%20Move%20towards%20Igbo%20Music%20Instruments%20Constructio%20and%20Performance%20for%20Communication%20Utility.pdf>

⁴⁷⁹C. Umeojilinnaka, *Interview granted* on 20.02.2020.

⁴⁸⁰Cf. CBCN, *Guidelines for Composers of Liturgical Music and Catholic Choirs in Nigeria*, pp. 36-37.

are handled with expertise, everybody enjoys the solemnity and beauty they add to singing but in the hands of amateurs, instrumentation sadly constitutes a nuisance in liturgy.⁴⁸¹ Lacking the basic knowledge of liturgy, these instrumentalists sometimes behave as if they are not part of the worshipping community but have come just to display their skills and entertain the people. This is why intermittent seminars and workshops are also necessary for them. Through these programmes, the Music Commission is able to complement their skill to play the instrument with thorough awareness of the spirit of liturgy so that their performance in liturgy will always accord with the season and the true nature of each of its parts.⁴⁸² And through such enlightenment too, they will be able to render their service to God and the Church in the spirit of prayer and self-control, eschewing self-aggrandizement.

b) Singing with Band Groups

At liturgical celebrations, the performance of the so-called ‘Marching Band Group’ is always worrisome and requires proper attention. Pope Pius X categorically condemned the use of bands in the church and allowed only a limited and judicious use of wind instruments in special cases with the express permission of the Local Ordinary. And provided no profane pieces are executed, he also gave concessions for a band to play in processions outside the church as an accompaniment if the bishop permits.⁴⁸³ The reasons are not far-fetched in our local situation in Igboland. According to E. Umezina, these brass bands are not only uncontrollable but also aliturgical instruments, evoking military imageries which have no place in liturgical worship.⁴⁸⁴ Sometimes, the owners and users of these bands invite a competent but non-Catholic trumpeter or saxophonist who, with no knowledge of liturgy, often plays accompanying songs that are both aliturgical and secular.

In comparison with the marching band, the gospel band may be better in terms of the volume of noise it generates; however, it is basically meant for gospel music which is not composed for the purpose of liturgy. Apart from that, it often also distracts like the marching band, especially when the instrumentalists are amateurs or those who are not imbued with the spirit of liturgy. Basil K. Nwazojie, the chairman of Awka Diocesan Liturgy and Inculturation Commission, sees the use of both bands as an aliturgical practice that should rather attract the bishop’s intervention, even with the crosier.⁴⁸⁵ But if the gospel band must be allowed, its use must

⁴⁸¹M. A. Banjo, *The Use of Music in the Sacred Liturgy*, p. 109.

⁴⁸²SVC, *MS*, no 67; Cf. CBCN, *Guidelines for Composers of Liturgical Music and Catholic Choirs in Nigeria*, p. 36.

⁴⁸³Cf. Pope Pius X, *TLS*, nos 20-21.

⁴⁸⁴E. C. Umezina, *The Changing Face of Catholic Liturgical Music in Igboland*, p. 218.

⁴⁸⁵B. K. Nwazojie, “ADLIC Chairman’s Address,” [in] Awka Diocese, *Inculturation at the Service of the Liturgy*, (Awka: Global Select Ltd., 2014), p. 7.

be highly regulated to eliminate the tendency of individuals who are not well trained musically and liturgically to handle the instruments and distract the faithful.

Finally, one sometimes witnesses in a liturgical celebration a level of misunderstanding that manifests itself between the band group and the choir group as to what and when each group might perform. Wherever such exists, the music director of the parish must instantly strive to resolve the issue as it does not present a good image of participants in the liturgy. And for the whole diocese, the LMC must clearly spell out without ambiguity the parts of the liturgy where the band group can perform and the group needs to abide by the regulation.

c) Singing with Western Instruments

As earlier mentioned, Igbo local instruments are capable of lifting the heart and soul in prayer when used as an accompaniment to singing and played by those who possess the know-how. Thus, it may not be necessary, in the spirit of inculturation, to mix them up with Western instruments as some try to do.⁴⁸⁶ It is good and enough to use only local instruments for our liturgical music which is often in local language.

Complete set of Western instruments can be procured, learnt and better used with the peculiar type of Western music that fits them. But because these instruments are expensive and require a lot of time and discipline to learn and perfect, they are not yet commonly used in Igboland. Today, however, there is a noticeable change as few music academies are springing up in some quarters and more young people are already learning some of these instruments. Some of these academies, with the instrumental ensemble and choral group, have even started to perform during liturgical celebrations. And some of their performances are above average and thus commendable. However, it is observed that some have also performed below the standard required for the liturgy and have succeeded in causing distraction in the church. Any liturgical performance presupposes thorough preparation and to be in a hurry to perform when one is not fully prepared is unacceptable. Time for liturgy in the church can never be the time for training and practice.

1.2.3 Instrumental Music

As *MS* confirms, musical instruments are useful in liturgical celebrations whether by accompanying the singing or by being played as solo.⁴⁸⁷ We have discussed above the use of musical instruments as an accompaniment to singing; here we shall concentrate on its use as solo instruments in sacred worship. The USCCB confirms their capacity to uplift the human soul to the heavenly realities we celebrate in liturgy:

⁴⁸⁶D. Ipere, *Interview granted* on 07.02.2022.

⁴⁸⁷SVC, *MS*, no 62.

Instrumental music can also assist the assembly in preparing for worship, in meditating on the mysteries, and in joyfully progressing in its passage from liturgy to life. Instrumental music, used in this way, must be understood as more than an easily dispensable adornment to the rites, a decoration to dress up a ceremony. It is rather ministerial, helping the assembly to rejoice, to weep, to be one of mind, to be converted, to pray. There is a large repertoire of organ music which has always been closely associated with the liturgy. Much suitable music can be selected from the repertoires of other appropriate instruments as well.⁴⁸⁸

The Catholic Episcopal Conference of Poland is similarly convinced that instrumental music (instrumental compositions and organ improvisations), used according to the mind of the Church, greatly enriches the liturgy.⁴⁸⁹ As solo instrument in the Latin Church, the pipe organ enhances the sublimity of church rituals, and captivates the minds of the faithful towards God and heavenly reality.⁴⁹⁰ But apart from the organ, other instruments like the violin, played by themselves or with other stringed instruments or with the organ according to the guiding principles of liturgy can express with an indescribable power the joyful and the sad sentiments of the soul.⁴⁹¹

In sung or said Masses, the opportune time to play the organ and/or other suitable instruments as solo is during the Entrance, Offertory, Communion or Dismissal procession. In other sacred celebrations, the same rule applies with the necessary adaptations. During these recommended moments, instrumentalists are encouraged to play pieces from the treasury of sacred music composed by professionals of various times and cultures. Nevertheless, talented and trained instrumentalists are permitted to make improvisations whenever necessary.⁴⁹² It is, however, prohibited to play these instruments during Masses in Advent, Lent, the Sacred Triduum and in the Offices and Masses of the Dead.⁴⁹³ Pure instrumental music in Igboland is not common but concrete efforts are ongoing to improve the situation and we shall consider two of them.

a) Music Education

In Nigeria as a whole, it is not common, if possible at all, to find pure instrumental music used in the liturgy; it is found only in concert halls during musical performances. However, there is need to groom professional organists and instrumentalists – both for Western and local instruments – who can understand and perform the delicate duty of solo instrumentation where and when necessary. And as we just said, progressive efforts to learn the Western instruments

⁴⁸⁸USCCB, *Liturgical Music Today: A Guideline for the Catholic Church Liturgical Musician*, no 58, accessed on 24.11.2021, http://www.ccwatershed.org/media/pdfs/13/12/17/11-52-27_0.pdf

⁴⁸⁹*Instrukcja Konferencji Episkopatu ...*, no 37.

⁴⁹⁰SVC, *SC*, no 120.

⁴⁹¹Pope Pius XII, *Musicae Sacrae*, no 59.

⁴⁹²USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 92.

⁴⁹³SVC, *MS*, nos 65 and 66.

(string, wind and even brass instruments) and incorporate them into the liturgy have already started. The younger generation in some of the mission schools is rising to the challenge and it is encouraging. With improved economy, more schools will certainly be added to the existing number.

But to make sure that these students receive proper tutoring and avoid the costly mistake of wrong learning at the beginning, the researcher is of the view that music education, as a matter of necessity, should be included in the school curriculum, at least as an elective subject. There is also an equal necessity of employing competent and zealous teachers to impart the knowledge and the skills. This should be the case in all the minor seminaries and mission schools owned by the diocese. According to the Snowbird Statement on Catholic Liturgical Music, “the Catholic church’s rich legacy of musical education of children and youth, extending back to early medieval times, needs to be rediscovered and promoted today. The musical formation of the young is critically important to the life of the church.”⁴⁹⁴ Apart from learning musical skills, researchers have shown that music education provides children even from their nursery and primary schools years with many other intellectual⁴⁹⁵ and developmental benefits,⁴⁹⁶ the importance of which, cannot be over-emphasized.

b) Music Academy

Outside the school environment, there is also an urgent need for the establishment of music academies. NACALIMCON instructs as follows: “Music academies should be set up at Diocesan levels to help train Music Directors, instrumentalists and other ministers of sacred music. Having it on the diocesan level will help the dioceses to deal with their peculiarities. These academies should develop a scheme/programme that will comprise general knowledge and appreciation of music and then sacred/liturgical music.”⁴⁹⁷ If the music academies as proposed by NACALIMCON do not have space for children as it appears, then, there is still need for such as discovering and developing one’s talent from childhood is the best way to perfection.

Nobody can deny the obvious fact that founding such a music academy is not an easy project to embark upon. Huge amount of money will be required to buy enough instruments and

⁴⁹⁴CanticaNOVA Publications, *The Snowbird Statement on Catholic Liturgical Music*, no 11.

⁴⁹⁵L. L. Brown, “The Benefits of Music Education,” accessed on 25.11.2021, <http://www.pbs.org/parents/education/music-arts/the-benefits-of-music-education/> (for example, language development and reasoning, development of self-confidence and sense of achievement, increased IQ, brain working harder, spatial-temporal skills and improved test scores).

⁴⁹⁶National Association for Music Education, “20 Important Benefits of Music in our Schools,” accessed on 25.11.2021, <https://nafme.org/20-important-benefits-of-music-in-our-schools/> (More benefits include: mastery of memorization, learning to improve their work, increased coordination, success in society, emotional development, development of imagination and intellectual curiosity, learning teamwork and self-discipline).

⁴⁹⁷CBCN, *Guidelines for Composers of Liturgical Music and Catholic Choirs in Nigeria*, pp. 24-25.

employ professional trainers. Moreover, being a new culture, some parents may not immediately understand the objectives and music may not even count as their immediate priority as low-income earners. Notwithstanding these teething problems, each diocese should be able to establish, at least, one music academy at the diocesan level and be ready to promote it by every available means. In dioceses with more progress and growing interest, capable parishes have also set up their own music academy for young children. One can mention the Archdiocese of Onitsha which has not less than six flourishing music academies in different corners of the Archdiocese.⁴⁹⁸ Surely, such noble establishments will offer more children and youths a greater opportunity to acquaint themselves with the theory and practice of music and liturgy. Not only that, it will keep them close to the Church, separate them from the negative effects of peer pressure and inculcate in them the culture of productivity with their time, talent and treasure. In the nearest future, the proliferation of music academies in the various dioceses of Igboland will help to churn out professional musicians who can handle different musical instruments during liturgy, not only as an accompaniment but also as solo.

1.2.4 *Dance in the Liturgy*

From our discussions so far, we know that music, vocal or instrumental, affects us. It affects us as singers, players or hearers; it affects us not only spiritually or emotionally, but also bodily. This is why music naturally goes with some movements of the body which, in a rhythmical way, communicates human feelings and is referred to as dance. Whether and to what extent dance should be permitted to accompany music in the liturgy is what we intend to consider here.

John G. Davies who wrote a book on liturgical dance is one of the authors who believe that dance, rather than being a mere decoration added to the liturgy, could be well integrated into the celebration in such a way that “the dance *is* the worship... the dance is the thanks, is the joy, the praise, the penance.”⁴⁹⁹ In this fundamental way of interpreting dance in the context of Christian liturgy, according to him, there is a gain in three respects: “diversity is increased, creativity is encouraged and participation is intensified.”⁵⁰⁰

But over the centuries, even from the time of the Patristic Fathers, dancing has never been considered as an integral part of the Roman Liturgy; great theological writings, conciliar decisions

⁴⁹⁸J. Orakwe, *Interview granted* on 03.03.2020.

⁴⁹⁹J. G. Davies, *Liturgical Dance – an Historical, Theological and Practical Handbook*, (London: SCM Press Ltd., 1984), p. 150.

⁵⁰⁰*Ibid.*, p. 143.

and papal legislations have often condemned it as prone to disorder and a little conducive to liturgical worship.⁵⁰¹ Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger was categorical about it:

Dancing is not a form of expression for the Christian liturgy.... It is totally absurd to try to make the liturgy “attractive” by introducing dancing pantomimes (wherever possible performed by professional dance troupes), which frequently (and rightly, from the professionals’ point of view) end with applause. Wherever applause breaks out in the liturgy because of some human achievement, it is a sure sign that the essence of liturgy has totally disappeared and been replaced by a kind of religious entertainment.⁵⁰²

Dance is a cultural element; it expresses culture and can best be interpreted in the context of culture. In western culture, absolute disapproval of dance in the liturgy strictly applies since it always evokes a sense of banality and reminds participants in the liturgy of worldly places and situations. There, according to CDWDS, “dancing is tied with love, with diversion, with profaneness, with unbridling of the senses: such dancing, in general, is not pure. For that reason, it cannot be introduced into liturgical celebrations of any kind whatever: that would be to inject into the liturgy one of the most desacralized and desacralizing elements.”⁵⁰³ Reacting similarly, Francis Cardinal Arinze who was the prefect of the Congregation emphasized: “The directive we give from our Congregation is this: in the strict Liturgy, that means the Mass, the Sacraments, Europe and America should not talk of Liturgical Dance at all.”⁵⁰⁴

In some other cultures, especially African culture, dance is perceived differently. It is so much a part of the people’s life as eating, drinking and working. It is a means of expression of human feelings in social and religious life.⁵⁰⁵ Putting this into consideration, the Instruction on Inculturation and the Roman Liturgy, *Varietates Legitimae*, makes allowance for liturgical dance in some African liturgies. It explains: “Among some peoples, singing is instinctively accompanied by handclapping, rhythmic swaying and dance movements on the part of the participants. Such forms of external expression can have a place in the liturgical actions of these peoples on condition that they are always the expression of true communal prayer of adoration, praise, offering and supplication, and not simply a performance.”⁵⁰⁶

⁵⁰¹CDW, *Dance in the Liturgy*, accessed on 29.11.2021, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/dance-in-the-liturgy-2167>

⁵⁰²Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2000), p. 113.

⁵⁰³CDW, *Dance in the Liturgy*.

⁵⁰⁴YouTube Video, *Cardinal Arinze on Liturgical Dancing*, accessed on 29.11.2021, <http://www.pagadiandiocese.org/2015/01/25/cardinal-arinze-on-liturgical-dancing/>

⁵⁰⁵M. M. Okewola, “The Role of Dance in African Culture,” accessed on 29.11.2021, <https://www.globalsistersreport.org/news/spirituality/column/role-dance-african-culture>

⁵⁰⁶CDWDS, *Instruction: Inculturation and the Roman Liturgy (Varietates Legitimae)*, no 42.

In recent years, various kinds of ritual dance in African or Asian culture have been introduced into several papal liturgies. And as Francis Cardinal Arinze observed, these dances which are customary during processions in most of these cultural regions can constitute a legitimate form of inculturation of the liturgy.⁵⁰⁷ Nevertheless, care must be taken to checkmate excesses so that inculturation does not become illegitimate. The Catholic Church is not and can never be portrayed as a dancing Church which is how some critics have described Zairean liturgy.⁵⁰⁸ In 2019, the researcher celebrated Holy Week in a parish in Kenya and witnessed that music and dance went on at the same high degree throughout the Paschal Triduum. He also learnt that in some other East African countries, it is similar. Such situations require a critical examination and a moderation to accord with basic liturgical principles.

In Igbo Catholicism, dancing is no longer an object of debate; through the process of inculturation, it has been allowed to be part of the liturgy just as it has always been part of the Igbo traditional culture, religion, rituals and ceremonies. Composition of liturgical songs with danceable rhythms is on the increase. Beyond Igboland, dance is also acceptable in Nigeria as a whole as NACALIMCON's new directive indicates:

In keeping with our traditional cultural heritage, we encourage graceful and decent dancing at appropriate places and times of the Holy Mass. These dances should be done with graceful decorum in accordance with local customs that portrays reverence for the presence of God. Suitable moments for dance in the liturgy are: a) Entrance b) Gloria c) Offering d) Presentation of gifts/Offertory e) Thanksgiving.⁵⁰⁹

In this citation, one immediately observes the emphasis on 'graceful decorum and decent dancing.' This is where the problem actually lies as people, exceeding the limit of inculturation, have gone overboard to import all sorts of secular dances into the liturgy, for instance, *awilo*, *makossa* and hip-hop. In the just concluded Conference of the Directors of Liturgy and Masters of Liturgical Ceremonies in Nigeria on March 30, 2022 which centred on the Worship of the Most Blessed Sacrament outside the Mass, part of the resolutions drew attention to the rigorous dance and frenzy before the Blessed Sacrament, with the priest sometimes carrying the Monstrance. According to them, this exaggerated form of worship/adoration which is spreading fast has become a terrible distraction.

⁵⁰⁷A. Ward, "On Liturgy Dance," accessed on 29.11.2021, <https://adoremus.org/2007/12/31/On-Liturgical-Dance/>

⁵⁰⁸Cf. E. C. Anagwo, "Liturgical Music and Dance: Possible Areas of Inculturation among Igbo Christians of Nigeria," p. 238.

⁵⁰⁹CBCN, *Guidelines for Composers of Liturgical Music and Catholic Choirs in Nigeria*, pp. 35-36.

Because of the vibes they generate and the dancing they encourage, use of charismatic songs with a solo singer and marching/gospel band is preferred in some parishes today even when they are not the best options in liturgy and this is rampant most especially during offertory processions. In some places where there are good choirs, the choir is restricted to singing only but melodious and danceable tunes. In other places, it is observed that a lot of time is unduly allotted to singing, clapping and dancing during the homily. In all these areas and forms of abuses, there is urgent need to restore sanity; there is need for more discipline and caution on the part of the clergy and the faithful; and there is need for composers to stick to the principles of good liturgical compositions.

In some dioceses and parishes, there are liturgical dancers comprising some girls and sometimes, boys. They are formed and trained to dance during major liturgical celebrations, especially during the Entrance and Offertory processions; some also dance during the singing of *Gloria*. Like the diocesan choir, the liturgical dancers at the diocesan level should be the pattern for the parishes. Within the ambit of decency and decorum and with proper training that involves general knowledge of liturgy, indigenous liturgical dance should be promoted while necessary precautions taken to avoid performances, especially during consecration and in the sanctuary, that can easily lead to distractions in liturgy.⁵¹⁰ Whether at the cathedral or in the parishes, we must always guard against natural human tendencies as Francis Cardinal Arinze pointed out in his book *Celebrating the Holy Eucharist*. He reminds us that “dance easily appeals to the senses and tends to call for approval, enjoyment, a desire for repetition, and a rewarding of the performers with the applause of the audience.”⁵¹¹ Both the dancers, the trainers and the rest of the faithful must not be carried away by the dance as to lose sight of God for whom we primarily gather at liturgy.

Summary

After the discussion of the principles of liturgical music in chapter one, we tried, in chapter two, to consider the application of these principles; who applies them, with what instruments and where they are applied. The chapter is divided into major subheadings: the ministers of liturgical music and the genres/types of liturgical music.

The ministers of liturgical music are those who apply the principles. They include: The faithful, the clergy, the cantor, the psalmist, the *schola*, the choir and the organist. First of all, we looked at their individual functions and the requirements for effective performance. We also

⁵¹⁰Cf. A. B. C. Chiegboka, *50th Anniversary of Vatican II Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium in the Year of Faith and its Relevance to the Church*, (Awka: Fab Anieh Nig. Ltd., 2013), p. 24.

⁵¹¹Cf. Francis Cardinal Arinze, *Celebrating the Holy Eucharist*, (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), p. 54; Cf. E. C. Anagwo, *Profane-Style Christian Music and the Catholic Liturgy*, (Uyo: Heritage Digi-Link Int'l Ltd, 2020), p. 52.

discussed their major obstacles and how to surmount them. Secondly, we looked at some common issues pertaining to the ministers as a group such as formation, remuneration, grooming of successors, inculturation and the Liturgical Music Commission that is supposed to look after them and oversee what they do.

The genres/types of liturgical music are the different instruments with which to apply the principles. The first and foremost is vocal music – its primary instrument is the human voice. We discussed how the different kinds of vocal music emerged along the history lane of Catholic liturgy. The next is vocal-instrumental music which combines the human voice with other mechanical instruments. Lastly, we have the pure instrumental music. In this whole discussion concerning the ministers and the genres of liturgical music, our attention was particularly focused on the socio-cultural environment where these principles are applied – Igboland. And this is why we also added dance in the liturgy to our discussion as something more peculiar and closely connected to music in Africa, Nigeria and Igboland. Though dancing is allowed in the liturgy in Igboland, great care and vigilance are necessary since dance can easily turn the liturgy to a kind of religious entertainment, becoming a distraction to the faithful.

CHAPTER THREE: Music in the Celebration of the Holy Eucharist

As it is in the area of agriculture, for instance, so it is in the area of liturgical music. The knowledge of the concept and the best methods of farming, coupled with the possession of the best tools and good seeds for the sowing are all geared towards the actual cultivation of the field in anticipation of a bumper harvest of its fruits. Our discussion in the first and second chapters dealing with the principles, ministers and genres of liturgical music is meant to launch us into the field of liturgical celebration, beginning with the Holy Eucharist as the source and summit. The solemn celebration and active participation in this sacrament yield a harvest of inestimable proportion and it is the aim of this chapter to explore how liturgical music helps to achieve this.

1.1 The Concept of the Holy Eucharist

In the context of this work, we cannot fully dissect the notion of the Holy Eucharist which has a very wide scope. Nonetheless, our brief discussion here will offer us the basic understanding of the Mystery we celebrate. Divided into seven subheadings, we shall start with the Meaning, the Institution and the Matter and Form of the Eucharist. We shall then end with the Eucharist as a Sacrament, a Meal, a Real Presence and a Sacrifice.⁵¹²

1.1.1 *The Meaning and Institution of the Eucharist*

The most important and exclusive function to which the grace of the Catholic priesthood is ordered is the celebration of the Eucharist which is “the very soul of the Church”⁵¹³ and the centre of her entire sacramental, liturgical and spiritual life. For the fathers of the SVC, the Eucharist “is the fount and the apex of the whole Christian life.”⁵¹⁴

From the words of the Institution of the Eucharist itself, one can also deduce its real meaning. By the words “Take and eat/drink,” Christ intends this to be food for the disciples; and by the words “this is my Body/Blood,” Christ intends to make himself really and substantially present in the food; and by the words “which will be given up/poured for you” Christ intends to make himself present in the food but only in the context of a sacrifice.⁵¹⁵ Thus, Christ intended the Passover celebration he had with his disciples to be a meal, a presence and a sacrifice. Referring to these three aspects, Pope John Paul II, in his first encyclical letter, *Redemptor Hominis*, mentioned that the Eucharist “is at one and the same time a sacrifice - sacrament, a communion - sacrament, and a presence - sacrament”⁵¹⁶ We shall expatiate on these dimensions in a moment.

⁵¹²For more details, see E. Sri, *A Biblical Walk through the Mass*, (West Chester: Ascension, 2021), pp. 9-18.

⁵¹³Pope Leo XIII, *Mirae Caritatis*, no 15.

⁵¹⁴SVC, *Lumen Gentium*, LG, no 11.

⁵¹⁵Cf. A. Nwabekee, *The Eucharist: A Meal; A Real Presence; A Sacrifice of Christ*, (Enugu: Snaap Press, 1993), p.56.

⁵¹⁶Pope John Paul II, *Redemptor Hominis*, no 20.

But before that, let us reiterate that the paschal mystery is central to every liturgical celebration; the Eucharist, however, “is in an outstanding way the sacrament of the paschal mystery.”⁵¹⁷ This mystery is a mystery of faith as we daily proclaim at Mass. Without faith, neither liturgy nor the Eucharist will have any significance. We must fundamentally believe in Christ who is always present in the Church not only in the person of His minister, but in His word, under the Eucharistic species, in the sacraments and when the Church prays and sings.⁵¹⁸ To help us understand and perceive this great mystery and to represent the manifold presence of Christ, liturgy employs the use of several signs and symbols.⁵¹⁹

Jesus Christ Himself instituted all the seven sacraments; this is the basic teaching of the Catholic Church. About the institution of the Eucharist which is the source and summit, SC declared:

At the last Supper, on the night He was betrayed, our Saviour instituted the Eucharistic sacrifice of His Body and Blood. This He did in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross throughout the ages until He should come again, and so to entrust to His beloved spouse, the Church a memorial of His death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a paschal banquet in which Christ is eaten, the mind is filled with grace, and a pledge of future glory is given to us.⁵²⁰

The New Testament account of the Institution of the Eucharist by Christ can be gleaned from four passages. They are: *Mtt.26:26-29; Mk. 14:22-25; Lk.22:19-20 and I Cor. 11:23-25*. These accounts furnish us, in essence, with what Christ did and said at the institution of the Eucharist and as an author put it: “Our whole faith in the Eucharist, as well as all our theology, depends on the accounts of the Lord’s Last Supper left to us by St. Paul and the Evangelists.”⁵²¹ By the repetition of both the actions and the words of the Institution, the full significance of the Eucharist is made ever present.⁵²²

1.1.2 *The Matter and Form of the Eucharist*

Every sacramental rite consists of two elements namely, matter and form, which together form the external sign of that sacrament. The matter of a sacrament is the perceptible thing to be used (such as water poured in baptism) or a sensible action to be employed (such as the acts of the penitent expressed in penance) in the celebration of a sacrament. The form of a sacrament, on the other hand, is the words or some other equivalent signs (such as a nod expressing consent in matrimony) which determine or perfect the significance of the required matter.⁵²³

⁵¹⁷Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, no 3.

⁵¹⁸Cf. SVC, SC, no 7.

⁵¹⁹For more details, see *The Weekday Missal*, (London, HarperCollins Publishers, 2012), pp. vi-vii.

⁵²⁰SVC, SC, no 47.

⁵²¹M-J. Nicolas, *What is the Eucharist?* (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1960), p. 13.

⁵²²Cf. C. Barnas, “Eucharist,” [in:] *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, (Famington Hills: Gale Research Inc., 2002), vol 5, 2nd ed., p. 412.

⁵²³Cf. P. Darcy, “The Matter and Form of the Seven Sacraments,” accessed on 03.01.2022, <https://peterdarcywriting.com/matter-and-form-of-the-seven-sacraments/>

In the sacrament of the Eucharist, the matter is the bread and wine whereas the words of the consecration constitute the form. Transubstantiation is the term which the Catholic Church uses to describe the unique and truly wonderful conversion of the whole substance of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ at the pronouncement of the words of consecration.⁵²⁴

1.1.3 *The Eucharist as a Sacrament: Real and Substantial Presence of Christ*

A sacrament is defined as “a sensible sign instituted by Jesus Christ to signify and cause justification and sanctification.” As the Sacrament of sacraments, the Eucharist occupies a unique position among the other sacraments as their point of culmination. According to St. Thomas Aquinas, Christ Himself is contained substantially in this sacrament, while only His power and his momentary acts are contained in the other sacraments.⁵²⁵ The person of Jesus Christ who is contained in the Eucharist summarises the entire spiritual good of the Church.

Among the sacraments of Christian initiation which bring the Christian faithful to full stature, the Eucharist is also the centre of focus. Drawing attention to the two models of Christian initiation rising from the SVC, B. Migut preferred the model connected to the *Ordo Initiationis Christianae Adultorum* (1972) as more balanced than that connected to the *Ordo Baptismi Parvulorum* (1969). In line with Pope Benedict XVI’s view,⁵²⁶ Migut based his preference on the fact that the model “retains the theological sequence of the sacraments and treats the Eucharist, rather than confirmation, as the fullness and summit of Christian initiation.”⁵²⁷

Right from the history of salvation as contained in the Old Testament, God has been present to His people in various forms and places. But at Incarnation, in the fullness of time, God sent His Only Son, Jesus Christ whose name is Immanuel: God-is-with-us. In Him, God’s presence became ever present, real, and concrete. Even at His death, Christ did not leave us orphans; He rather left His Spirit as His abiding presence (*Cf. Jn. 14:16,18*). Today, especially in the liturgical celebrations, Christ is still present to us in different modes as we had earlier mentioned.⁵²⁸ Among them all, Christ’s presence in the Eucharistic species by means of transubstantiation is a special type of presence terminologically known as REAL PRESENCE. According to Pope Paul VI, “This presence is called ‘real’ not to exclude the idea that the others are ‘real’ too, but rather to indicate presence par excellence, because it is substantial and through it Christ becomes present whole and entire, God and man.”⁵²⁹ This presence, Thomas Merton added, “makes the Eucharist different

⁵²⁴Pope Paul VI, *Mysterium Fidei*, no 46.

⁵²⁵T. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, (New York: Benziger Brothers Inc., 1948), Part III Qu. 65, art. 3.

⁵²⁶Pope Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, no 17.

⁵²⁷B. Migut, “The Eucharist as a Sacrament of Christian Initiation: Historical-Liturgical Aspect,” *Roczniki Teologiczne*, vol 8, 2019, p. 79.

⁵²⁸Cf. SCR, *Eucharisticum Mysterium*, no 9; SVC, *SC*, no 7.

⁵²⁹Pope Paul VI, *Mysterium Fidei*, no 39.

from all the other sacraments and elevates it so far above them all”⁵³⁰ Without the fact of Real Presence, the Eucharist as a Meal which we treated above and the Eucharist as a Sacrifice which comes next will be meaningless and impossible to explain. From the same perspective also, worship of the Eucharist outside Mass will be rendered null and void.⁵³¹

1.1.4 *The Eucharist as a Meal and as a Sacrifice*

As already mentioned, Christ instituted the Eucharist in the context of a meal and with sensible elements symbolic of a meal - bread to serve as food and wine to serve as drink. In these sacramental signs of His Body and Blood, Christ becomes our food and drink. The Eucharistic meal is to the soul what material food is to the body. Just as the material food has the fourfold effect of sustaining, increasing, repairing, and delighting the body, the soul, by means of a vital assimilation, experiences the same effects when it feeds on the Body and Blood of Christ. This heavenly food sustains and invigorates the soul in its turbulent spiritual journey to God, it develops and brings to perfection the spiritual life received at baptism. And as A. M. Crafts wrote, “this bread of life is at once food and medicine. It heals as well as sanctifies.”⁵³² It repairs the loss which the soul incurs from the effect of concupiscence and venial sins and delights the soul by the Real Presence to which it is incorporated.

Because of this incorporation of the soul into Christ, and not vice versa, “the Eucharist is the source and school of spirituality of communion in all its dimensions”⁵³³ The vertical dimension of this communion concerns our union with Christ while the horizontal dimension deals with our union with one another and with the Church. There is also the eschatological dimension which anticipates our eternal communion with God in the world to come⁵³⁴ and S. Hahn, for that reason, considers every *single* Mass as heaven on earth.⁵³⁵

The supreme and unique sacrifice of the Cross is the ultimate action which God undertook, out of His infinite love and mercy, in the person of Jesus Christ, for the redemption of humanity and the sanctification of the world. In the Eucharist, the one and the same sacrifice of Christ is being re-enacted, re-presented and re-applied to all peoples of all ages – an idea the Church expresses with the dynamic notion of ‘anamnesis – calling to mind.’⁵³⁶ It is only in the manner of

⁵³⁰T. Merton, *The Living Bread*, (New York: Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, 1956), p. 56.

⁵³¹Cf. Pope John Paul II, *Mane Nobiscum Domine*, no 16.

⁵³²A. M. Crafts, *The Fullness of Sacrifice*, (Glasgow: Sands & Co., 1953), p. 194.

⁵³³B. Migut, “Duchowość Eucharystyczna jako Duchowość Komunii,” *Roczniki Teologiczne*, vol 3 (59), 2012, p. 90.

⁵³⁴Cf. Francis Cardinal Arinze, *Celebrating the Holy Eucharist*, pp. 30-31.

⁵³⁵S. Hahn, *The Lamb’s Supper: The Mass as Heaven on Earth*, (New York: Doubleday, 1999), p. 5; Cf. S. Hahn, *Signs of Life*, (New York: Image, 2018), pp. 39-40.

⁵³⁶For more explanations of anamnesis, see Pontifical Committee for International Eucharistic Congresses, “The Eucharist: Communion with Christ and with One Another,” nos 93-100.

offering that the Eucharistic Sacrifice differs from the Sacrifice of the Cross.⁵³⁷ The Eucharistic Sacrifice has a fourfold dimension: praise, thanksgiving, propitiation and satisfaction. Considering these dimensions as benefits and fruits derivable from the sacrifice, Pope Leo XIII asserted that the Eucharist offers us a rare opportunity “to show to God, as our Lord, the highest reverence, and, as He is our greatest benefactor, the deepest gratitude.” And through it also, he continued, “men can satisfy, and that most abundantly, the demands of God's justice, and can obtain the plenteous gifts of His clemency.”⁵³⁸

While being a true sacrifice of Christ, the Eucharist is simultaneously a true sacrifice of the Church. As a Mystical Body of Christ, the Church consists of members who participate in the priesthood of Christ by virtue of their baptismal character. Through the Eucharist, the Church, being a kingdom of priests, is able to offer her sacrifice to God the Father through, with and in Christ.⁵³⁹ United with Christ, the Church is not only the subject of the sacrifice, but also the object; she is both the offerer and the offered.⁵⁴⁰ The validly ordained priest only serves as the representative of the whole Church in this sacrifice of all sacrifices as L. Feingold called it.

Thus far in our discussion, we have shown that the Eucharist is a sacrament with sublime dignity. As Catholics, even in the face of the COVID 19 pandemic, we cannot be or live without it. Underscoring this point in a letter he sent to the Presidents of the Episcopal Conferences of the Catholic Church, the prefect of the CDWDS, Cardinal Sarah, strongly appealed: “Let us return to the Eucharist with joy.”⁵⁴¹ But to celebrate this sacrament in such a way that all may fully participate with joyous hearts and renewed amazement, adequate preparations are very necessary. What these preparations are on the part of the ministers of liturgical music is the focus of our next subtopic.

1.2 Liturgical Music Preparations for the Eucharistic Celebration

The *MS* exhorts us to make practical preparation in view of any liturgical celebration, whether it be in ritual, pastoral or musical matters. This exercise under the guidance of the rector of the church should be done in a spirit of teamwork and cooperation by all parties concerned.⁵⁴² We shall concentrate here on musical preparations necessary before each Eucharistic celebration.

⁵³⁷GIRM, 2011 edition, no 2.

⁵³⁸Pope Leo XIII, *Mirae Caritatis*, nos 17 & 18.

⁵³⁹Cf. M. Thurian, *The Eucharistic Memorial: The New Testament*, (Virginia: John Knox Press, 1963), Part II, p. 78.

⁵⁴⁰M. Schmaus, *Dogma: The Church as Sacrament*, (London: Sheed and Ward, 1975), vol 5, p. 113.

⁵⁴¹Cardinal R. Sarah, “Let us Return to the Eucharist with Joy,” accessed on 30.01.2022, <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/full-text-cardinal-robert-sarah---let-us-return-to-the-eucharist-with-joy-58368>

⁵⁴²SVC, *MS*, no 5.

1.2.1 Parish Liturgical Music Committee and Music Selection

In every parish or chaplaincy, just as it happens at the diocesan level, there ought to be a Liturgy or Worship Commission which, as one of the four or five standing commissions of the Parish Pastoral Council, assists in the planning and management of the pastoral activity in the parish. The chairperson who is preferably a member of the parish council acts as the link between the commission and the council.⁵⁴³ The major pastoral concern of this commission is to make sure that liturgical celebrations, in meeting the demands of the prescribed liturgical books and taking cognizance of the people's cultural peculiarity, achieve the desired purpose through active, conscious and full participation of the faithful. This great responsibility could be split into four areas of focus: planning, formation of liturgical ministers, formation of the assembly and evaluation.⁵⁴⁴

Ideally, membership into this commission should include representatives from the different liturgical ministries and representatives of the liturgical assembly itself who “have some education and formation in the areas of liturgy, liturgical ministry, the liturgical year, and principles of art and environment and music in Catholic worship.”⁵⁴⁵ More so, they ought to have the passionate desire and the keen interest to use their knowledge and talent to constantly improve the liturgy which remains the centre of the people's faith formation. By virtue of their office or skill, some of them could be considered as permanent members like the pastor/pastoral administrator, the parish music director, the coordinator of arts/environment and coordinators of the various liturgical ministries. And because of the vast scope of liturgy, this commission is sometimes subdivided into committees to cover the different areas which include: music, art and environment, planning or liturgy preparation, lectors, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, sacristans, ushers and greeters, Altar servers etc.⁵⁴⁶

Among other things, the committee for liturgical music has the key function of selecting appropriate songs for every liturgical worship. This forms part of the liturgical planning which usually takes place on monthly basis. The three basic criteria for making this selection derive from the three characteristic features of liturgical music which we discussed in chapter one of this work. It may, therefore, be necessary to refer to them since our discussion here will presume a prior

⁵⁴³Archdiocese of Saint Louis, “Guidelines for Parish Liturgy Commissions,” (1986), p. 12, accessed on 31.01.2022, <https://www.archstl.org/Portals/0/Documents/Worship/Guidelines%20for%20Parish%20Liturgy%20Commissions.pdf?ver=2018-08-09-100657-133>

⁵⁴⁴“Diocesan Guidelines for Parish Worship Commission,” assessed on 31.01.2022, https://www.saginaw.org/sites/default/files/2018-01/ParishWorshipCommission2018_0.pdf

⁵⁴⁵Ibid.

⁵⁴⁶Archdiocese of Milwaukee, “Commission Guidelines,” *Parish Commissions & Committees Manual*, (2014), p. 33, accessed on 31.01.2022, <https://www.archmil.org/ArchMil/Resources/ParCnl1/Manuals-for-Parishes/ParishCommissionsCommittees2015.pdf>

knowledge of them. And to discuss these criteria, many authors like P. C. Sheehan prefer to use the concept of the three judgements – liturgical, musical and pastoral judgement.⁵⁴⁷ Let us now consider these judgements one after the other.

1.2.1.1 Musical Judgement

In the words of D. E. Saliers, “if worship is to glorify God and sanctify what is human and creaturely, then musical judgments are ingredient in assessing the adequacy of our worship.”⁵⁴⁸ Musical judgement which seeks to evaluate the suitability of a piece of music for use in the liturgy based on its beauty of form asks whether the music is good from the artistic and technical point of view. It establishes whether the range and style of musical forms employed are capable of giving rise to and expressing the varying emotions and experience of faith of a worshipping assembly.⁵⁴⁹ Clarifying this, D. E. Saliers added:

The whole way in which music employs pitch, rhythm, melodic and harmonic forms, dissonance, and so on provides us with a non-discursive symbolism of our life. So the very temporality of music is revelatory of our temporality: tensions, climaxes, releases, serenities, dissonance and consonance – only in and through well-crafted or deeply shared common forms of ordered sound can we receive back our way of affectively being in the world. In the sense one might be led to speak of the ‘sacramentality’ of music.⁵⁵⁰

Musical judgement further seeks to discover if the different musical elements – pitch, interval, melody, harmony, dynamics, tempo, meter, rhythm etc. are properly arranged for easy singing by the intended music ministers. And because “the various moments in the Liturgy require a musical expression of their own,”⁵⁵¹ it also asks whether the musical forms used synchronise with the different seasons of the liturgical year and are appropriate for the different parts of the liturgy. It further asks if the music supports or distracts from the text and whether its melody, rhythm and metre respect, ignore or even contradict the natural speech rhythms and inflections?⁵⁵² Here, musical judgement connects with the liturgical judgement which we shall immediately discuss below. But before we do so, let us also emphasize that liturgical music, even when it has sufficiency of artistic expression, “must comply to the legitimate demands of adaptation and

⁵⁴⁷P. C. Sheehan, *The Role of Music in Liturgy*, accessed on 01.02.2022, pp. 9 – 16
https://www.academia.edu/12569062/Role_of_Music_in_Liturgy

⁵⁴⁸D. E. Saliers, “Liturgical Musical Formation,” [in:] R. A. Leaver, J. Ann Zimmerman (eds.), *Liturgy and Music*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1998), p. 388.

⁵⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁵⁰Ibid., p. 389.

⁵⁵¹Pope John Paul II, *Chirograph for the Centenary of “TLS”*, no 5.

⁵⁵²CCCB, *Guidelines for Composers*, no 4.

inculturation.”⁵⁵³ From this perspective of considering the circumstances of the particular worshipping community, musical judgement is also interrelated with the pastoral judgement. As J. Gelineau has repeatedly argued, the most beautifully constructed Bach chorale may be the worst liturgical choice for a particular community for whom it does not connect with the Paschal mystery which the liturgy enacts.⁵⁵⁴

1.2.1.2 Liturgical Judgement

The sound judgement we make to determine whether a piece of music to be selected for a liturgical purpose has the desired quality of holiness is called liturgical judgement. In this type of judgement, the liturgical planners must search for the harmony and consistence between liturgical action and the musical word.⁵⁵⁵ They will ascertain this by asking the question: “Does this piece of music serve the liturgy?”⁵⁵⁶ “Is this composition capable of meeting the structural and textual requirements set forth by the liturgical books for this particular rite?”⁵⁵⁷ To answer this question, of course, one must be conversant with the nature of the liturgical rite which itself determines not only the kind of music to be used, but also what is to be sung and who to sing it.⁵⁵⁸ In this line of thought, K. Harmon believes that hymns and songs whose main objective is to express private devotion, or to serve the need for catechesis or evangelization cannot be appropriate for liturgical use.⁵⁵⁹

Necessary also for liturgical judgement is a good knowledge of the different parts of each liturgical celebration, their corresponding song forms with their priority level for singing and the liturgical norms guiding them.⁵⁶⁰ While using the principle of progressive solemnity to guide the choice of parts to be sung in a particular rite, efforts must also be made to achieve a certain balance among the various elements in the liturgy. And because the music form ought to be dependent on the form of the liturgical text, it must be certain that the musical setting of the song to be selected has the ability to support the liturgical text and deliver meaning consistent with the teaching of the Church.⁵⁶¹ As an author put it: “the principal classes of texts must be kept in mind: proclamations,

⁵⁵³Pope John Paul II, *Chirograph for the Centenary of “TLS”*, no 6.

⁵⁵⁴K. Harmon, *The Ministry of Music*, p. 88.

⁵⁵⁵J. Melloh, “Feel the Music,” [in:] V. C. Funk (ed.), *Music in Catholic Worship – the NPM Commentary*, p. 18.

⁵⁵⁶Archdiocese of Perth, *Sing a New Song: Guidelines for Choosing Music for Liturgical Celebrations*, p. 24, accessed on 01.02.2022, <http://liturgy.perthcatholic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/SING-A-NEW-SONG.pdf>

⁵⁵⁷USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 127.

⁵⁵⁸Archdiocese of Perth, *Sing a New Song: Guidelines for Choosing Music for Liturgical Celebrations*, p. 24, accessed on 11.01.2022.

⁵⁵⁹K. Harmon, *The Ministry of Music*, p. 44.

⁵⁶⁰P. Mason, “Guideline: Music within the Mass,” p. 7, accessed on 03.02.2022.

⁵⁶¹USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 128.

acclamations, psalms, and hymns, and prayers. Each has a specific function which must be served by the music chosen for a text.”⁵⁶²

This practice of liturgical judgement, according to D. E. Saliers, has an additional advantage of promoting variety of musical forms and idioms:

The musical forms themselves must be congruent with the prayer-action and the ritual acts. This does not lead to uniformity in musical idiom. If the liturgy is to be faithfully celebrated over time in various seasons and festivals – each with their own appropriate communication, then a variety of musical idioms and styles are to be cultivated.⁵⁶³

1.2.1.3 Pastoral Judgement

Any composed song which is musically beautiful and liturgically holy must also be pastorally relevant in order to qualify as suitable for liturgical purposes. The evaluative procedure to determine the pastoral significance of a musical composition belongs to the realm of pastoral judgement which always asks the question: “Will this composition draw this particular people closer to the mystery of Christ, which is at the heart of this liturgical celebration?”⁵⁶⁴ Will it be accessible to, meaningful for, and singable by this particular assembly?⁵⁶⁵ Peter Sheehan affirms that the melody, pitch, rhythm, ambitus and the accompaniment style of any liturgical music must technically foster prayerful participation. Its phrases and intervals must also be simple enough for the assembly to sing.⁵⁶⁶

Just as a musical expert is required to analyse and evaluate the issues concerned with musical judgement and a proficient liturgist to answer the questions raised in the area of liturgical judgement, only a well-skilled pastoral guide will be capable of dealing with the issues related to the criteria for pastoral evaluation. Such a person must be aware of the diverse customs and traditions of the worshipping community, “whether that diversity is due to age, ethnicity, language, education, or theology.”⁵⁶⁷ Granted it will be difficult all the time, given the varying circumstances mentioned above, to meet everybody’s taste in the choice of music for liturgy, efforts must be

⁵⁶²J. A. Warburton, “Pastoral Music Magazine: Witness to and Participant in the Post-Vatican II Reform of Music and Liturgy in the United States,” Ohio State University (Master’s thesis), 1997, p. 93, accessed on 03.02.2022, https://etd.ohiolink.edu/apexprod/rws_etd/send_file/send?accession=osu1209581288&disposition=inline

⁵⁶³D. E. Saliers, “Liturgical Musical Formation,” [in:] R. A. Leaver, J. Ann Zimmerman (eds.), *Liturgy and Music*, pp. 392 – 393.

⁵⁶⁴USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 133.

⁵⁶⁵K. Harmon, *The Ministry of Music*, p. 44; Cf. CCCB, *Guidelines for Composers*, no 4.

⁵⁶⁶P. C. Sheehan, *The Role of Music in Liturgy*, p. 16.

⁵⁶⁷P. Colloton, “Considering the Lenses of *Sing to the Lord*: Relationship between the Three Judgment and the Two Dimensions, One Context,” accessed on 03.02.2022, <http://www.pastoralliturgy.org/resources/1003STL-ConsideringTheLenses.php>

made to select songs that do not offend anyone's prayerful sensibilities but rather deserve everyone's esteem.⁵⁶⁸ As much as possible, it must be pastorally universal.

1.2.1.4 *Three Judgements but One Evaluation*

In his article on the three judgements about music, J. Larson cautioned against the tendency of undue compromise on the pastoral judgement as often observed at weddings, funerals and children's liturgies. According to him, some have wrongly begun to understand the word "pastoral" from the point of view of personal choice and preference. He is, however, convinced that "a genuine pastoral judgement does not take precedence over the musical or the liturgical judgement."⁵⁶⁹ That we desire to respect the local language or age of the worshipping community, for instance, does not permit us to use a song that is neither artistic nor in accord with the liturgy. In fact, none of these judgements is to be considered as either superior or opposed to the other; the three should rather be viewed "as complementary aspects of a single dynamic decision-making process."⁵⁷⁰ In order to make a good music selection, we need to know about the music art and the liturgy as well as the worshipping community.⁵⁷¹ This selection requires a critical evaluation that is borne out of "cooperation, consultation, collaboration, and mutual respect among those who are skilled in any of the three judgments, be they pastors, musicians, liturgists, or planners."⁵⁷²

The parish priest or the chaplain is an *ex officio* member of the liturgical music committee and his pastoral input is greatly needed. As part of the team, he provides necessary information about his community and the key message of the homily which is often based not only on the readings, but also on the theme of the liturgy which is derivable from the collect and the preface.⁵⁷³ In his absence, it behoves the other members of the committee to search out for this theme themselves after going through the readings. The information so gathered necessarily guides the selection of the processional songs the texts of which are not fixed in the liturgical books. In this regard, for example, the song *The Lord is my Shepherd* by Thomas Koschat will be *ad rem* if selected for the Fourth Sunday of Easter which is known as the Good Shepherd Sunday. The perfect blending of the song's lyrics with the theme and the readings of the day makes it a preferred choice.

⁵⁶⁸P. Mason, "Guideline: Music within the Mass," p. 5, accessed on 03.02.2022.

⁵⁶⁹J. Larson, "The Three Judgements about Music," accessed on 03.02.2022, https://liturgy.blogs.com/liturgy_reflections/2007/12/the-three-judge.html

⁵⁷⁰D. Mathers, "Three Judgements, One Evaluation," *Pastoral Music*, vol 32:4, 2008, p. 28.

⁵⁷¹CBCEW, "Music and the Liturgy of the Eucharist," (2005), p. 7, accessed on 03.02.2022, <https://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/HCW/Music&Euch.pdf>

⁵⁷²USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 126; Cf. P. Colloton, "Considering the Lenses of *Sing to the Lord*: Relationship between the Three Judgment and the Two Dimensions, One Context," accessed on 03.02.2022.

⁵⁷³P. C. Sheehan, *The Role of Music in Liturgy*, accessed on .05.02.2022, p. 12.

Though the evaluative process for music selection may not be so easy at the beginning, the dignity and seriousness of the liturgy deserve it and later, with practice and skill, it gradually becomes simpler. In some parishes in Igboland where the liturgical music committee is non-existent or experts for the job are lacking, individuals who have some kind of knowledge can assist and their efficiency improved with constant training and formation. And it may actually be necessary for the bishops of a particular ecclesiastical province or region having the same culture and language as we have in Igboland to mandate and mobilize a group of experts within their territory to produce a booklet of appropriately selected songs for each Sunday of the three-year cycle of the liturgical calendar. This important assignment is beyond the scope of this work but will make for greater uniformity of liturgical celebration and help to serve the needs of such parishes with lack.

1.2.2 Practices and Rehearsals

Somehow, there is a difference between practice and rehearsal. Practice is often an individual exercise done at home or any other convenient place, as and when preferable. Through it, we acquire, develop and master skills for effective performance. As a popular proverb says, ‘practice makes perfect.’ Rehearsal, on the other hand, is done closer to the actual event and is more of a collective activity. “After each individual has practiced and learned their part to the best of their ability on their own time, they bring their parts to rehearsal and put it all together as a team.”⁵⁷⁴ If we practise hard in games just to win a perishable wreath, liturgy in which we win an imperishable trophy deserves even much more (Cf. 1Cor.9:25). After selecting the appropriate music, we prepare for a worthy and fruitful celebration through constant practices and well-coordinated rehearsals.

Each minister of liturgical music, alone or with the help of others, is obliged to practise severally what to perform at liturgy at a given time. Presumption is not tolerated as no one is above practice; even for professionals, it is still very essential. While the presider/pastor, the psalmist, the cantor and the choir need to practise what to sing on individual basis, the organist and other instrumentalists must practise what to play. Apart from individual practices of the members, the choir and the instrumentalists also need to practise as individual groups. Whether as individual

⁵⁷⁴PursueGod Worship, “Practice vs. Rehearsal,” accessed on 05.02.2022, <https://www.pursuegodnetwork.org/practice-vs-rehearsal/>; Cf. N. Kaushik, “Difference Between Practice and Rehearsal, accessed on 05.02.2022, <http://www.differencebetween.net/language/words-language/difference-between-practice-and-rehearsal/>

persons or individual groups, liturgical ministers ought to practise for every liturgical celebration.⁵⁷⁵

In Igboland, when the bishop is to pay an official or pastoral visit to any parish, his chancellor or the diocesan Master of Ceremony usually visits ahead of him for a singular purpose – to make final preparations for a smooth liturgical celebration. He is meant to organize a day or days of rehearsals for all those involved, in one way or the other, with the liturgy. It is always a serious exercise which nobody jokes with and which aims at making the liturgy of the day the best possible. But if, as sometimes is the case, this level of preparation is done only when the bishop is visiting, we miss the mark. At the Eucharist, Jesus, the King of kings, comes. Therefore, every liturgical celebration on Sundays, at least, should be well prepared for. The parish priest, in conjunction with the Parish Liturgical Committee, must seek for the best way to organize a similar kind of collective rehearsal in his parish as often as possible, if not weekly.

Important as it is, the time for rehearsals scheduled before the liturgical celebration must not encroach into the time for the celebration itself. There have been situations in the past where the Mass has started while the choir and the organist who gathered for rehearsal are still struggling to find their way into the Church. The difficulty or the delay is sometimes worsened by the lack of time difference between the end of one Mass and the beginning of the next as observed in some parishes. To avoid this, choirmasters and other ministers must endeavour to end all rehearsals early enough before the Mass just as pastors of souls ought to plan the Mass schedules properly and strive to keep to the time allotted to each Mass to allow for a free flow of people in and out of the Church before the next Mass begins.

1.2.3 Punctuality and Silence

Lateness to Mass and to other liturgical activities remains a major challenge in the Nigerian Church.⁵⁷⁶ Latecomers are distractions not only to themselves but to other participants in the liturgy. It is more worrisome when those who come late are also the ones who leave before the dismissal time. For the ministers of liturgical music, such attitude can never be acceptable. One cannot imagine the choirmaster, the psalmist or the organist coming for Mass after the Liturgy of the Word. Just as T. C. Haliburton said in 1853, ‘punctuality is the soul of business.’ Pastors, therefore, must consistently help and urge the general faithful to imbibe the culture of punctuality. Such culture in some parishes encouraged and still encourages the tradition of doing a little

⁵⁷⁵Cf. Francis Cardinal Arinze, *Celebrating the Holy Eucharist*, p. 59.

⁵⁷⁶Cf. U. Aba, *The Reception of the Second Vatican Council's Liturgical Reforms in Nigeria (Nsukka Diocese)*, p. 177.

rehearsal with the entire congregation so that they can get the air of the key melodies for the day's celebration.

Additionally, punctuality offers the people of God the opportunity to gain some moment of silence before the start of any liturgical celebration. Such moment of silence is a time for the heart to cut off the noise of the outside world and recollect itself in preparation for the encounter with Jesus.⁵⁷⁷ Pope Francis gave this assertion in his Wednesday General Audience on Nov. 15, 2017. And just as we read in the Office of the Reading on the feast day of St. Charles Borromeo, the following are the questions the saint would ask anyone or a priest who complains of a thousand thoughts distracting his mind from God as soon as he comes to choir to sing the divine office or prepares to celebrate Mass: "But how had he been behaving in the sacristy before going into choir or beginning Mass? Did he make any real effort to compose his thoughts? What means did he choose and put into practice to fix his attention?"⁵⁷⁸ Certainly, therefore, the few minutes spent to recall the Great Mystery about to be celebrated and our ministerial function in the celebration can really help us to remain focused throughout the period of the liturgical worship.⁵⁷⁹

1.3 Liturgical Music at Mass

Having looked at the concept of the Eucharist and the ways to prepare in musical matters for its celebration, let us now consider the structure of the Mass and how best to participate in it. Finally, we shall discuss the forms of liturgical music used at Mass.

1.3.1 *The Structure of the Mass*

Structurally, the Mass essentially consists of two parts. Mentioning them with their opening and concluding rites, Pope Benedict XVI underlined its intrinsic unity:

Both in catechesis and in the actual manner of celebration, one must avoid giving the impression that the two parts of the rite are merely juxtaposed. The liturgy of the word and the Eucharistic liturgy, with the rites of introduction and conclusion, 'are so closely interconnected that they form but one single act of worship.' There is an intrinsic bond between the word of God and the Eucharist. From listening to the word of God, faith is born or strengthened (cf. *Rom* 10:17); in the Eucharist the Word made flesh gives himself to us as our spiritual food.⁵⁸⁰

⁵⁷⁷Cf. Pope Francis, [in:] H. Brockhaus, "Pope Francis: The Mass Needs Silence, not 'Chit-chat,'" accessed on 05.02.2022, <https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/pope-francis-the-mass-needs-silence-not-chit-chat-76871>

⁵⁷⁸*The Divine Office: The Liturgy of the Hours According to the Roman Rite*, (London: Wm Collins Sons & Co. Ltd., 1974), vol 3, p. 383.

⁵⁷⁹Cf. Francis Cardinal Arinze, *Celebrating the Holy Eucharist*, p. 59.

⁵⁸⁰Pope Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, no 44; Cf. CDWDC, *Inaestimabile Donum*, no 1; GIRM, no 28.

One of the underlying principles of SC “is the conviction that public worship is a response of a certain culture to God’s Revelation.”⁵⁸¹ Liturgy is thus a kind of dialogue or a two-way relationship and communication between God and His people. This is clearly depicted from the beginning of the Mass to the end. By coming to the Church, in the first place, we freely respond to God’s loving invitation: “Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest.” (Matt. 11:28) We continue to respond to God who has gathered us in His presence in the Introductory Part of the Mass; we confess our sins to Him, ask for mercy, glorify His majesty and through the presider, we collect our intentions together and present them to Him, ready to listen to His Word.

This communicative dialogue continues in the two main parts of the Mass comprising word (The Liturgy of the Word) and action (The Liturgy of the Eucharist).⁵⁸² Sr. Marietta explains this dialogue further. In the former part, God speaks to us and we respond. He instructs and feeds us with the food of His Word in the Old and New Testament and in the Gospel, all of which the priest expounds and adapts to our circumstance during the homily. With our response to the Word we heard by psalms, profession of faith and the prayer of the faithful, the Liturgy of the Word is ended. The latter part comprises the period of Offertory/Consecration and the Communion rite. During the Offertory, we give ourselves to God through, with and in Christ under the exterior signs of wine and bread while during Communion, God gives Himself to us through, with and in the Body and Blood of Christ which we receive under the exterior appearances of bread and wine.⁵⁸³

But apart from the Word and Action dimensions of the Mass, we can also talk about the Being dimension which begins from the time of the reception of Holy Communion and continues even after the Mass. Having received Christ in the Holy Communion, we unite and become one with Him, living, moving and having our being in Him as St. Paul would say (Acts 17:28). Not only with Him, we also unite with one another and with the Church as Members of the Mystical Body of Christ. In this union which is the fruit and goal of any Eucharistic sacrifice, we march from the Church into the world to evangelize it through our word and action already transformed by the life-giving Word and redeeming Action of Christ, thus, fulfilling the mandate to live out in ordinary life the mystery of salvation in Christ which we have sacramentally celebrated.⁵⁸⁴ According to Hans Urs von Balthasar, the concepts of person and mission are closely linked in the Christian context. As the person of Jesus is constituted by the mission from his Father, so does a

⁵⁸¹P. Romfh, “The New Musical Form of the Catholic Mass,” *The Choral Journal*, vol 12, no 5, 1972, p. 15.

⁵⁸²Cf. I. H. Dalmais, P. M. Gy, P. Jounel, A. G. Martimort (eds.), *The Church at Prayer: Principles of the Liturgy*, p. 174; S. Hahn, *Letter and Spirit*, (New York: Doubleday, 2005), pp. xii-xiii.

⁵⁸³Sr. Marietta, S. N. J. M., *Singing the Liturgy*, p. 153.

⁵⁸⁴J. A. Komonchak, M. Collins, D. A. Lane (eds.), *The New Dictionary of Theology*, (Bangalore: Theological Publications, 2014), p. 595.

Christian realize his personhood in the measure of his participation in the mission of Christ.⁵⁸⁵ At the end of the Mass, therefore, obedience to and fulfilment of the missionary mandate which liturgical subjects receive increasingly perfects their life in Christ. As R. Barron puts it: “In this great act of giving to the other what one has received from the liturgy, the Christian self is both grounded and expressed.”⁵⁸⁶

1.3.2 *Participation at Mass and its Kinds*

The purpose of liturgy is greatly achieved to the extent the faithful participate in it. This is why one of the fundamental principles of the liturgical reform called for by the SVC was active participation of the faithful in the Church’s public worship.⁵⁸⁷ In *SC* and *MS*, the fathers of the SVC heavily emphasize this principle as the primary and most indispensable source of the true Christian spirit:

Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that fully, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy. Such participation...is their right and duty by reason of their baptism. In the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else; for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit.⁵⁸⁸

There are different kinds of participation at Mass by which we mean the qualities which our participation at Mass must possess in order to be comprehensive and complete. Such qualities include: active, full, conscious, sacramental and fruitful. Let us explain what they mean.⁵⁸⁹

a) *Active Participation and its Forms*

Active participation involves two forms according to *MS*. Firstly, participation should be internal “in the sense that by it the faithful join their mind to what they pronounce or hear, and cooperate with heavenly grace.”⁵⁹⁰ Following from this, some writers argue that “music should not be employed in the divine service when it calls up praise from the lips and not from the heart, when the singers are distracted from what they are singing.”⁵⁹¹ Even listening attentively to the

⁵⁸⁵R. Barron, *Exploring Catholic Theology*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015), pp. 157-158.

⁵⁸⁶*Ibid.*, p. 158.

⁵⁸⁷J. Fessio, “Active Participation in the Church’s Liturgy,” *Adoremus*, vol 1, no 1, 1995.

⁵⁸⁸SVC, *SC*, no 14. (Cf. *MS*, no 15).

⁵⁸⁹For more explanations, see B. Nadolski, *Wprowadzenie do Liturgii*, (Kraków: Wydawnictwo WAM, 2004), pp. 176-180.

⁵⁹⁰SVC, *MS*, no 15.

⁵⁹¹H. M. Schueller, *The Idea of Music*, p. 386.

prayers and readings of the liturgy, to the ministers and to the choir is a form of active participation which the faithful must learn. It helps to raise their minds to God and also promotes the attitude and the religious activity which are fundamental in common worship.⁵⁹² Secondly, participation of the faithful is more complete when their internal disposition and participation can be shown and concretized externally by actions, gestures, bodily attitudes, by the acclamations, responses and singing.⁵⁹³ Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, however, warned that liturgy should not degenerate into general activity in such a way that the various external actions become the essential in liturgy.⁵⁹⁴ Between the two forms of active participation – internal and external – there must always be a harmony, “a logical alternation between singing and listening, between an external activity and a holy silence.”⁵⁹⁵

b) Full and Conscious Participation

Pope John Paul II gave the same explanation about active participation in 1998 while addressing the bishops of Washington, Oregon, Montana, Idaho and Alaska. More than that, he also explained the two other adjectives which *SC* used to qualify the word, participation – full and conscious. For him, each member of the worshipping community has a role to play in the liturgy and **full** participation (*participatio plena*) is when each member exactly does so. However, it does not mean as he immediately emphasized “that everyone does everything, since this would lead to a *clericalizing* of the laity and a *laicizing* of the priesthood.”⁵⁹⁶ Coming to the explanation of **conscious** participation (*participatio conscia*), he mentioned that it involves instructing the entire community properly in the mysteries of the liturgy in order to avoid making the experience of worship something of a mere formalism or ritualism.⁵⁹⁷

c) Sacramental and Fruitful Participation

Apart from the persistent call by the Holy Mother Church for full, conscious and active participation in the liturgy which is directed to the entire liturgical assembly in different ways, according to their differing rank and office,⁵⁹⁸ the SCR and later GIRM no. 13, in conformity with

⁵⁹²C. E. O’Neill, “The Theological Meaning of Actousa Participatio in the Liturgy,” [in:] J. Overath (ed.), *Sacred Music and Liturgy Reform after Vatican II*, (Collegeville: North Central Publishing Company, 1969), p. 107.

⁵⁹³SVC, *MS*, no 15.

⁵⁹⁴Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, p. 101.

⁵⁹⁵J. Lennards, “Possibilities and Limitations of Congressional Singing,” [in:] *Sacred Music and Liturgy Reform after Vatican II*, p. 151.

⁵⁹⁶Pope John Paul II, *Address of the Holy Father Pope John Paul II to the Bishops of the Episcopal Conference of the United States of America*, Vatican 1998, no 3, accessed on 07.02.2022, http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1998/october/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19981009_ad-limina-usa-2.html

⁵⁹⁷*Ibid.*

⁵⁹⁸SVC, *SC*, no 26.

the desire of the Fathers of the Council of Trent, also talks about the more complete or perfect form of participation which is achieved by *sacramental* participation in the reception of the Holy Communion. By this form of participation, the faithful derive greater fruits from the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass⁵⁹⁹ which they have a duty to share in the form of evangelization with the world around them. This missionary dimension which is the last mode of participation known as *fruitful* participation (*participatio fructuosa*) makes it easy to understand the reason why the Eucharistic celebration which is also termed *Missa* always concludes with “*Ite Missa Est*,” that is, the mission or the sending forth to proclaim the gospel to the world. For Pope John Paul II, therefore, “the liturgy is intimately linked to the Church’s mission to evangelize. If the two do not go hand in hand, both will falter.”⁶⁰⁰ And for Usman, a fruitful participation presupposes the other forms of participation.⁶⁰¹

1.3.3 *The Principle of Progressive Solemnity*

Musicam Sacram retains the distinction between the two kinds of Masses as proposed by the Instruction of September 3, 1958: The Sung Mass and the Read Mass (Low Mass). The Sung Mass is further divided into Solemn and High Mass.⁶⁰² Before the Vatican II, it was either high mass or low mass but today, for pastoral reasons, there is a choice of what the faithful can sing according to their capabilities. *Musicam Sacram* explains that “between the solemn, fuller form of liturgical celebration, in which everything that demands singing is in fact sung, and the simplest form, in which singing is not used, there can be various degrees according to the greater or lesser place allotted to singing.”⁶⁰³ These degrees form what is called *the principle of progressive solemnity* which teaches that the kind and amount of music to be used in any liturgical celebration must correspond to the degree of solemnity of that celebration.⁶⁰⁴ It delineates the sung parts of the Mass which should be given preference because of their greater importance in connection with the feast, the season, and the nature of the liturgy. The degrees are three in descending order of priority.⁶⁰⁵

⁵⁹⁹SCR, *De Musica Sacra et Sacra Liturgia*, no 22c.

⁶⁰⁰Pope John Paul II, *Address of the Holy Father Pope John Paul II to the Bishops of the Episcopal Conference of the United States of America*, Vatican 1998, no 4, accessed on 07.02.2022.

⁶⁰¹J. V. Usman, “Actuosa Participatio: the “why” and the “how” of Participation in the Liturgy according to SC,” accessed on 07.02.2022.

⁶⁰²For the explanation of Solemn and High Mass, see SCR, *De Musica Sacra et Sacra Liturgia*, no 3.

⁶⁰³SVC, *MS*, no 7.

⁶⁰⁴Catholic Diocese of Cubao, “Diocesan Guidelines on Music in the Liturgy,” no 12, accessed on 09.02.2022, <https://sites.google.com/site/cubaoliturgy/guidelines/guidelines-on-music-in-the-liturgy>

⁶⁰⁵For the details of the three degrees, see SVC, *MS*, nos 29 – 31.

Whereas the first degree may be used alone, the second and the third, wholly or partially, may never be used without the first. And the use of the third degree already presumes the first and the second.⁶⁰⁶ These degrees which, according to A. Bartlett, demonstrate the musical priorities of the Mass are also principally directed toward promoting congregational singing as a pastoral tool. Thus, the congregation learns to sing the Order and Ordinary of the Mass successfully before it progresses to the Proper of the Mass which, varying constantly, is most difficult to grasp and participate in.⁶⁰⁷ The knowledge of this principle is essential for all the ministers, especially the celebrant and the choir who must strive to put it into practice in order to avoid situations obtainable in many parishes in Igboland where the elements in the third and second degrees are always sung at Masses whereas those in the first and highest degree are often recited.⁶⁰⁸ To underscore the seriousness of the matter, I. Pawlak asserted that Mass is not to be recognized as sung when the above-mentioned hierarchy of degrees is not observed.⁶⁰⁹

Another form of grading of liturgical music is the hierarchy of function⁶¹⁰ as K. Harmon called it. Here, liturgical music is graded in three levels or degrees of importance according to the specific function it performs in the Mass. The first and the highest level belongs to music which, constituting a rite in itself, is not accompanied by any other liturgical action. The acclamations, the Responsorial Psalm, the Lord's Prayer with the doxology are some examples. Music, which functions as an accompaniment of a specific liturgical action, comes second in priority. Examples are the processional songs or Agnus Dei which accompanies the Breaking of the Bread (fraction). To the last group belongs such music which provides a favourable atmosphere for meditation and reflection during the liturgy. Though optional, by listening to such music, the assembly is usually uplifted in the spirit. Examples include organ voluntaries or pure instrumental music and choral anthem or music by the choir alone.⁶¹¹

1.3.4 *Forms of Liturgical Music within the Mass*

In the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Mass, we use different forms of music to express the different forms of prayer but there is hardly any consensus about the mode of classification of these forms of liturgical music. For our discussion here, we choose to classify these liturgical songs

⁶⁰⁶Ibid., no 28.

⁶⁰⁷A. Bartlett, "Progressive Solemnity, Musicam Sacram's Plan for Sung Liturgy in Every Parish," accessed on 09.02.2022, <https://adoremus.org/2017/01/ever-ancient-ever-new-implementing-musicam-sacram-today-part-ii/> Cf. E. Schaefer, *Catholic Music Through the Ages*, p. 170.

⁶⁰⁸D. Andrew, "Progressive Solemnity," [in:] *Musica Sacra Forum*, accessed on 09.02.2022, <https://forum.musicasacra.com/forum/discussion/10720/progressive-solemnity/p1>

⁶⁰⁹I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 286.

⁶¹⁰For details, see K. Harmon, *The Ministry of Music*, p. 12.

⁶¹¹P. Romfh, "The New Musical Form of the Catholic Mass," p. 17; Cf. K. Harmon, *The Ministry of Music*, p. 12.

using their form and function as a criterion. According to I. Pawlak, this mode of classification, which he also used, is far from being perfect, but to a large extent, it helps to distinguish and discuss individual songs under a structured framework. The classification is as follows: cantillations, litanic songs, hymns, symbol of faith, chants between readings, processional songs, thanksgiving songs, and silence as song.⁶¹²

1.3.4.1 Cantillations

Found in different religious traditions round the globe, especially in Judaism, cantillation originally and primarily applied to the public recitation of prayers and Sacred Scripture and gave “particular expression to word meaning (accent) and phrasing (syntax).”⁶¹³ Often known also as liturgical recitative, it is one of the musical forms that developed out of Gregorian chant. It is a mid-way between recitation and singing, a form of heightened speech which has become in Christian liturgy the normal vehicle of biblical readings, psalms, prayers and litanies.⁶¹⁴

Because it is, by its nature, performed by a soloist who is a liturgical minister of a rite, cantillation can fully express the true sense of the spoken word before the assembly.⁶¹⁵ At Mass, it is used to sing the orations (the collect, the prayer over the gifts and the post-communion prayer) as well as the preface and the Eucharistic prayer. GIRM encourages the priest to sing the entire Eucharistic prayer which A. Ruff sees as an art in which tempo is key so that chanting adds an element of spirit and reverence to the prayer without being a distraction.⁶¹⁶ But as it often requires a musically talented priest to do so, it is not common in Igboland; however, on special occasions like the First Mass of a newly ordained priest, effort is made and it is normal to sing the entire Eucharistic prayer, even the Roman Canon I. In the face of challenges in singing the entire prayer, E. McNamara suggests, at least, the singing of the words of consecration which “contribute to forming a sense of the sacred. It is especially useful in concelebrations so as to guarantee some degree of uniformity among priests who are used to their own personal rhythm of celebration.”⁶¹⁷

Especially on major solemnities and feasts, cantillations in fairly simple chants can also be used by the deacon/priest to sing the Gospel to underline its importance during the celebration; the lector can similarly sing the Old and New Testament readings, including the psalms. When the

⁶¹²I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 287.

⁶¹³J. Spector, “Chant and Cantillation,” *Musica Judaica*, vol 1, no 9, 1987, p. 2.

⁶¹⁴M. D. Kirby, “Toward a Definition of Liturgical Chant,” accessed on 15.03.2022; Cf. P. Mason, *Guideline: Music within the Mass*, p. 3.

⁶¹⁵J. Gelineau, *Liturgical Assembly, Liturgical Song*, (Portland: Pastoral Press, 2002), p. 123.

⁶¹⁶A. Ruff, “The Eucharistic Prayer Sung,” accessed on 15.03.2022,

<https://www.praytelligblog.com/index.php/2017/10/01/the-eucharistic-prayer-sung/>; Cf. GIRM, no 147.

⁶¹⁷E. McNamara, “Singing the Consecration,” accessed on 15.03.2022,

<https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/singing-the-consecration-4320>

overall pastoral efficacy calls for it, only ministers who have enough musical talent are expected to execute this function to avoid causing severe penance to the congregation.⁶¹⁸ This tradition of singing the Gospel and the readings occasionally should be considered and possibly recommended in Igboland where it hardly exists. But because of the tonal character of Igbo language in particular, the use of cantillations or singing *recto tono* makes little sense. To bring out the proper meaning of the texts, simple tones that respect tonality are rather composed for the presidential prayers and such tones can also be used to sing the Gospel and the readings.

1.3.4.2 *Dialogues and Acclamations*

GIRM clearly maintains that “since the celebration of Mass by its nature has a ‘communitarian’ character, both the dialogues between the priest and the assembled faithful, and the acclamations are of great significance; for they are not simply outward signs of communal celebration but foster and bring about communion between priest and people.”⁶¹⁹ Beyond that, they also reflect our relationship with God who loves and reaches out to us while we constantly respond to Him with acclamations of praise.⁶²⁰ Such great significance helps us understand why preference is given to them in selecting the parts of the Mass to be sung.⁶²¹ The chanting of the dialogues and the acclamations, therefore, should be the rule and not the exception as many parishes have made it to be. In Igboland, the Inter-diocesan Liturgical Music Commission of Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province produced the musical notations for these dialogues and acclamations in the *NCIHB* and both old and young are conversant with the melodies and join to sing them at Mass.

a) *Dialogues*

While discussing cantillations above, we recommended the chanting of the Gospel and other readings on occasional basis. But even when the Gospel itself is not to be sung, it is very appropriate, according to the General Introduction to the Lectionary, to chant the dialogue before the Gospel, that is, *The Lord be with you* and *A reading from the holy Gospel...* and at the end, the acclamation *The Gospel of the Lord*. Correspondingly, the congregation chants the response. “This is a way both of bringing out the importance of the Gospel reading and of stirring up the faith of those who hear it.”⁶²² It is further recommended that *The word of the Lord* at the end of the other

⁶¹⁸E. McNamara, “Singing the Gospel,” accessed on 15.03.2021, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/singing-the-gospel-4675>

⁶¹⁹GIRM, no 34.

⁶²⁰N. Wagner, “The Purpose of the Parts of the Mass We Sing,” accessed on 15.03.2022, <https://liturgy.life/2020/07/the-purpose-of-the-parts-of-the-mass-we-sing/>

⁶²¹SVC, *MS*, no 7.

⁶²²CDWDS, *General Introduction to the Lectionary (Ordo Lectionum Missae)*, 2nd edition, no 17.

readings be sung so that by chanting their response, “the assembled congregation pays reverence to the word of God it has listened to in faith and gratitude.”⁶²³

The other major dialogues between the priest and the people occur at the beginning of the Mass, before the Eucharistic prayer, before the kiss of peace and at the dismissal. These dialogues are generally so short and uncomplicated by their nature that even the priest or deacon with limited singing ability can easily chant them.⁶²⁴ Lastly, considered as dialogue are also the presidential prayers by the chief celebrant and the response by the congregation. Indeed, these prayers are meant to be sung but even when they are not, it is most advisable to sing the conclusion to the prayer so that the people can sing the ‘Amen’ as their sign of assent.⁶²⁵

b) Acclamations

As liturgy is dialogical, every proclamation of the priest or other ministers is always followed by an acclamation from the congregation as their response.⁶²⁶ Here lies the relationship between dialogues and the acclamations which could be defined as short and joyous statements of faith by which the whole assembly wholeheartedly and forcefully assent to God's Word and Action.⁶²⁷ As direct and strong declarations addressed to God, “acclamations are unique in that they are the assembly’s highest mode of priestly participation in the Eucharistic celebration.”⁶²⁸ Through them, the people claim ownership of all the prayers which the presider addresses to God on their behalf. Like the dialogues, they also belong to the highest degree of liturgical importance whether from the viewpoint of the principle of progressive solemnity or from the hierarchy of function. As such, they are meant to be sung in every Mass, even with a smaller congregation.⁶²⁹ And being the means of expression of love and fidelity to the Eucharistic mystery, their musical setting must be such as to enable the worshipping community to sing them from memory without difficulty.⁶³⁰ As by their nature, they need to be “rhythmically strong, melodically appealing, and affirmative.”⁶³¹

The five principal acclamations in the Eucharistic liturgy include the Gospel Acclamation, the *Sanctus*, the Memorial Acclamation, the Great Amen and the doxology of the Lord’s Prayer.

⁶²³Ibid., no 18.

⁶²⁴USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 115a.

⁶²⁵Cf. Ibid., nos 151, 175, 197.

⁶²⁶K. W. Seaman, “The Memorial Acclamations,” accessed on 15.03.2022, https://www.holytrinityhudson.org/documents/Reproducible_MemorialAcclamation.pdf

⁶²⁷Cf. USCCB, *Music in Catholic Worship*, 1972, no 53, accessed on 15.03.2022, http://archive.ccwatershed.org/media/pdfs/13/12/17/11-37-54_0.pdf

⁶²⁸K. Harmon, *The Ministry of Music*, p. 20.

⁶²⁹USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 115a; Cf. B. K. Nwazojie, “ADLIC Chairman’s Address,” p. 11.

⁶³⁰Cf. E. Harrington, “Singing the Mass,” accessed on 17.03.2022,

<https://www.liturgybrisbane.net.au/resources/liturgy-lines/singing-the-mass/>

⁶³¹USCCB, *Music in Catholic Worship*, no 53.

Considered also as acclamations are the “Amen” that concludes the various prayers and the responses such as “Thanks be to God” at the end of the readings.⁶³² We shall treat *Kyrie eleison* as a form of litany though it is also an acclamation.

1.3.4.3 Litanies

As defined by P. Mason, a litany “is a prayer with a series of invocations or intercessions sung by a cantor or other minister, with a repeated response sung by all.”⁶³³ From the definition, it is clear that litanies are designed to be sung. Doing so often makes them more effective as “the repetition of melody and rhythm draws the people together in a strong and unified response.”⁶³⁴ Whether as a devotional or liturgical prayer, litanies are usually intercessory in content and their form is characteristically the same, having a pattern of short variable invocations or petitions stated or sung by an individual or a small group (such as a *schola* or choir) and a short invariable response by the entire assembly.⁶³⁵ Adopted from the pre-Christian religions and cultures, this form of prayer which has become organically connected with Christian worship can be differentiated into two types namely, static and dynamic. In the former, which is associated with the liturgy of the Mass, requests are made in one place (the temple) while in the latter, the supplications are made during a procession. The responses to these litanies such as *Amen*, *Te rogamus*, *audi nos*, and especially *Miserere nobis* and *Kyrie eleison*, with time, have become independent liturgical chants.⁶³⁶ Now, let us delve further into the individual litanies we pray at Mass in their order of chronology.

a) *Kyrie Eleison – Lord, Have Mercy*

Many liturgists and theologians have emphasized that the true nature of *Kyrie eleison* “has more to do with God’s gracious mercy than our sinfulness.”⁶³⁷ To this group belongs G. Byer who is convinced that *Kyrie* is a kind of celebration of God’s abundant mercy towards human needs by which the desire to give Him glory naturally erupts. And this is what we do when we move from *Kyrie eleison* to *Gloria in excelsis Deo*. This understanding helps one to appreciate the placement of *Kyrie* in its present position in the Order of the Mass and why the continued attachment of *Kyrie* to a penitential act is regarded by some authors (for example, T. Schnitzler) as the tragedy of *Kyrie*.

⁶³²J. Kubicki, “Liturgical Acclamations,” [in:] *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, accessed on 17.03.2022, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/liturgical-acclamations>

⁶³³P. Mason, *Guideline: Music within the Mass*, p. 3.

⁶³⁴USCCB, *Music in Catholic Worship*, no 74.

⁶³⁵K. Harmon, *The Ministry of Music*, p. 59.

⁶³⁶I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 298.

⁶³⁷G. Byer, “Kyrie Eleison: Lord, Have Mercy,” accessed on 18.03.2022, <https://www.ocp.org/en-us/blog/entry/kyrie-eleison-lord-have-mercy>

It is noteworthy that the Greek word *eleison* contains a motif of thanksgiving and praise for the reconciliation that had taken place. To sing the *Kyrie* and not to recite it, therefore, emphasizes this character of praise.⁶³⁸ But when *Kyrie* is sung as part of the Penitential Act, each acclamation is preceded by a trope⁶³⁹ and its mood is generally different from that of the *Gloria*.

GIRM stipulates that *Kyrie* should be sung by everyone - the choir or cantor with the people. "Each acclamation is usually pronounced twice, though it is not to be excluded that it be repeated several times, by reason of the character of the various languages, as well as of the artistry of the music or of other circumstances."⁶⁴⁰ The form of call-and-response could be used in singing it as well as alternation between the congregation and the choir or cantor but the musical setting has to be simple and short as not to attach excessive importance to the introductory rites.⁶⁴¹ Occasionally, however, the choir or *schola* alone is permitted to sing a polyphonic setting of the *Kyrie*, otherwise it would be impossible to perform the great works of liturgical music that have been composed throughout history. The congregation, in such situation, listens and joins in the other parts of the Ordinary.⁶⁴²

In *NCIHB*, there five different Cyclic Masses containing five different melodies or musical settings for the *Kyrie*, *Gloria*, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, and *Agnus Dei*. The first one with the title *Missa Ihunanya* (Mass of Love) was composed by C. Ezenduka; the second – *Missa Uchenna* (Mass of God's Will) by F. Ebewu; the third – *Missa Obioma* (Mass of Kindness) by Fred. V. C. Uche; the fourth – *Missa Chukwuemeka* (Mass of God's Mighty Deed) by C. Ezenduka and the fifth – *Missa Ncheta* (Mass of Remembrance) by Peace Val. All the five settings of the *Kyrie* are written in a simple way that can easily be sung by all; two of them are in monotone while three are harmonized in four parts – SATB.

b) The General Intercessions (The Prayer of the Faithful)

The restoration of the Prayer of the Faithful after the homily by the SVC was regarded as one of the best successes of its liturgical reform.⁶⁴³ But while *SC* limited it to Sundays and feasts of obligation,⁶⁴⁴ GIRM extended it to all Masses with the participation of the people. It explained:

In the universal prayer or prayer of the faithful, the people respond in some sense to the Word of God which they have received in faith and, exercising the office of their baptismal priesthood, offer prayers

⁶³⁸I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 299.

⁶³⁹GIRM, no 52.

⁶⁴⁰GIRM, no 52.

⁶⁴¹USCCB, *Music in Catholic Worship*, no 65.

⁶⁴²I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 300.

⁶⁴³L. Deiss, *The Mass*, p. 45.

⁶⁴⁴Cf. SVC, *SC*, no 53.

to God for the salvation of all. It is desirable that there usually be such a form of prayer in Masses celebrated with the people, so that petitions may be offered for holy church, for those who govern with authority over us, for those weighed down by various needs, for all humanity, and for the salvation of the whole world.⁶⁴⁵

Different documents of the Church recommend that the prayer of the faithful be executed in the form of singing.⁶⁴⁶ Except in few places like the cathedral where it is the duty of the deacon, a cantor or a member of the choir to lead at the prayer of the faithful, it is customary in most parishes in Igboland to appoint beforehand some members of the congregation to take the intentions one after the other. Handing them a concise and well-prepared text formulated as a liturgical prayer as done in some places has an added advantage; it helps to avoid opportunities for amusement and other forms of distraction which occur sometimes when, at the spur of the moment, volunteers are invited before the altar to help with the prayers.⁶⁴⁷ It is also possible for the Liturgy Commissions in the region to join forces and produce official texts in the local language which can be approved and used for the general intercessions. This is common in places like Europe and America. After the introduction by the priest, the choir usually provides the people with the response to sing after each intention.

The practice of grooming children to sing the whole prayer of the faithful is also becoming the custom in most parishes. This is worthy of recommendation but there is also the need for a prior supervision of the choice of the text and the melody. While expressing the needs of the entire community, the text must be sober and brief and constructed in a manner suitable for singing.⁶⁴⁸ And the common practice of using popular gospel songs or borrowing their melodies for use in the responses for both the prayer of the faithful and the responsorial psalm (*contrafactum*) must be done with caution. In fact, according to I. Pawlak, it is to be discouraged because of the danger of introducing secular melodies or elements devoid of aesthetic value and sound theology into the liturgy. Again, the regular use of these songs or their melodies because they appeal to the taste of the common people may gradually lead to the impoverishment of the repertoire of liturgical music and discouragement of musical creativity.⁶⁴⁹

⁶⁴⁵GIRM, no 69.

⁶⁴⁶Cf. SVC, IO, no 56; MS no 30c.

⁶⁴⁷Cf. Francis Cardinal Arinze, *Celebrating the Holy Eucharist*, p. 66.

⁶⁴⁸GIRM, no 71.

⁶⁴⁹I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, pp. 305-306.

c) *Agnus Dei – Lamb of God*

With the liturgical reform of SVC, *Agnus Dei* was restored to its position as an accompaniment to the fraction rite and was allowed to be repeated as many times as necessary, especially in concelebrations. To be sung usually by the choir or cantor, “it is desirable that the people should participate in this song, at least by the final invocation or response.”⁶⁵⁰ Apart from the model setting for the Lamb of God in the Roman Missal (RM), composers are permitted, for pastoral reasons, to create other settings, using the form of verse-refrain or an *ostinato* with verses for a cantor or any other suitable form while respecting the basic nature of this chant as a litany.⁶⁵¹ Like the *Kyrie*, both the choir and the people can easily participate in the musical settings for the *Agnus Dei* in the *NCIHB*.

Let us say a word here about the Rite of the Kiss of Peace which, preceding the *Agnus Dei*, is the expression “by which the Church entreats peace and unity for herself and for the whole human family, and the faithful express to each other their ecclesial communion and mutual charity before communicating in the Sacrament.”⁶⁵² Whereas the dialogue before the kiss of peace may be sung, CCCB holds that no vocal or instrumental music should accompany this sign of peace.⁶⁵³ The reasons are clear according to CBCEW. Singing at this moment could prolong and lay undue emphasis on this liturgical action within the Communion Rite. It could also be a hinderance as the sign of peace and singing cannot go on simultaneously without difficulty.⁶⁵⁴ In Igboland, it is often the priest who intones a song at this moment and even though the songs are often related to the exchange of peace, they prolong the rite unduly. And to avoid such prolongation is also the reason GIRM exhorts us to extend the sign of peace in a sober manner only to people nearest to us. The final verdict on this issue, however, is left for the Conferences of Bishops to give in line with the culture and customs of their peoples.⁶⁵⁵

To conclude this section on the litanies all of which belong to the second degree of participation, it is pertinent to reiterate their significance as the prayer and/or chant of the people. Even as they are less important than the elements of the first degree, “we need to enable each to emerge appropriately from within its ritual context. To do so will be to enhance the liturgy as a whole.”⁶⁵⁶

⁶⁵⁰SVC, *MS*, no 34; cf. GIRM, no 83.

⁶⁵¹CCCB, *Guidelines for Composers of Liturgical Music*, no 33.

⁶⁵²GIRM, no 82.

⁶⁵³CCCB, *Guidelines for Composers of Liturgical Music*, no 32.

⁶⁵⁴CBCEW, “Music and the Liturgy of the Eucharist,” p. 5.

⁶⁵⁵GIRM, no 82.

⁶⁵⁶K. Harmon, *The Ministry of Music*, p. 65.

1.3.4.4 Hymns

The term ‘hymn,’ deriving from the Latin *hymnus* which itself is a derivative of the Greek *hymnos*, means to sing. Thus, according to St. Augustine, a hymn is a song with God’s praise. Like Augustine, the earliest Christian authors understood the notion of a hymn as a general term that embraced the psalms, the doxologies, the canticles and other kinds of songs in praise of God. Praise of God here must be understood in an inclusive way. God can be really praised in His saints and in all His creation. A hymn to a saint is thus a song of praise to God. Even one’s personal encounter and relationship with God can form the theme of a hymn but then, the text must be so universalized that the gathered community, situating their individual experiences of God in it, will be able to sing the text with authenticity and with assent.⁶⁵⁷ A hymn, strictly speaking, is also distinguishable by other characteristic features; its lyric, for instance, is a sequence of words ruled by “metre or rhythm, with or without rhyme, or, at least, by a symmetrical arrangement of the stanzas.”⁶⁵⁸ In most hymns, the theme or the logic of thought is developed sequentially along the stanzas, from the first to the last. This is why every hymn “needs to be given full scope to deliver its meaning. One cannot eliminate stanzas without threatening the integrity of the text.”⁶⁵⁹ And because of the strophic nature of a hymn, it can easily be sung congregationally since the same melody is applicable to all the stanzas.

In the Western or Latin hymnody, there are different levels of classification. First of all, we have liturgical and non-liturgical or devotional hymns. Under liturgical hymnody, some belong to the liturgy of the Mass and can be found in the Missal or the Gradual. Others which are located in the Breviary or the Antiphonary are meant for the liturgy of the Hours. Non-liturgical hymnody also comprises two kinds; either it is intended for song or is meant only for silent private devotion, meditation, and prayer.⁶⁶⁰ For our purpose here, we shall consider liturgical hymns used for Mass which are basically two. The first is the *Gloria* which, as part of the liturgical rite, is universally legislated. The second is the hymn of thanksgiving after the reception of Holy Communion which is optional depending on local legislation and necessity. It is optional within the Mass because it can also be done “after the celebration, if possible by staying behind to pray for a suitable time.”⁶⁶¹ These two hymns are sung without the accompaniment of any other liturgical action. As the third, however, we can also add the processional hymns or songs which accompany other liturgical actions in the liturgy and which we shall discuss separately in the next subheading.

⁶⁵⁷Ibid., p. 33.

⁶⁵⁸C. Blume, “Hymn,” [in:] *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910), vol 7, accessed on 18.03.2022, <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07595a.htm>

⁶⁵⁹K. Harmon, *The Ministry of Music*, p. 33.

⁶⁶⁰C. Blume, “Hymn,” [in:] *The Catholic Encyclopedia*.

⁶⁶¹CDWDC, *Inaestimabile Donum*, no 17.

a) *Gloria in Excelsis Deo – Glory to God in the Highest*

According to GIRM, *Gloria* “is a most ancient and venerable hymn by which the Church, gathered in the Holy Spirit, glorifies and entreats God the Father and the Lamb.”⁶⁶² It has been called ‘the Angelic Hymn’ because it begins with a scriptural text (Lk. 2:13-14) of the angelic proclamation at the birth of Christ. To distinguish it from *Glory be...* (little doxology) which normally ends the psalm prayers, it is also referred to as ‘the Great Doxology.’⁶⁶³ And as it became originally the Church’s festive and morning hymn of thanksgiving to the Holy Trinity during the Liturgy of the Hours, the title “Morning Hymn” found in the *Codex Alexandrinus* was also used for it.⁶⁶⁴ Around the 4th century, there were strong reactions against private psalms (non-biblical psalms composed by private persons) used as Church hymns which, popular in the 2nd and 3rd centuries, have turned out to be means of propagating heresies. The only two that survived the critical attacks were the *Gloria* and *Te Deum*. And though their composition was not based on rhythmic and metrical principles because they were written as psalms, “it would be difficult to find in any Liturgy a more beautiful example of poetry than our *hymnus angelicus*.”⁶⁶⁵

We earlier mentioned that *Gloria* which is an amplification of praise and petition is actually a continuation of the *Kyrie*. Though it can be recited, it is more suitable to sing the *Gloria* just as the song ‘Happy Birthday to you.’ Apart from being a hymn by nature, its use only in the context of great solemnity requires singing.⁶⁶⁶ Currently, GIRM recommends that the *Gloria* “is intoned by the priest or, if appropriate, by a cantor or by the choir; but it is sung either by everyone together, or by the people alternately with the choir, or by the choir alone... it is sung or said on Sundays outside advent and Lent, and also on Solemnities and feasts, and at particular celebrations of a more solemn character.”⁶⁶⁷ The alternation could be also between two choirs or between the choir and the cantors.⁶⁶⁸ In the *NCIHB*, all the musical settings of *Gloria* are in the form of through-composed except one which has the chorus and verse form. Over time, the people have got used to them and join the choir in singing them. Most of the current versions of this *Gloria* which may not be found in the hymn book are in the form of chorus/refrain and verse. Occasionally, in some places, a paraphrased or shortened version of the original text of *Gloria* had been preferred and

⁶⁶²GIRM, no 53.

⁶⁶³J. McClintock, J. Strong, “Gloria in Excelsis,” [in:] *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological and Ecclesiastical Literature*, accessed on 18.03.2022, <https://www.studylight.org/encyclopedias/eng/mse/g/gloria-in-excelsis.html>

⁶⁶⁴Cf. M. B. Hellriegel, *The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*, (St. Louis: Pio Decimo Press, 1944), p. 26; C. Kelly, “Gloria,” [in:] *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, accessed on 18.03.2022, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/philosophy-and-religion/christianity/christianity-general/gloria>

⁶⁶⁵A. Fortescue, “Gloria in Excelsis Deo,” [in:] *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1909), vol 6, accessed on 18.03.2022, <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/06583a.htm>

⁶⁶⁶L. Deiss, *The Mass*, p. 25.

⁶⁶⁷GIRM, no 53.

⁶⁶⁸*Ordo Cantus Missae (OCM)*, no 3.

used for singing. This is not correct and should be discouraged by the Episcopal Conferences in accordance with the stipulation of GIRM which states that “the text of this hymn may not be replaced by any other.”⁶⁶⁹

b) Hymn of Thanksgiving after Communion

“When the distribution of communion is over, if appropriate, the priest and faithful pray quietly for some time. If desired, a psalm or other canticle of praise or a hymn may also be sung by the whole congregation.”⁶⁷⁰ When the option of a hymn is chosen, it is better to timely end the communion chant.⁶⁷¹ This has been the ancient practice of the Church. During this crucial moment, as many Patristic Fathers did, the element of thanksgiving to God was specially emphasized. This tradition was then more strongly practised in the Eastern liturgy than in the West. St. John Chrysostom rebuked those who did not have time for thanksgiving after Communion which St. Augustine understood as the last part of the Mass.⁶⁷²

The Liturgy Office of CBCEW rightly observed that the theme for the hymn of thanksgiving does not only have to be thanksgiving to God for the immeasurable gift of Jesus received at Communion but can also be praise and thanksgiving for the wonderful works accomplished by God through creation, redemption and sanctification.⁶⁷³ This knowledge must always guide our choice of hymns; those ones meant for adoration or directly addressed to Christ which many have wrongly selected in the past should be avoided. And because this tradition of thanksgiving after Communion was completely neglected for some past centuries, there is an inadequate repertoire of appropriate hymns which needs to be augmented with new compositions. Such compositions are better if they have objective and timeless character, independent of the liturgical season but only related in content to this moment of thanksgiving. Apart from a hymn, other musical forms such as verse and refrains and *ostinato* chants can be used. A cantor, a *schola* or a full choir, on behalf of the faithful, can also perform but occasionally. And even instrumental music, especially organ music, is also appropriate.⁶⁷⁴

As in the stipulation of GIRM quoted above, both the priest and the faithful are expected to participate in this prayer or hymn of thanksgiving. As such, it ought to begin when the distribution of Holy Communion and the purification of the sacred vessels are over and must not be interrupted by other activities like announcements or collections. In most parishes in Igboland,

⁶⁶⁹GIRM, no 53.

⁶⁷⁰Ibid., no 88;

⁶⁷¹Ibid. no 86.

⁶⁷²I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 345.

⁶⁷³Cf. CBCEW, “Music and the Liturgy of the Eucharist,” p. 7; CCC, no 1360.

⁶⁷⁴I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, pp. 348-349.

unfortunately, this regulation is rarely observed even after repeated corrections. Most choirs keep singing the processional songs up to the moment the presider is ready to say the prayer after Communion, giving no room for either silence or a hymn of thanksgiving. But when pastors with the members of the Parish Liturgy Commission appreciate the necessity for a proper demarcation between communion songs and a post-communion hymn, and wisely instruct their parishioners in their individual parishes, a positive change will be possible in the different dioceses.

1.3.4.5 *Psalms*

The use of psalms in Christian Churches has its beginnings in the Jewish liturgical tradition. As part and parcel of the worship in the synagogues and temples, the Book of Psalms was used both as the psalter and songbook from where all poetic texts and songs were taken. Though recited as readings occasionally, psalms, by their nature as songs of praise, were sung in Jewish worship or at least, cantillated or monotoned.⁶⁷⁵ Of the three major methods used, the first was in alternation between a soloist and the choir or congregation which, later in Christian liturgy, became known as *responsorial* psalmody. While the reader or psalmist sings the verses (V), the congregation sings the antiphon (A) which was also called the refrain or the responsory. The format is A (by the cantor) A (by the congregation) V₁ (cantor) A (Congregation) V₂ A... and so on. The second method where verses were alternated between two choirs was called the *antiphonal* psalmody. The format is A (always by both choirs) V₁ (choir 1) V₂ (choir 2) V₃ (choir 1) V₄ (choir 2)...A or A (both choirs) V₁ V₂ A V₃ V₄ A...A. In the third method which is rare and is referred to as the *direct* psalmody, the psalm verses were sung through to the end by the psalmist without any form of alternation or antiphonal repetition. The congregation just listens.⁶⁷⁶ Specifically, J. M. Joncas called this form of direct psalmody “Solo direct” as against what he referred to as “Choir direct” or “Assembly direct.”⁶⁷⁷ The choice of method is determined by many factors. GILH says:

Different psalms may be sung in different ways for a fuller grasp of their spiritual meaning and beauty. The choice of ways is dictated by the literary genre or length of each psalm, by the language used, whether Latin or the vernacular, and especially by the kind of celebration, whether individual, with a group, or with a congregation.⁶⁷⁸

⁶⁷⁵Cf. CDWDS, *GILH*, no 121.

⁶⁷⁶Cf. Sr. Marietta, *Singing the Liturgy*, pp. 76-78; Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia, “Psalmody,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2020, accessed on 04.05.2021, <https://www.britannica.com/art/psalmody>; L. Montgomery, “Singing Psalms in the New Millennium,” accessed on 04.05.2021, <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.544.7093&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

⁶⁷⁷For explanations, see J. M. Joncas, “Musical Elements in the *Ordo Missae* of Paul VI,” [in:] A. J. Chupungco (ed.), *Handbook for Liturgical Studies: The Eucharist*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1999), vol 3, p. 223.

⁶⁷⁸CDWDS, *GILH*, no 103.

As a Jew, Jesus himself prayed and sang psalms as poems of praise to His Father, a fact which became “a compelling reason for the use of psalmody in liturgical celebrations, also a practice common in the early church.”⁶⁷⁹ Added to this reason is their variety and unique characteristics.⁶⁸⁰ The apostle Paul admonished the first Christian faithful to sing psalms in praise and thanksgiving to God through Christ (Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:18-20). Tertullian, like other Patristic Fathers, confirmed that in Christian assemblies, “the Scriptures are read, the psalms are sung, sermons are preached.”⁶⁸¹ In fact, the Jewish psalmody which was adopted both in the East and the West by the early Christian Church gave birth to the different Christian chants including the Gregorian, Ambrosian and Byzantine chants. While the methods of singing psalms in the early church did not differ much from the Jewish methods, the Christological interpretation given to the psalms did. “The Fathers of the Church saw the whole psalter as a prophecy of Christ and the Church and explained it in this sense; for the same reason the psalms have been chosen for use in the liturgy.”⁶⁸² In the Latin tradition of psalmody, three major elements contributed significantly to a better understanding of the psalms and their function as Christian prayer. They are: the captions (with quotations added), psalm-prayers, and especially the antiphons.⁶⁸³ These psalms feature eminently in all the Offices of the Liturgy of the Hours, but we shall concentrate here in their use at Mass. In Igboland, some of these psalms have been composed as songs to be used during the processions at Mass. Examples are Ps. 22/23 – *Chukwu bu Onye Nche M* (The Lord Is My Shepherd); Ps. 50 – *Meerem Ebere, O Chineke* (Have Mercy on Me, O Lord); Ps. 99 – *Bilienu Kwebenu Ukwe Anuri* (Arise and Sing a Hymn of Joy).

a) *Responsorial Psalm (Gradual)*

GIRM lucidly states that the responsorial psalm, an independent rite or act, is an integral part of the Liturgy of the Word which fosters meditation on God’s Word as mentioned in chapter one. Its liturgical and pastoral importance is such that songs or hymns may never be used to replace it.⁶⁸⁴ It is a responsorial psalm not only because it has a response but also, it is a response to the proclaimed Word of God preceding it and which announces and actualizes the wondrous deeds of God among us.⁶⁸⁵ Although it is related more intentionally by similarity of text, mood or content to the first reading, many authors, according to K. Harmon, have actually argued that the

⁶⁷⁹E. Pike, “The Place of Psalms in Liturgy,” *Obscultia*, vol 9, issue 1, 2016, p. 99.

⁶⁸⁰Cf. CDWDS, *GILH*, no 121.

⁶⁸¹Pope Pius XII, *MSD*, no 10.

⁶⁸²CDWDS, *GILH*, no 109.

⁶⁸³*Ibid.*, no 110. For the explanation of these elements, see nos 111-113.

⁶⁸⁴GIRM, no 61; cf. no 37.

⁶⁸⁵Cf. P. Inwood, “Psalm Singing in Roman Catholic Liturgy,” accessed on 19.03.2022, <http://ismreview.yale.edu/article/psalm-singing-in-roman-catholic-liturgy/>

responsorial psalm responds to more than just the first reading. For Peter Purdue and Jean-Pierre Prevost, it connects the first reading and the gospel while for Irene Nowell, it does the more difficult task of linking the second reading to the other two.⁶⁸⁶

As currently done in most places, we always use the responsorial method in Igboland. Here, the psalmist chants the refrain or the response which the rest of the congregation repeats. While the verses are taken one after the other, the response follows after each verse. The responsorial psalm especially and its verses are supposed to be rendered in a simple, audible and comprehensible manner, admitting of no complexity in its musical setting. This will ensure the active participation of the congregation, at least, in the response which is the most important part of this chant from the perspective of prayer.⁶⁸⁷ Having treated the functions of a psalmist in chapter two of this work, it will not be necessary to repeat the points already mentioned. We have also mentioned the fact that psalms can alternatively be sung as thanksgiving after Communion. We shall now proceed to the last usage of psalms at Mass namely, as antiphons.

b) Antiphons

The Propers of the Mass are traditionally six in number. They include the Introit, the Offertory and the Communion chants. Others are the Responsorial Psalm (Gradual), Alleluia (Tract) and Sequence. Because they constitute a rite or act in itself wherever they occur in the liturgy, the last three significantly differ from the first three which only serve to accompany other rites.⁶⁸⁸ Belonging to our present subheading are the first three. Antiphon is from the Greek *antiphonon* (similar root with Latin *antiphona* or French *antienne*) which means sounding against, singing opposite or alternate chant. With this etymology, the Catholic encyclopaedia describes antiphon as commonly consisting of one or more psalm verses or scriptural text which is sung or recited before and after each psalm and the Magnificat during the Liturgy of the Hours. Its major purpose is to provide “the key to the liturgical and mystical meaning of the psalm with regard to the feast on which it occurs.”⁶⁸⁹ It served the same purpose at Mass in the early Church where it was also applied in a wider sense of the term to serve as chants for the Entrance, Offertory and Communion processions. Here, the antiphon is sung before and after each verse of the psalm in an antiphonal way by alternating choirs. One choir sang the refrain or the antiphon between the verses sung by the second choir, resulting in such a musical form as A V₁ A V₂ ...A.

⁶⁸⁶Cf. K. Harmon, *The Ministry of Music*, pp. 48-49.

⁶⁸⁷Sr. Marietta, *Singing the Liturgy*, p. 166.

⁶⁸⁸Cf. *Ibid*, no 37a&b.

⁶⁸⁹J. Otten, “Antiphon,” [in:] *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1907), vol 1, accessed on 19.03.2022, <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01575b.htm>

1.3.4.6 Processional Songs

Procession could be understood as the movement of a people from one place to another in a specific order and for a specific purpose. As described in many Scriptural passages and applied today in the context of the Church, procession designates the movement of the entire religious community, clergy and the laity, with chants and prayers, to an appointed destination. In this ecclesial sense, processions are always symbolic in meaning, pointing ultimately “to our ongoing journey toward God and toward the heavenly Jerusalem.”⁶⁹⁰ One can distinguish between liturgical processions in which the rite, prayers and chants are stipulated in the liturgical books and non-liturgical processions such as May processions in honour of the Mother of God. In liturgical processions, there are two kinds: the ordinary and the extraordinary processions. Ordinary processions are associated with specific annual feast days of the universal Church such as Candlemas, Palm Sunday and *Corpus Christi*. They can also be held on other days chosen in accordance with the customs of the local Churches. Extraordinary processions, on the other hand, are approved by the bishop for a special purpose or occasion such as the solemn transfer of relics or organized prayer in times of disaster.⁶⁹¹

Processions have also been part of the Eucharistic Sacrifice of the Mass. According to L. Deiss, the four major processions at Mass and their accompanying songs mark the different modes of Christ’s presence in the Eucharist. The Entrance procession by the priest who represents Christ marks the presence of Christ in the community where two or three are gathered in His name. As the Liturgy of the Word culminates in the Gospel, the presence of Christ in His Word is marked by the procession with the Book of the Gospel. In the Eucharist which is the highest point of the entire Eucharistic celebration, His presence is marked by two processions, at the beginning and at the end. We bring our gifts of bread and wine to the altar during the Offertory procession and partake of the gift of the Body and Blood of Christ during the Communion procession.⁶⁹² With this background, let us now concentrate on the chants accompanying the various processions we make at Mass which, apart from their specific purposes, are also meant to remind us of our earthly pilgrimage towards our final destination in heaven.

As for the chants, we can use psalms or antiphons as mentioned in our previous discussion. Because these antiphons are scriptural and liturgical texts found in liturgical books for the Eucharistic celebration, it is certainly preferable to use them. They are, properly speaking,

⁶⁹⁰D. C. Smolarski, “Are Processions Really Necessary during Mass,” accessed on 19.03.2022, <https://saginaw.org/sites/default/files/2018-03/week7.pdf>

⁶⁹¹B. I. Mullahy, “Processions: Religious,” [in:] *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, accessed on 19.03.2022, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/processions-religious>; Cf. Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia, “Procession,” [in:] *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2020, accessed on 19.03.2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/procession>

⁶⁹²L. Deiss, *Visions of Liturgy and Music for a New Century*, pp. 118-120.

liturgical music. In singing them, we sing the Mass which is a better option than just singing at Mass. This is an argument many scholars have rightly adduced.⁶⁹³ In Latin, these antiphons and their Gregorian chants are found in the *Graduale Romanum* or *Graduale Simplex* and those with the basic knowledge of plainchant and Latin (*schola*) can gradually master them with effort and sing them with understanding.⁶⁹⁴ This is not so for the majority of the congregation with little or no knowledge of Latin and plainchant. For them to participate actively, it is, thus, necessary for an approved translation and simple composition of the text in the native language. Such compositions can be in the responsorial form or verse-refrain.

In Igboland, for instance, some choirs and choirmasters do not even know about the existence of these official liturgical books for the choir. Again, the problem of correct translation and the variable nature of the texts of the Proper pose a big challenge to composers who are mainly amateurs. And when composed, the choirs and the congregation are faced with the problem of constantly learning new melodies for each Eucharistic celebration. But through her competent members, however, the LMC can help by using officially approved translation of the texts to compose simple melodies on monthly basis to be published in the diocesan bulletins which parishes can easily access, learn and, possibly, rehearse with the congregation as already suggested. The Commission can even work towards the production of a booklet containing these simple melodies for the three-year cycle of the liturgical year. This will promote uniformity of liturgical music in the dioceses and offer great assistance to choirs and choirmasters that need it. *Musicam Sacram* states that “it is desirable that the assembly of the faithful should participate in the songs of the Proper as much as possible, especially through simple responses and other suitable settings.”⁶⁹⁵ This applies especially in sung Masses but also in read Masses. The rehearsal with the congregation solely aims at achieving this objective. In the alternative, however, the Church allows for the possibility of occasionally using hymns or songs to accompany the processions under specified conditions:

The custom legitimately in use in certain places and widely confirmed by indults, of substituting other songs for the songs given in the Graduale for the Entrance, Offertory and Communion, can be retained according to the judgment of the competent territorial authority, as long as songs of this sort are in

⁶⁹³Cf. D. Galles, “Hymns at Mass: Some Observations on What We Sing in Church,” accessed on 19.03.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/hymns-at-mass-some-observations-on-what-we-sing-in-church-1255>; J. Ostrowski, “Can Hymns Replace the Propers during Mass?” accessed on 19.03.2022, <https://www.ccwatershed.org/2012/03/15/everything-you-ever-wanted-know-about-hymns-part-2/>

⁶⁹⁴Cf. The editors, “Communion Antiphon with Psalms,” *Adoremus*, vol XIII, no 5, 2007, accessed on 19.03.2022, <https://adoremus.org/2007/07/communion-antiphon-with-psalms/>

⁶⁹⁵SVC, *MS*, no 33.

keeping with the parts of the Mass, with the feast or with the liturgical season. It is for the same territorial authority to approve the texts of these songs.⁶⁹⁶

Because of the ‘four-hymn syndrome’ allowed since after the liturgical reform of Vatican II Council in the case of Low Masses, some people have passionately taken to the misplaced priority of completely discarding the Proper of the Mass in favour of the hymns or songs even in Sung Masses. According to S. J. Schuler, this practice has greatly destroyed the notion of the liturgical year to which *SC* devoted a whole chapter. Since the hymn texts have replaced the proper liturgical texts which are meant to set the tone for the feast or establish the liturgical season, every Mass and every season have become the same.⁶⁹⁷ Deliberating further on the issue which has become a general phenomenon in different countries including Nigeria, the Committee on the Liturgy for the American Bishops added:

In fact, many of the faithful interpret singing the liturgy to mean singing hymns or songs. Thus, those involved in liturgical preparation oftentimes confine themselves to the selection of hymns as their first priority and neglect the singing of ritual texts. The Committee noted that this is not the result that the Church intended. Indeed, we might add it frustrates one major conciliar reform—opening up more of the treasure of the scriptures to the People of God.⁶⁹⁸

In Igboland, one can also notice the effect of this syndrome. Almost half of the liturgical songs in *NCIHB* are devoted to the processions at Mass. But since the processions are long enough, especially at the Offertory and Communion, the researcher sees no harm in combining the two options, beginning with the antiphon with its verse(s) and ending with appropriately selected hymns or songs.⁶⁹⁹ Examples of the songs for the Entrance procession include: *Anyi G’eye N’ihu Chineke* – We Shall Go Before the Creator God; *Jesu Kristi Isi Idi Aso* – Jesus Christ the Source of Holiness; *Anyi Etobe Gi* – We Praise You. For the Offertory, we have *Nye Chineke Onyinye* – Give Gifts to God; *Nara Onyinye Anyi* – Receive Our Gifts; *Onye na-enye Onyinye N’obi Ocha* – He Who Gives with a Pure Heart; *Christi Ukochukwu Ebebe* – Christ the High Priest. As Communion songs, we use *Jesu Nnoo* – Welcome Jesus; *Abum Achicha Di Ndu* – I Am the Bread of Life; *O Nwere Ihunanya Di Ka Nkea* – Is There Any Love Greater Than This? Lastly, for the

⁶⁹⁶Ibid., nos 32 & 36.

⁶⁹⁷R. J. Schuler, “Sacred Music and the Liturgical Year,” accessed on 20.03.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/sacred-music-and-the-liturgical-year-11169>; Cf. J. P. Swain, *Sacred Treasure: Understanding Catholic Liturgical Music*, pp. 157-158.

⁶⁹⁸D. Galles, “Hymns at Mass: Some Observations on What We Sing in Church,” accessed on 20.03.2022.

⁶⁹⁹Cf. C. Cicognani, A. Carinci, “Instruction on Sacred Music and the Sacred Liturgy,” *The Furrow*, vol 10, no 1, 1959, p. 50, accessed on 20.03.2022, https://www.jstor.org/stable/27657555?seq=8#metadata_info_tab_contents

dismissal procession, we have: *Pubanu Ndi Otu Kristi* – Go Forth You Christians; *Tobenu Chineke* – Praise the Creator God.

1.3.4.7 Chants between the Readings

Among the Propers of the Mass or chants between the readings, the responsorial psalm and the Alleluia which are scriptural compositions were originally melismatic in their musical settings and sung in a responsorial manner whereas the Sequence which is non-scriptural was usually sung syllabically either by antiphonal or direct method.⁷⁰⁰ The use of Gradual in today's liturgy is extremely rare even though it still remains an option in the modern form of the Roman rite. Having discussed the responsorial psalm and the Alleluia, let us now discuss the Sequence which today, as part of the Mass, only appears on selected days of solemnity.

Originating around the 9th century from the trope to the *jubilus* (long melismatic extension of the last syllable, *a*, of the Alleluia) and reaching a certain level of prominence in the Medieval era, the Sequences used at Mass were meant to serve as musical and meditative extensions of the Alleluia verse. The use of Sequence was not limited to the Mass; it was also used in the Liturgy of the Hours to replace the verse after the responsory which follows one of the longer readings or the hymn at Vespers or Compline. The *Te Deum* remains a prominent example till today. More so, it was used during a procession. Before the Council of Trent, with the exception of Sundays within the period from *Septuagesima* (starting two weeks before Lent) to Easter when the Tract was usually used, a proper Sequence was employed for almost every Sunday and holyday of the year in certain places in the Latin Church.⁷⁰¹ But for the purpose of liturgy, the limitless number of Sequences was reduced to only four in the 1570 Roman Missal namely: *Victimae Paschali Laudes* – Easter Sunday, *Veni, Sancte Spiritus* – Pentecost Sunday, *Lauda, Sion, Salvatorem* – Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ and *Dies Irae* – Requiem Masses. *Stabat Mater Dolorosa* – Feast of the Seven Sorrows of the Blessed Virgin Mary, as the fifth, was added in 1727 Missal by Pope Benedict XIII.⁷⁰² Today, after the liturgical reforms of SVC, it has become optional to sing the Sequences except on Easter Sunday and on Pentecost Day.⁷⁰³ While the Sequence for the Corpus Christ is recommended, the *Dies irae* and *Stabat mater* can only be used as optional hymns in the Breviary. With its development of the poetic and strophic musical form since the 11th century (x

⁷⁰⁰Cf. C. Tietze, *Hymn Introits for the Liturgical Year*, pp. 19-20.

⁷⁰¹USCCB, "The History and Use of Sequences in the Liturgy," [in:] *NewsLetter*, vol XLVIII, July 2012, p. 26, accessed on 20.03.2022, <https://www.usccb.org/about/divine-worship/newsletter/upload/newsletter-2012-07.pdf>

⁷⁰²D. Friel, "A Mini History of the Sequences," accessed on 20.03.2022, <https://www.ccwatershed.org/2015/05/24/mini-history-sequences/>

⁷⁰³Cf. GIRM, no 64.

aa bb cc...y),⁷⁰⁴ “the Sequence may be sung by all together, or in alternation between the congregation and choir and cantor, or by the choir or cantor alone.”⁷⁰⁵

The normal format for singing the Gospel Acclamation is to introduce the Alleluia which is followed by its verse and concluded by a repeat of the Alleluia. In this format, the Sequence was initially sung between the verse and the concluding Alleluia. A change came with the 1974 *Graduale Romanum* when it was sung only after the concluding Alleluia and omitted if the Alleluia and its verse is not sung.⁷⁰⁶ This position which was also maintained in no. 64 of 2000 GIRM served the purpose of extending the Alleluia verse and acting as a musical accompaniment to the solemn and sometimes, lengthy procession with the Book of the Gospels. But from the 2002 GIRM already, the Sequences are prescribed to be sung before the Alleluia. This maintains the order in which they appear in most printed editions of the Lectionary.⁷⁰⁷

For D. Friel, this present arrangement of singing the Sequence before the Alleluia appears anomalous. It prevents the Sequence from serving as a kind of preamble to the Gospel and separates it also from the Alleluia from where it first drew its life as even suggested by its etymology from the Latin *sequere* which means ‘to follow’⁷⁰⁸ Differently perceived, the USCCB holds that the placement as it is today preserves a stronger tie between the Alleluia and the Gospel. When properly prepared and rendered, the Sequence more deeply inserts the liturgical assembly into the great and central mystery of the day’s celebration in preparation for the Gospel. Sitting in a posture of meditation, the assembly listens to the Sequence but stands when the Alleluia is intoned. Because of the poetic nature of sequences, it is always advisable to offer a little explanation at the beginning of the Mass so that the faithful can be drawn from its rich imagery to a deeper experience of meditation on the mystery being celebrated. A more detailed explanation of its nature and history can also be pasted on the notice board outside the church or published in the bulletin as part of liturgical catechesis.⁷⁰⁹

⁷⁰⁴Cf. M. DeVoto, “Sequence,” [in:] *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2007, accessed on 20.03.2022, <https://www.britannica.com/art/sequence-musical-composition>

⁷⁰⁵USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 166.

⁷⁰⁶*OCM*, no 8.

⁷⁰⁷D. C. Smolarski, *The General Instruction of the Roman Missal, 1969-2002: A Commentary*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2003), p. 30; cf. GIRM, no 64.

⁷⁰⁸D. Friel, “A Mini History of the Sequences,” accessed on 20.03.2022.

⁷⁰⁹USCCB, “The History and Use of Sequences in the Liturgy,” [in:] *NewsLetter*, p. 27, accessed on 20.03.2022; Cf. S. Boyd, “The Pentecost Sequence,” accessed on 20.03.2022, <https://www.catholicvoice.org.au/the-pentecost-sequence/>

1.3.4.8 *The Profession of Faith - Credo*

GIRM explains the purpose of the Creed as a means by which the faithful respond to the Liturgy of the Word. In a formula approved for liturgical use, they are able to confess and pronounce with their lips the great mysteries of the faith they are about to celebrate in the Eucharist.⁷¹⁰ Concerning the singing of the Creed, the Instruction further legislates:

The Creed is to be sung or said by the priest together with the people on Sundays and Solemnities. It may be said also at particular celebrations of a more solemn character. If it is sung, it is begun by the priest or, if this is appropriate, by a cantor or by the choir. It is sung, however, either by all together or by the people alternating with the choir. If not sung, it is to be recited by all together or by two parts of the assembly responding one to the other... At the words '*et incarnatus est*' (*by the power of the Holy Spirit ... became man*) all make a profound bow; but on the Solemnities of the Annunciation and of the Nativity of the Lord, all genuflect.⁷¹¹

The Creed is the habitual form of professing our faith but whenever baptismal promises are to be made or renewed with the sprinkling of holy water as we have on Easter Vigil or when baptism or confirmation is celebrated during Mass, the Creed may be omitted. The renewal of baptismal promises suffices in this case because we profess our faith in it using the Apostles' Creed in the question and answer format. It is important here never to confuse the sprinkling of holy water after renewal of baptismal promises with the blessing and sprinkling of holy water which, taking place at the beginning of the Mass, may replace the penitential rite and the *Kyrie eleison*. If the occasion warrants, however, it is also possible to have the rite of the renewal of baptismal promises together with the Creed.⁷¹² Traditionally, the Nicene Creed is used at Mass whereas the Apostles' Creed which is permitted at Masses for children is also used during baptism and during the renewal of baptismal promises on Easter and at Confirmation. But today, there is freedom of choice to use either the Nicene Creed or the Apostles' Creed on Sundays and Solemnities. And even, the use of the Apostles' Creed is further recommended during the Seasons of Lent and Easter.⁷¹³

Concerning the issue of whether to sing or recite the *Credo* at Mass, there have been divergent opinions. On the one hand, those who support recitation argue that it consumes less time and enhances fuller participation of the people by not excluding those who are less musically

⁷¹⁰GIRM, no 67.

⁷¹¹Ibid., nos 68 and 137.

⁷¹²E. McNamara, "Substituting for the Creed," accessed on 20.03.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/substituting-for-the-creed-4349>

⁷¹³E. Foley, *A Commentary on the Order of Mass of the Roman Missal*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2011), p. 156; cf. D. C. Smolarski, "Why is there a Different Creed Sometimes Used at Mass Now?" accessed on 20.03.2022, <https://saginaw.org/sites/default/files/2018-01/week13.pdf>

talented. Having a non-rhythmic text, they also maintain that recitation is more appropriate for the literary genre. Singing, for them, exaggerates the importance of *Credo*, making it the longest common song. On the other hand, those who uphold the idea of singing the *Credo* are convinced that it is more expressive of the oneness of the faith we profess and helps to eliminate the mumble that often characterizes common recitation by a large community.⁷¹⁴ In all this, the Church is wise in allowing for recitation while recommending singing. *Musicam Sacram* states that “it is preferable that the Creed, since it is a profession of faith, should be sung by all, or in such a way as to permit a fitting participation by the faithful.”⁷¹⁵ Mindful of its lengthy text, the composition of *Credo* must avoid unnecessary repetitions and elaborations so that, without being unduly long, the people can easily join in singing it through. The form of alternate singing or verse-refrain is also appropriate.

In Igboland, *Credo* is rarely recited on Sundays and Solemnities. In Latin, *Credo III* Gregorian chant is so common in all the dioceses that almost everybody knows it off by heart and joins in singing it through at Mass. Local composers have also composed the Latin text using verse-refrain or chorus and verse form. Majority of the compositions are in the vernacular languages and appear in the above-mentioned forms. But in the *NCIHB*, we have four musical settings for the *Credo*. One is in the form of call and response while another has the form of chorus and verse. For the other two in through-composed form, one is harmonized and the other is in a monotone. But the people have learnt the melodies over time and always join the choir in singing them. Because only the Nicene Creed is used, there are yet no compositions with the text of the Apostles’ Creed. It is even doubtful if many know about the possibility of its usage in place of the Nicene Creed.

1.3.4.9 *Silence as Music*

In the history of Western music, silence began to receive more attention as part of music in the 19th century with the works of Beethoven. An author agreed that “what Beethoven introduced most forcefully into Western music was the explosive silence.”⁷¹⁶ From Anton Webern to Morton Feldman in the 20th century, the debate surrounding musical silence continued to progress, reaching its apogee with John Cage whose collection of musical essays is known as *silence*. His piano piece *4’33”* comes to mind whenever the idea of silent music is brought up and “is also the piece most discussed in the academic literature as silent.”⁷¹⁷ For some of these

⁷¹⁴L. Deiss, *Visions of Liturgy and Music for a New Century*, pp. 223-224.

⁷¹⁵SVC, MS, no 34; cf. *OCM* no 11

⁷¹⁶C. Fonseca-Wollheim, “How the Silence Makes the Music,” no 5, accessed on 21.03.2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/02/arts/music/silence-classical-music.html>

⁷¹⁷A. Kania, “Silent Music,” *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, vol 68, 2010, p. 344.

minimalist composers, “music is painting with sound on a canvas of silence.”⁷¹⁸ The researcher does not intend to join in this academic debate for lack of space but rather to emphasize the importance of silence in the better understanding and appreciation of a piece of music and then relate it analogically to the significance of silence as part of music at Mass.

Kathleen Harmon argues that music in the liturgy covers a wider spectrum than song and instrument. She includes as part of music any action involving words such as recitation of prayers and proclamation of texts. For her, “these words need to be musically rendered, spoken with changes in intonation, and with the rhythms of alliteration and assonance, of phrasing, accent, and meter.”⁷¹⁹ But even more important is the inclusion of silence as a significant part of music. From these perspectives, one can view the entire Liturgy of the Mass in its four parts as musical; it could be likened to a symphonic orchestra or a choral symphony which traditionally also consists of four movements. As this musical composition is a combination of musical notes and musical silence (rests), so does the Mass comprise of moments of musical activity and silence.

A cursory look at the musical score of each of the movements of this composition reveals a series of short- or long-range musical rests spread throughout the music. The interplay of musical notes and musical rests precludes the possibility of one section or part performing all the time. The use of musical terms like *solo*, *solis*, *tutti*, *divisi* and unison also creates similar possibilities. For example, a choral section could be performing while the instrumental ensemble is observing their rest. A particular section of the ensemble could be playing when the other section is observing their silence and so on. Apart from the silence of the musical rests which form an organic part of the musical structure, we have what is called the pre-performance and the post-performance silence and the silence which, coming in-between the different movements, is not supposed to be disrupted by the audience. All these moments of silence – the silence out of which music arises and returns to – are part of the music. As Claude Debussy would say, music is the silence between the notes.

The strict observance of these moments of silence where they occur gives meaning and expresses the beauty of music. On the contrary, any form of noise to fill this gap for silence becomes a distraction that destroys the music. The same is applicable at Mass where “structurally, liturgical silence is indispensable to the rhythm of a balanced celebration.”⁷²⁰ Besides the moments of musical activity, the different ministers of the liturgical music have also their individual moments of silence which they ought to observe. But unfortunately, some of these ministers are

⁷¹⁸A. L. Blackwell, *The Sacred in Music*, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999), p.142.

⁷¹⁹K. Harmon, *The Mystery We Celebrate, the Song We Sing: A Theology of Liturgical Music*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2008), p. 74; Cf. W. T. Flynn, “Liturgical Music as Liturgy” [in:] R. A. Leaver, J. Ann Zimmerman (eds.), *Liturgy and Music*. pp. 253-254.

⁷²⁰Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales (CBCEW), *Celebrating the Mass: A Pastoral Introduction*, (London: Catholic Truth Society, 2005), no 92, p. 32.

still operating under the frame of mind that silence is something to be dreaded, drowned or filled up. The organist, for example, wrongly thinks that he must play everything that is sung on the organ in order to be active even when the liturgical rubrics give a contrary instruction as in the case of the ‘presidential prayers.’⁷²¹ The choirmaster who believes he must be busy throughout the Mass utilizes his moments of silence as the time to select hymns, confer with the organist and give instructions to the choir members or instrumentalists. The choir fills up these moments with singing just as the psalmist considers them as the best time to plan for his next performance. And sadly too, for some of the faithful, silent moments are simply time for discussions on private issues etc.⁷²²

Because of the inherent danger to liturgy in these distractions in the form of constant physical activity, it has become necessary to listen anew to the great wisdom of Pope John Paul II who made every effort to correct the misconception of the idea of full, active and conscious participation as promoted by Vatican II Council. While upholding the view that active participation in liturgical worship surely involves activities like gesture, word, song and service, he, nevertheless, emphasized that it “does not preclude the active passivity of silence, stillness and listening: indeed, it demands it. Worshippers are not passive, for instance, when listening to the readings or the homily, or following the prayers of the celebrant, and the chants and music of the liturgy. These are experiences of silence and stillness, but they are in their own profoundly active.”⁷²³

There is also in music what is referred to as a ‘General Pause’ or ‘Grand Pause’ (G.P) which indicates silence for one or more bars for the entire orchestra or ensemble.⁷²⁴ A typical example of full score rest is seen in few bars leading to the end of the famous “Hallelujah Chorus” from Handel’s *Messiah*. In liturgy too, something similar is experienced. At the proper times, silence is to be observed by all.⁷²⁵ It allows the worshipping community to listen and reflect on what it has heard and experienced, and to open its heart to the mystery celebrated.⁷²⁶ Confirming this and mentioning examples of such moments of silence, the GIRM stipulates that its function is dependent on the time it occurs at Mass:

For in the Penitential Act and again after the invitation to pray, individuals recollect themselves; whereas after a reading or after the Homily, all meditate briefly on what has been heard; then after communion, they

⁷²¹Cf. GIRM, no 32; *MS*, no 64.

⁷²²Cf. Francis Cardinal Arinze, *Celebrating the Holy Eucharist*, p. 36.

⁷²³Pope John Paul II, *Address of the Holy Father Pope John Paul II to the Bishops of the Episcopal Conference of the United States of America*, Vatican 1998, no 3, accessed on 21.03.2022.

⁷²⁴E. Gould, *Behind Bars – The Definitive Guide to Music Notation*, (London: Faber Music Limited, 2011) p. 190.

⁷²⁵SVC, *MS*, no 17.

⁷²⁶USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 118.

praise God in their hearts and pray to him. Even before the celebration itself, it is commendable that silence to be observed in the church, in the sacristy, in the vesting room, and in adjacent areas, so that all may dispose themselves to carry out the sacred action in a devout and fitting manner.⁷²⁷

In conclusion, the whole liturgy of the Mass is like a piece of music where musical notes are punctuated by musical silence and the proper combination creates the beauty. In the words of K. Harmon:

What makes a specific celebration of liturgy non-musical is not the absence of song, but the absence of a breathed rhythm of sound and silence that is truly prayerful. Likewise, what makes a liturgy musical is not the presence of song, but the presence of prayer mediated by a rhythm of sound and silence that is musical.⁷²⁸

1.3.4.10 Musical Analysis of Selected Songs

In this chapter, the researcher has used some songs selected from the *NCIHB* as examples. The criterion for selection was based on his judgement as a person who has lived, studied and worked in different parts of Igboland both as a seminarian and a priest; he selected the less complex, more popular and widely used liturgical songs in Igboland. Because of limited space, he has chosen two out of these songs for a brief formal analysis and has transcribed them into staff notation – just the chorus/refrain and one verse. The transcription is done in the same key G major in accordance with the guiding principle in the Institute of Musicology in John Paul II Catholic University, Lublin.

⁷²⁷GIRM, no 45.

⁷²⁸K. Harmon, *The Mystery We Celebrate, the Song We Sing: A Theology of Liturgical Music*, p. 74.

a) *Onye na-enye Onyinye N'obi Ocha – He Who Gives with a Pure Heart*

Onye na-enye Onyinye N'obi Ocha
Ten, który daje z pogodnym sercem

Paulinus Umeh

O - nye nae-nyeo - nyi-nye n'o - bi o-cha Chi - ne - ke n'a - hu ya n'a-nya

5 we - rea - nu - ri bu - teo - nyi - nye n'i - huo - che - ze Ya Chi - ne - ke O - nyeo - nyi - nye ga -

8 Verses
enye kwa gi mma-ji 1. O - tu - tu ngo - zi d'i - che iche ka O nye - re gi bu

12 Chi - ne - ke O - nye di u - kwu we - r'a - nu - ri bi - a nye Chukwuzie - ke - le

16 Chi - ne - ke O - nyeo - nyi - nye kwe - si - ri iny'e - ke - le

This is a song with chorus and verse form written by Paulinus Umeh who is the biological father of the researcher. The chorus is in four parts of homophonic texture and with a simple melodic line and harmonic arrangement. It has eight bars with a combination of quaver, crotchet, dotted crotchet and minim notes. It begins with an interval of perfect fourth and ends in a major third. Other intervals in this song are minor second, major second and major third. The ambitus of this piece is an octave from the tonic. The key of this song which is written in four-four time signature is A major.

The melodies for the chorus and the four verses of this song sound good with a balanced mixture of stepwise motion and melodic leaps which any choir can easily sing. The harmony is in simple chord progression. The visible chords starting from key A major are I, II, III, IV, V, VI and V7. The text of the chorus reads: He who gives with a pure heart is loved by God. Bring your gift with joy before His Kingly throne and God who is the giver of gifts will reward you with abundant gifts. Apart from the fourth verse which is a doxology, the other verses are theological elaborations of giving back to God as a token of our gratitude for God's love and goodness. The song is clearly a song to accompany the offertory procession.

b) *Onyenwanyi Mee Ebere – Lord, Have Mercy*

Onyenwanyi Mee Ebere
Kyrie

Fr. C. Ezenduka

$\text{♩} = 96$

O - nye - nwea - nyi me-ee-be - re mee - be - re O - nye - nwea - nyi me-ee-be -
 11 re e - be - re e-be - r'e - be - re mee - be - re Kri - sti me-ee-be - re
 23 mee - be - re Kri - sti me-ee-be - re e - be - re e-be - r'e be - re mee - be -
 35 re O - nye - nwea - nyi me-ee-be - re mee' - be - re O - nye - nwea - nyi
 46 me-ee - be - re e - be re e - be - ree - be - re mee - be re

This musical piece is the first part of Msgr. Ezenduka's cyclic Mass called *Missa Chukwuemeka*. The key of this piece which is written in three-four time signature and meant to be sung by all in unison is D major. 'Lord have mercy' is sung at the beginning; with the same melody, it is repeated at the end; 'Christ have mercy is sung in-between them with a different melody but quite similar to the melody of 'Lord have mercy.' The notes used are as follows: crotchet, minim and dotted minim. The ambitus of this Ordinary of the Mass is major sixth from the mediant but the intervals in the composition include major and minor seconds, major and minor thirds and perfect fourth. The melody is a mixture of stepwise and skipwise motions in a manner that is so easy to sing. The skipwise motion in bar 8 is particularly significant to emphasize the 'Lord have mercy.' The structure of the composition gives room for a dialogue between the cantor or choir and the people; the people can join in the second part of each acclamation when the cantor or choir alone would have sung the first part.

Summary

Just as Pope Pius XI differentiated between praying at Mass and praying the Mass, Fr. P. Schineller has also highlighted the distinction between singing at or during the Mass and singing the Mass. For him, we are meant to sing the Mass; we can do this by ensuring that we sing the important parts of the Mass, giving a higher priority to the acclamations in response to the priest than to the entrance or Communion hymn. Commenting on this, E. McNamara added to the list of

what should ideally be sung, for instance, the greeting, responses and the presidential prayers. He also mentioned the responsorial psalm, the people's invocation to the universal prayer, the Lord's prayer, the Lamb of God and the final blessing.⁷²⁹ The sublimity and dignity of the Holy Mass do not admit of any form of haste that sometimes leads to recitation rather than singing of the Mass. A priest does not need to spend much more time than necessary during homily only to recite the rest of the Mass to recover time; worse still is to recite the Mass in order to save time for other non-liturgical programs which A. B. C. Chiegboka together called the "third liturgy (liturgy of the fundraising)."⁷³⁰ The above forms of liturgical music and the various forms of participation during the Mass formed the third part of our discussion in this chapter.

In the first part, we considered the notion of the Eucharist which remains the mystery of mysteries and according to Pope Benedict XVI, "the mystery of faith par excellence."⁷³¹ We briefly discussed the institution of the Eucharist and its matter and form; we also considered the Eucharist as a sacrament, as a meal, as a real presence and as a sacrifice. In the second part, we discussed the different modes of preparation for the Eucharistic celebration as it concerns especially the ministers of liturgical music. When appropriate songs have been selected, necessary practices and rehearsals follow; in all this, punctuality is key just as some meditative silence before the Mass finally gets us ready to encounter Christ. The better and more serious these preparations, the greater and more fruitful our participation.

⁷²⁹E. McNamara, "What About 1967's Musicam Sacram"

⁷³⁰Cf. A. B. C. Chiegboka, *50th Anniversary of Vatican II Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, p. 23.

⁷³¹Pope Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, no 6.

CHAPTER FOUR: Music in the Other Sacraments and in the Liturgical Year

Having explored how liturgical music helps to reap abundant fruits out of the solemn celebration and active participation in the sacrament of Holy Eucharist, we wish to extend our discussion to the remaining sacraments. We shall also consider the celebration of these sacraments in the context of the liturgical year.

1.1 Music in the Other Sacraments

As already discussed, the Eucharist which is the consummation of spiritual life begun at baptism is the end of the sacramental system.⁷³² All the other sacraments are related to the Eucharist in an organic and dynamic way and in order that this relationship may be clearly seen and a greater number of the faithful participate in them, most of these sacraments are celebrated within the context of the Eucharist, sometimes on Sunday.⁷³³ When this is so, the basic principles guiding the use of musical forms within the celebration of the Mass as discussed in the previous chapter largely apply. Having said that, let us also mention that each of these sacraments has its peculiar texts and some chants which are contained in the ritual book for its celebration just as we have the texts and chants of the Eucharist in the Roman Missal. These texts and chants indicate, at least, the nature of what should be considered an appropriate text or music for these rites. In situations as it is where many of the prescribed texts have no accompanying chants, the chant forms in the Roman Missal can serve as appropriate guides, both for the priest celebrant and the faithful. What is most important above all, as G. D. Gill further added, is that “pastors and liturgical musicians should make every effort to ensure that singing takes place in these celebrations as well as in the many rites that belong to the Order of each of the Sacraments... If we are typically singing the Eucharist well, and with Sunday singing as our norms, then both for the clergy and faithful, singing the Sacraments should also soon become the norm.”⁷³⁴ In this chapter, we shall discuss the use of liturgical music in the celebration of these sacraments, either within or outside the Mass. Beginning from the Sacraments of Christian Initiation (Baptism and Confirmation), we move to the Sacraments at the Service of Communion (Ordination and Matrimony) before we end with the Sacraments of Healing (Penance and Pastoral Care of the Sick) which involve less use of liturgical music in their communal celebrations.

⁷³²Cf. T. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Part III Qu. 63, art. 6.

⁷³³Cf. *The Order of Baptism for Children OBC*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2020), no 9.

⁷³⁴G. D. Gill, *Music in Catholic Liturgy*, (Chicago: Hillenbrand Books, 2009), p. 85.

1.1.1 *The Sacrament of Baptism*

A person is fully initiated into the Roman Catholic Church after the reception of the three sacraments of Christian initiation – Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist. Baptism is the first of these sacraments by which one is freed from the power of darkness and joined to the mystery of Christ’s death, burial and resurrection. A baptized person, freed from sin and incorporated into the Church as an adopted child of God and a member of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, participates in the royal priesthood of Christ and is able to join in the celebration of the Eucharist which is the memorial of Christ’s death and resurrection.⁷³⁵ General introduction to the Rite of Christian Initiation underscores the necessity for music in the celebration of this dignified sacrament of faith. It states that “the celebration of baptism is greatly enhanced by the use of song, which stimulates in the participants a sense of their unity, fosters their praying together, and expresses the joy of Easter that should permeate the whole rite. The conference of bishops should therefore encourage and help specialists in music to compose settings for those liturgical texts particularly suited to congregational singing.”⁷³⁶ Though many aspects of the rite of Baptism could be performed in singing, it is unfortunate that in many places including Igboland, the Sacrament of Baptism is celebrated with the least solemnity, especially when it takes place outside Mass. Nothing, or at best, one song is rendered at the end of the baptismal rite. Such a situation needs to change for the better. We shall now look at those aspects of the rite we are encouraged to sing or accompany with singing, beginning with adult initiation.

1.1.1.1 *The Initiation of Adults*

The process of Adult Initiation by which adult converts to the Catholic faith are admitted into the Church after a series of liturgical rites is organized under four periods and three steps. The first step is to accept and receive them as catechumens after expressing their intention to follow Christ at the end of a non-fixed Period of Evangelization and Pre-catechumenate. The Church accomplishes this through the Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens which is often celebrated during Sunday Mass. It simply consists in the reception of the candidates and the celebration of God’s Word; when the candidates are thereafter dismissed, the celebration of the Eucharist may then follow.⁷³⁷ To celebrate this rite which also grants the catechumens some ecclesial rights and liturgical privileges,⁷³⁸ it is fitting that the entire Christian community, or at

⁷³⁵Cf. CCC, nos 1212-1213.

⁷³⁶Liturgy Office England & Wales, *Christian Initiation, General Introduction*, no 33, accessed on 23.03.2022, <https://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/Rites/CIGI.pdf>

⁷³⁷*RCIA: Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (Study Edition)*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1988), no 44.

⁷³⁸For details, see *Ibid.*, no 47.

least, a section of it, comprising the priest or the deacon, the catechist, the sponsors, friends, relatives and neighbours, takes an active part in it.⁷³⁹ As singing enhances such an active participation in liturgy, it is appropriate to find simple ways to sing the responses, antiphons, psalms, acclamations, and other songs during the Reception of the Candidates so that all can easily join. The Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) mentions the key moments apt for singing during this first step.⁷⁴⁰ Since baptism, by which we die to sin and rise to new life, recalls and re-enacts the paschal mystery itself, the musical setting of the songs and psalms for its celebration must greatly reflect the joy of the resurrection, particularly when the celebration is to take place on a Sunday or during the Easter Vigil.⁷⁴¹

After the first period and the first step of the adult initiation comes the second period which is the period of the Catechumenate. The rites belonging to this period are the celebrations of the Word of God, minor exorcisms and the blessings of the catechumens (the anointing of the catechumens is optional).⁷⁴² The foremost among these rites is the celebration of the Word of God and there, the use of liturgical music is very significant. While a suitable song is used to open the celebration, responsorial psalms are also sung after the readings. “With this celebration of the Word of God, the catechumens are introduced to the formative role of singing the Liturgy and are thus instructed to more fully participate in singing the Sunday Eucharist.”⁷⁴³ This second period is closed by the Rite of Election or Enrolment of Names which is the second step of Christian initiation. A suitable psalm or song can accompany the rite of the enrollment of names, especially if the number of the catechumens to sign the Book of the Elect is many. The RCIA recommends Ps. 16 or Ps. 33 with such a refrain as, ‘Happy the people the Lord has chosen to be his own.’⁷⁴⁴

The rite of election just discussed begins the third period – The Period of Purification and Enlightenment – which customarily coincides with the season of Lent. Marking this period are the liturgical celebrations of the Scrutinies and the Presentations which effectively bring about this process of purification and enlightenment.⁷⁴⁵ The three scrutinies take place on the Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent respectively. At each scrutiny, a suitable song may be rendered at the end of the rite of exorcism, for example, Psalm 6, 26, 32, 38, 39, 40, 51, 116:1-9, 130, or 142.⁷⁴⁶ Apart from the Scrutinies and the Presentations, this third period is also marked by the Preparation Rites of Holy Saturday. When the elect have assembled for the celebration of these rites, a suitable

⁷³⁹Ibid., no 45.

⁷⁴⁰Cf. Ibid., nos 48, 49, 55, 60 & 67.

⁷⁴¹Liturgy Office England & Wales, *Christian Initiation, General Introduction*, no 6.

⁷⁴²RCIA, no 79.

⁷⁴³G. D. Gill, *Music in Catholic Liturgy*, p. 87.

⁷⁴⁴Ibid., no 132.

⁷⁴⁵Cf. Ibid., no 139.

⁷⁴⁶Cf. Ibid., nos 154, 168 & 175.

opening song is rendered. An appropriate psalm or hymn is also sung between the readings during the liturgy of the Word. And as usual, a dismissal song concludes the celebration.⁷⁴⁷

The third and the last step in the process of adult initiation is the celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation – Baptism, Confirmation and Holy Eucharist – on Easter Vigil. As part of the celebration of Baptism, the Litany of the Saints is sung by the cantors. The faithful join to sing the appropriate responses and acclamations to the different names of the saints and petitions enumerated during this litanic form of prayer. If need be, names of other saints or suitable petitions to the occasion could be added at the proper place.⁷⁴⁸ However, one is not free to change the litanic form of this prayer to any other musical form or substitute it entirely with another song or hymn.⁷⁴⁹ For the blessing of the water for baptism, *RCIA* recommends that the celebrant sings the prayer with the faithful also responding in singing. Their response is, ‘Springs of water, bless the Lord. Give him glory and praise for ever,’ or any other suitable acclamation.⁷⁵⁰ The baptism of each candidate, either by immersion or by pouring of water, is followed by the singing of a short acclamation by the people. Choices can be made from any of the twelve short scriptural acclamations provided in number 595 of Appendix II in *RCIA*.

After the baptismal washing, certain explanatory rites that give expression to the effects of the received sacrament are celebrated. They include: the clothing with the baptismal garment and the presentation of a lighted candle. The anointing with chrism is omitted as the celebration of confirmation is next to follow.⁷⁵¹ Between these two celebrations – baptism and confirmation – the gathered assembly may sing an appropriate song.⁷⁵² Singing of a suitable song is also recommended during the conferral of the sacrament of confirmation.⁷⁵³ On Easter Vigil, after the confirmation of the neophytes, they are led to their places among the faithful before the Renewal of Baptismal Promises. After the renewal and during the sprinkling of blessed baptismal water, the people sing songs that are baptismal in character. An example is the *Vidi Aquam* which is based on Psalm 118 and Ezekiel 47:1-2, 9.⁷⁵⁴ The fourth and the last period is called the period of Postbaptismal Catechesis or Mystagogy. Presently, in Igboland, there are still cases of adult initiation but the number of places where the celebration follows this process of four periods and

⁷⁴⁷For details of the model for the celebration of the Preparation Rites, see *Ibid.*, nos 187-192.

⁷⁴⁸*Ibid.*, no 221.

⁷⁴⁹G. D. Gill, *Music in Catholic Liturgy*, p. 89.

⁷⁵⁰*RCIA*, no 122.

⁷⁵¹*Ibid.*, nos 214 & 216.

⁷⁵²*Ibid.*, no 231.

⁷⁵³*Ibid.*, no 235.

⁷⁵⁴*Ibid.*, no 240; Cf. R. Cabié, P. Jounel, J. Evenou, A. G. Martimort, P. M. Gy, A. Nocent, D. Sicard, *The Church at Prayer: The Sacraments*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1988), vol 3, p. 99.

three steps as described above is very limited and the situation calls for serious consideration on the part of the Bishops and their various Liturgical Commissions.

1.1.1.2 Baptism of Children

The Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith considers infant baptism a serious duty that ought to lead to a pastoral conversation between the pastor and the family.⁷⁵⁵ The parents have the obligation to arrange and prepare for the baptism of their child in the first few weeks of birth, in consultation with their pastor.⁷⁵⁶ As for the time for the celebration, the Introduction to the Order of Baptism for Children (OBC), in line with Can. 856, recommends that it be celebrated at the Easter Vigil or on a Sunday. Baptismal celebration on such a day when the Church commemorates the Lord's Resurrection helps to illustrate its paschal character. However, in spite of its advantages, baptismal celebration on a Sunday should not happen too often.⁷⁵⁷

On another note, when the celebration is to take place outside the Mass, it is preferable to do so before, rather than after, the Mass. The reason is to bring out still the relationship between this sacrament and the Eucharist which is its completion and again, to make it possible for the faithful gathering for the Mass to be part of it. Adequate catechesis is needed for enlightening the faithful to appreciate and accept their collective responsibility to gather and welcome a new member of their domestic family. And since this celebration forms us all into a single Body of Christ, it is advisable to have the baptism of several children on the same day at a common celebration; in the same church, baptism should never be celebrated on the same day more than once. Let us now consider the Rite of baptism for severally children, paying particular attention to the parts involving singing. And whether outside of Mass or within Mass, these essential parts meant for singing are to be sung during the baptismal celebration.⁷⁵⁸ Lack of a well-planned communal celebration of baptism consequently leads to an unsuccessful use of music therein.⁷⁵⁹ It is also worthy to note, as USCCB stressed, that the unique circumstances surrounding children's baptism necessitate that "cantors and other ministers will often need to develop the skill of leading unaccompanied singing."⁷⁶⁰ Such a leader of songs is also meant to help the families in making

⁷⁵⁵Cf. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), *Pastoralis Actio* (Instruction on Infant Baptism), nos 28 & 29.

⁷⁵⁶Cf. *CCL*, (London: Collins Liturgical Publications, 1983), no 867 §1.

⁷⁵⁷*OBC*, no 9.

⁷⁵⁸G. D. Gill, *Music in Catholic Liturgy*, p. 90.

⁷⁵⁹R. Lewinski, "Baptism: Unless a Man Be Born Again..." [in] V. C. Funk (ed.), *Music in Catholic Worship – the NPM Commentary*, p. 144.

⁷⁶⁰USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 207.

proper responses.⁷⁶¹ In Igboland, the only song that is popularly used during the celebration of baptism is *Ekwelu m Nkwa na Mbosi Baptism* (I made a vow on my baptismal day).

1.1.2 *The Sacrament of Confirmation*

By the sacrament of confirmation, a baptized person receives the seal and the gifts of the Holy Spirit and becoming more conformed to Christ and more perfectly bound to the Church, is strengthened to be a true witness of Christ and a strong defender of the faith by word and action.⁷⁶² Being such an important sacrament, the *Rite of Confirmation (RC)* directs that “attention should be paid to the festive and solemn character of the liturgical service.”⁷⁶³ The presence of the bishop for the liturgical celebration makes this an imperative. As G. D. Gill emphasized, “the Sacred Liturgy with the Bishop is the primordial celebration of the Church and this of itself calls for song throughout the course of the rites.”⁷⁶⁴ In Igboland, the coming of the Bishop as the minister of the sacrament has great significance for the local church as it also coincides with his pastoral visit. Both events, all the more, necessitate the solemnization of the Eucharistic celebration. Almost all the parishioners, home and abroad, take active part in its preparation and celebration and the liturgical music committee spares no effort to make the liturgy of the day really splendid.

Since the celebration is always within Mass on Sunday, the music for the liturgy should normally follow the guidelines for Sunday Eucharistic celebration as already explained in the preceding chapter.⁷⁶⁵ Only three rituals that are peculiar to the Liturgy of Confirmation will make the difference. The first is the Profession of Faith at the end of which a suitable song can be chosen to express in a single voice the faith of the community instead of the formula, ‘This is our faith.’⁷⁶⁶ In this case, the music director has to ensure that the candidates learn and join their voices in singing the chosen song. The second is the Laying on of Hands for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit which the bishop accomplishes together with the priests who will minister confirmation with him. The invitation to pray for this intention and the prayer itself are the prerogatives of the bishop alone. And being one of the main presidential prayers of this rite, it is preferable for the bishop to sing them so that the people can also sing the acclamation – ‘Amen.’⁷⁶⁷ The third is the Anointing with Chrism during which a suitable song like *Veni Creator Spiritus* or *Veni Sancte Spiritus* may

⁷⁶¹For the songs, antiphons and psalms to be sung and when to sing them during the baptismal celebration, see *OBC*, nos 35, 42, 46, 48, 52, 54, 59, 60, 69, 71; G. D. Gill, *Music in Catholic Liturgy*, pp. 91-92.

⁷⁶²Cf. *CCC*, no 1285; *RC*, no 2.

⁷⁶³Cf. *Rite of Confirmation* [in:] *The Rites of the Catholic Church*, (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company Inc., 1983), no 4.

⁷⁶⁴G. D. Gill, *Music in Catholic Liturgy*, p. 93.

⁷⁶⁵USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 213.

⁷⁶⁶Cf. *RC*, no 23.

⁷⁶⁷Cf. *RC*, nos 24 & 25.

be sung.⁷⁶⁸ It is also permissible, during this period, to maintain silence or play a soft instrumental music.⁷⁶⁹ In the vernacular, the most widely used songs in *NCIHB* for Confirmation include: *Chukwu Muo Nso* (God the Holy Spirit), *Chukwu Muo Nso Bia Leta Anyi* (Come Holy Spirit and Visit Us).

1.1.3 *The Sacrament of Holy Orders*

Because of the importance of the sacrament of Holy Orders for the life of the particular church, *CCC* states that its celebration which should take place in the cathedral, preferably on Sunday, calls for the participation of the faithful in large numbers and with solemnity appropriate to the occasion.⁷⁷⁰ At the Eucharistic celebration of the sacrament, there is clearly a unique and preeminent manifestation of the Church; the faithful fully participate at the one altar where the bishop as the presider is surrounded by his presbyterate and ministers. Nothing else can call for a greater solemnity. It is, however, left for the Conferences of Bishops to decide how to adapt the rites of ordination for the three degrees of Holy Orders with respect to local circumstances and conditions and for the traditions and genius of the various peoples. In a bid to promote fuller and more active participation, they have the authority, for instance, to approve a list of liturgical songs to be used for the celebration, different from the ones given in the ritual book.⁷⁷¹

Since the sacrament of Holy Orders is celebrated within the Mass, what has earlier been discussed about singing during any solemn Eucharistic celebration applies. What determines the Propers of the Mass to be used is the Mass chosen to be celebrated for the sacrament. *GIRM* outlines the options for the antiphons and their chants, whether the celebration is that of Sunday, or any other solemnity, or simply, the ritual Mass for the sacrament of Holy Orders. And according to G. D. Gill, these antiphons “for the Mass to be celebrated can serve as a possible textual source to guide the choice of a suitable liturgical song.”⁷⁷² In the Rite of Ordination, *RO*, the psalms and antiphons to be sung at different moments during the ordination of a bishop,⁷⁷³ a priest, or a deacon⁷⁷⁴ are well specified and there is always an opportunity for the choice of a suitable song instead. For want of space and since much is common in the rite of ordination for the three

⁷⁶⁸Cf. *RC*, no 29.

⁷⁶⁹Diocese of Owensboro, *RC: Liturgical Guidelines*, p. 7, accessed on 22.04.2022, <https://owensborodiocese.org/wp-content/uploads/The-Rite-of-Confirmation.pdf>

⁷⁷⁰*CCC*, no 1572.

⁷⁷¹The Roman Pontifical, *Rite of Ordination of a Bishop, of Priests, and of Deacons (RO)*, ICEL, ,2017, no 11e.

⁷⁷²G. D. Gill, *Music in Catholic Liturgy*, p. 104.

⁷⁷³Cf. *RO*, nos 8, 33, 38, 42, 43, 57, 61; G. D. Gill, *Music in Catholic Liturgy*, p. 105.

⁷⁷⁴Cf. *RO*, nos 209, 212, 217.

hierarchical orders, we have chosen, as an example, to discuss the ordination of priests whose population is highest among them all.

When everything is set for the Mass to begin, a procession in the customary way leads to the altar while the Entrance antiphon with its Psalm or any other suitable song goes on. At the altar, Mass continues in the usual way from the Introductory Rites to the Liturgy of the Word up to the Gospel inclusively. After the gospel reading, the Ordination of Priests begins with the Election of the Candidates at the end of which the people give their assent. Other preparatory rites like the Homily, the Promise of the Elect and the Litany of Supplication continue as they are in the rite of ordination of a bishop. The same applies to the Laying on of Hands and the Prayer of Ordination which follow the preparatory rites.

Coming to the explanatory rites, the Anointing of Hands and the Handing on of Bread and Wine follow immediately after the Prayer of Ordination and the investiture of the newly ordained priests. As the anointing goes on, Psalm 109 (110) is sung with the following antiphon which is repeated after verses 1, 3, 4, and 7: ‘Christ the Lord, a Priest for ever according to the order of Melchizedek, offered bread and wine.’ During Easter season, ‘alleluia’ is added at the end of the antiphon. When the bishop has anointed the hands of all the newly ordained, the psalm is interrupted and the antiphon repeated just as the *Gloria Patri* is completely omitted. A choice of another liturgical song with a theme similar to the antiphon is also appropriate, especially if Psalm 109 (110) has previously been used as the Responsorial Psalm.⁷⁷⁵ During the fraternal kiss, the following responsory may be rendered:

I call you servants no longer, but my friends, because you know all that I have done in your midst,
alleluia.

*Receive the Holy Spirit, as an Advocate among you.

+He is the One the Father will send you, alleluia.

You are my friends, if you do what I command you.

*Receive the Holy Spirit...

V. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit,

+ He is the One ...⁷⁷⁶

In Lent, the ‘Alleluia’ is not added. In place of the above responsory, Psalm 99 can be sung with the following antiphon: ‘You are my friends, says the Lord, if you do what I command you.’ Alleluia, during Easter season, is added. More still, a choice of another liturgical song with a theme similar to the antiphon or the responsory is also appropriate, especially if Psalm 99 (100) has previously been used as the Responsorial Psalm.⁷⁷⁷ After this, the Mass continues as usual with

⁷⁷⁵Ibid., no 134.

⁷⁷⁶Ibid., no 137.

⁷⁷⁷Ibid.

the Liturgy of the Eucharist. But before the concluding rites, a liturgical song of thanksgiving may be rendered just after the distribution of Communion.⁷⁷⁸

In Igboland, even though the celebration of Holy Orders takes place on a Saturday, a dot is not removed from the required solemnity of the liturgy and always, the attendance is massive and impressive. The bishop's choir is always prepared with appropriate songs for the celebration of Holy Orders. Most of these songs are familiar to the people who actively participate in singing them and other responses at Mass. It is always a joyful and solemn liturgy. More efforts should, however, be geared towards the composition of simple tunes for the texts, psalms and antiphons recommended in the *RO*; this sort of compositions help to reveal and explain the deeper theological meaning of the celebrations and increase the repertoire of suitable liturgical songs for them. In *NCIHB*, the popular ordination songs include: For a priest – *I Bu Ukochukwu Ebebe* (You are a Priest for Ever); For a bishop – *Lee Nnukwu Ukochukwu* (Behold the High Priest).

1.1.4 *The Sacrament of Matrimony*

Christ raised to the dignity of a sacrament the matrimonial covenant by which a man and a woman jointly enter into a partnership of love and life till death. This covenant which is naturally ordered to the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of children essentially consists in the free exchange of consent between the two parties.⁷⁷⁹ By this consent expressed before the Church in a liturgical celebration governed by the appropriate liturgical norms, “the spouses, as ministers of Christ’s grace, mutually confer upon each other the sacrament of Matrimony.”⁷⁸⁰ The spouses, by this fact, ought to be part of the preparations for their sacramental celebration. They must be involved, as the circumstances allow, in the choice of the readings, the form for their expression of mutual consent, the formularies for the blessing of rings, for the chants etc.⁷⁸¹ Stressing this point with particular reference to liturgical music, USCCB directed that “both musicians and pastors should make every effort to assist couples to understand and share in the planning of their marriage Liturgy. Since oftentimes the only music familiar to the couple is not necessarily suitable to the sacrament, the pastoral musician will make an effort to demonstrate a wide range of music appropriate for the Liturgy.”⁷⁸² With special emphasis, G. D. Mill added that “secular music, even if it promotes Christian sentiment with regard to Marriage, is out of place in the celebration of Marriage.”⁷⁸³ The *Order of Celebrating Marriage (OCM)*, continuing on this

⁷⁷⁸Ibid., no 142.

⁷⁷⁹CCL, no 1055 §1.

⁷⁸⁰CCC, no 1623.

⁷⁸¹Cf. *OCM*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2016), no 29.

⁷⁸²USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 218.

⁷⁸³G. D. Gill, *Music in Catholic Liturgy*, p. 99.

aspect of the liturgical music, underlined that “the chants to be sung during the Rite of Marriage should be appropriate and should express the faith of the Church, with attention paid to the importance of the Responsorial Psalm within the Liturgy of the Word. What is said concerning the chants applies also to the selection of other musical works.”⁷⁸⁴ In more details, let us discuss the use of liturgical music in the celebration of marriage, both within and outside of Mass.

The celebration of marriage takes place normally and preferably during Holy Mass. As with the other sacraments, this demonstrates the connection of marriage with Christ’s Paschal mystery. Because the Eucharist is the memorial of the New Covenant in which Christ as the bridegroom has eternally united himself to the Church, his beloved bride for whom he offered his life, it is properly fitting “that the spouses should seal their consent to give themselves to each other through the offering of their own lives by uniting it to the offering of Christ for his Church made present in the Eucharistic sacrifice, and by receiving the Eucharist so that, communicating in the same Body and the same Blood of Christ, they may form but ‘one body’ in Christ.”⁷⁸⁵ If, thus, marriage is to be celebrated within Mass, the basic principles guiding singing during the Eucharistic celebration should also be followed. Also, the planning of the music must put into consideration the liturgical season and feasts.

In the Introductory Rites for the celebration, there are two forms to receive the bridegroom and the bride. In the first form, the Priest, fully and properly vested, goes to the door of the church with the servers. Through his warm reception and greetings, he demonstrates to the bridal party that the Church greatly shares in their joy. After this, the procession leads to the altar in the customary way as the Entrance Chant is sung. In the second form, on the other hand, the Priest, fully and properly vested, goes with the servers either to his chair or to the place prepared for the couple.⁷⁸⁶ “Instrumental music may accompany the procession of the bride and groom with the Entrance chant occurring after the priest greets them.”⁷⁸⁷ In either case, the Entrance chant performs its normal functions as in any Eucharistic celebration. Among other things, it expresses the mystery of the liturgical season or festivity when the wedding is on a Sunday or Solemnity and Wedding Mass is not to be used. But when the Wedding Mass is used, it rather expresses the mystery of marriage.⁷⁸⁸

From this point, the priest continues the Mass as usual, observing what the rubric stipulates in the Roman Missal or the Ritual Mass for the celebration of Marriage. After the reception of consent, the priest invites all to praise God by singing: ‘Let us bless the Lord.’ The people sing

⁷⁸⁴Cf. *OCM*, no 30.

⁷⁸⁵*CCC*, no 1621.

⁷⁸⁶Cf. *OCM*, nos 45-50.

⁷⁸⁷G. D. Gill, *Music in Catholic Liturgy*, p. 100.

⁷⁸⁸*Ibid*.

‘Thanks be to God’ in response or use another acclamation instead.⁷⁸⁹ Following the exchange of rings, the whole community may also sing a hymn or canticle of praise that has possible reference to the mystery being celebrated. In Igboland, there are some liturgical songs for wedding even though none appears in the *NCIHB*. But there is need also for more suitable songs to be composed using the liturgical texts.

Though the ideal is the celebration of Marriage within the Mass, it is also possible to celebrate it without Mass when necessity or circumstance warrants it. The celebration without Mass may or may not involve the distribution of Holy Communion. If there will be no distribution of Holy Communion, then, the minister blesses the people immediately after the nuptial blessing. “It is a praiseworthy practice to end the celebration with a suitable chant.”⁷⁹⁰ But when the distribution of Holy Communion is involved, then, the priest, after the nuptial blessing and bringing of the Body of Christ to the altar, invites the people to sing the Lord’s Prayer and exchange the Kiss of Peace. A chant during the distribution of Holy Communion and a psalm or a hymn of thanksgiving after Communion also form part of the celebration.⁷⁹¹ Apart from this major difference, the celebration of Marriage, either within or outside of Mass, basically follows the same order and there is no need here to repeat the whole process.

It is fast becoming the trend in many places, including Igboland, to hire professional singers to sing at liturgical celebrations, especially at weddings and funerals. While the musical ability and singing performance of these professionals are great, other factors must also be put into consideration. It must be ensured that there exists a proper relationship between them and the parish choir to avoid friction that sometimes arises with their presence. And given the fact that some of them do not understand the exact difference between liturgy and concert performance, the USCCB instructs as follows:

If vocal soloists are to be employed in the celebration of the sacrament, they should be instructed on the nature of the Liturgy and trained in the unique aspects of singing in a liturgical context. Either the soloist should be trained to carry out the ministry of psalmist and cantor, or else another singer should be secured for this liturgically important role. In all cases, soloists should be aware that their talents are offered at the service of the Liturgy. Vocalists may sing alone during the Preparation of the Gifts or after Communion, provided the music and their manner of singing does not call attention to themselves but rather assists in the contemplation of the sacred mysteries being celebrated. Soloists should not usurp parts of the Mass designated for congregational participation.⁷⁹²

⁷⁸⁹*OCM*, no 65.

⁷⁹⁰*Ibid.*, no 107.

⁷⁹¹*Ibid.*, nos 113-114.

⁷⁹²USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 221.

1.1.5 *The Sacrament of Penance*

In the *Rite of Penance*, there are three forms for celebrating the Sacrament of Penance. We shall concentrate on the second form which deals with the Rite of Reconciliation of Several Penitents with Individual Confession and Absolution. Just like every sin has both a personal and a social dimension,⁷⁹³ the Sacrament of Penance is not only a personal act, but has also its social dimension.⁷⁹⁴ In this form of the communal celebration of the sacrament which is most appropriate during Lent,⁷⁹⁵ both the personal and ecclesial nature of penance is clearly demonstrated. “The faithful listen together to the word of God, which proclaims his mercy and invites them to conversion; at the same time, they examine the conformity of their lives with that word of God and help each other through common prayer. After each person has confessed his sins and received absolution, all praise God together for his wonderful deeds on behalf of the people he has gained for himself through the blood of his Son.”⁷⁹⁶ Our particular purpose here is to consider the use of liturgical music which is very significant in this form.

According to the Rite, there are four stages in this celebration: The Introductory Rites, the Celebration of the Word of God, the Rite of Reconciliation and the Dismissal of the People. When the people have assembled, the celebration begins with a psalm, antiphon or any suitable song as the priest enters the church. At the end of the Introductory Rites, the priest invites all to pray and after a brief period of silence, sings the opening prayer. At this point, the second stage begins, which is the Celebration of the Word of God. In between the readings to be chosen, a psalm, or another suitable song, or a period of silence is inserted “so that everyone may understand the word of God more deeply and give it his heartfelt assent.”⁷⁹⁷ The gospel acclamation, as usual, is sung before the Gospel reading. During the examination of conscience after the homily, the priest, deacon or another minister may use a kind of litany, adapted to the people’s circumstance and age, to arouse true contrition for sin.⁷⁹⁸

In the Rite of Reconciliation, which is the third stage, the people are, first of all, invited to say a form of general confession. After that, they stand to sing a litany or an appropriate song “to express confession of sins, heartfelt contrition, prayer for forgiveness, and trust in God’s mercy.”⁷⁹⁹ Individual confessions follow after the Lord’s prayer which can never be omitted. The

⁷⁹³Pope John Paul II, *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia (On Reconciliation and Penance)*, no 16.

⁷⁹⁴CDWDS, “Rediscovering the ‘Rite of Penance,’” (Notitiae 2015/2), accessed on 22.04.2022, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc_con_ccdds_notitiae-2015-quademo-penitenza_en.html

⁷⁹⁵Cf. CDW, *Circular Letter Concerning the Preparation and Celebration of Easter Feasts (CLPCEF)*, no 15.

⁷⁹⁶*Rite of Penance (RP)*, (New Jersey: Catholic Book Publishing Group, 2009), no 22.

⁷⁹⁷*Ibid.*, no 51; Cf. no 24.

⁷⁹⁸*Ibid.*, no 26; Cf. no 53.

⁷⁹⁹*Ibid.*, no 27; Cf. no 54.

USCCB suggests a form of meditative singing or soft instrumental music during this period of confession, especially if the number of penitents is large.⁸⁰⁰ This may help to retain people's concentration and ward off unnecessary distractions as they wait for their turn. At the end of the confessions, all gather to thank and praise God for His abundant mercy, using a psalm, hymn or a litany. The canticle of Mary or Psalm 136:1-9, 13-14, 25-26 is a good example.⁸⁰¹ The last stage, after the priest's concluding prayer and blessing, is the joyful dismissal of the people which may as well be accompanied with a closing song that expresses gratitude and praise to God in the spirit of renewed commitment to Him.⁸⁰²

In Igboland, the Rite of Reconciliation of Several Penitents with Individual Confession and Absolution is frequently the form that is used during group retreats both for the clergy and the lay faithful, even though, in the words of CDWDS, "one notes that the Rite and formulas have not always been respected."⁸⁰³ Occasionally, it can be used in Catholic schools and institutions on days of confessions, especially at the beginning of the new academic year or term. And it is also fitting for the celebration of the first confession of school age children.⁸⁰⁴ The Jubilee Year of Mercy represented a significant opportunity to rediscover this form of celebration. Each year, therefore, let every parish and diocesan community strive to use, as often as possible, this rediscovered treasure.⁸⁰⁵

1.1.6 *The Pastoral Care of the Sick*

The Rites of Anointing of the Sick within and outside of the Mass follow almost the same procedure, especially when it involves a large congregation. This sacrament which can be preceded by the sacrament of Penance can also be followed by the sacrament of the Eucharist whenever circumstances permit.⁸⁰⁶ The ritual book, *The Pastoral Care of the Sick (PCS)*, clearly underscores the necessity of liturgical music in this form of anointing involving a number of sick people within the same celebration. It instructs that "the full participation of those present must be fostered by every means, especially through the use of appropriate songs, so that the celebration manifests the Easter joy which is proper to this Sacrament."⁸⁰⁷

⁸⁰⁰USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 229.

⁸⁰¹*RP*, no 29; Cf. no 56.

⁸⁰²Cf. D. Munch, "Penance: Reconciliation with your Neighbour, Too" [in] V. C. Funk (ed.), *Music in Catholic Worship – the NPM Commentary*, p. 160.

⁸⁰³CDWDS, "Rediscovering the 'Rite of Penance.'"

⁸⁰⁴G. D. Gill, *Music in Catholic Liturgy*, p. 96.

⁸⁰⁵Cf. CDWDS, "Rediscovering the 'Rite of Penance.'"

⁸⁰⁶CCC, no 1517.

⁸⁰⁷*Pastoral Care of the Sick (PCS)*, (New Jersey, Catholic Book Publishing Corp., 2007), no 108.

To begin the communal rite, an appropriate opening song or a psalm is necessary. After this, the priest kindly expresses Christ's sympathy and concern to the sick present by greeting and receiving them. A psalm could be sung during the Liturgy of the Word which follows immediately. During the rite of anointing which comes after the laying on of hands in silence, other priests may assist if the number of recipients is large. Also, suitable songs may accompany this rite to the end but, first of all, the sacramental form must have been heard at least once by all present.⁸⁰⁸

The Sacrament of Anointing may be celebrated within Mass when the condition of the sick permits and Holy Communion is to be received.⁸⁰⁹ During the distribution of Communion, an appropriate song or a psalm should be sung. The same applies even if the Holy Communion is to be administered to them outside of Mass. The celebration usually concludes, after blessing, with a suitable song.⁸¹⁰

1.2 Music in the Liturgical Year

We know that liturgical celebrations have different characters depending on the season of the liturgical year or the feast being celebrated.⁸¹¹ In all the preceding chapters of this work, we have severally underlined the fact that liturgical music is also dependent on this same factor.⁸¹² That is to say, the liturgical year affects the type of musical setting, the choice of song and the use of musical instrument for liturgical purposes. This is the focus of our discussion in this subheading.

1.2.1 Brief Understanding of the Liturgical Year

In liturgy, the Church commemorates and actualizes the saving mystery of Christ. This whole mystery achieves its aim when we ritually and actively participate in it in the liturgy and practically and daily live it out in the world, making it our own mystery.⁸¹³ Celebrating this salvific mystery as it unfolds in the course of a calendar year, the Church opens up for all time the wealth of her Lord's powers and merits to the faithful who hold on to them and become filled with saving grace.⁸¹⁴ It is the celebration, on prescribed days, of the different aspects of this mystery of redemption in Christ, rich and complex as it is, that has "given rise to the development of a liturgical cycle of feasts and seasons commonly referred to as the liturgical year."⁸¹⁵ The liturgical

⁸⁰⁸Ibid., no 110.

⁸⁰⁹Ibid., no 131.

⁸¹⁰Ibid., no 109.

⁸¹¹Cf. CCCB, *Guidelines for Liturgical Music*, no 69.

⁸¹²Cf. SVC, *MS*, no 36; *MS* no 32.

⁸¹³Cf. K. Harmon, *The Ministry of Music*, p. 2; B. Migut, "Misteryjna Natura Liturgii," *Roczniki Liturgiczno-Homiletyczne*, no 2 (57), 2010, p. 183.

⁸¹⁴SVC, *SC*, no 102.

⁸¹⁵J. A. Komonchak, M. Collins, D. A. Lane (eds.), *The New Dictionary of Theology*, p. 594; Cf. *SC*, no 102.

year thus is an actualization of Christ's mystery.⁸¹⁶ At the heart of this liturgical year is the Paschal Mystery which is central and gives meaning to each and every liturgical celebration; it is the source of power for all the sacraments and the sacramentals.⁸¹⁷ The Church, in accord with her traditional discipline, completes the education or formation of the faithful during the different seasons of the liturgical year by means of devotional practices for both the soul and body, prayer, instruction, works of mercy and of penance.⁸¹⁸

The liturgical year is made up of two cycles: The Temporal (the Proper of the Seasons) and the Sanctoral (the Proper of the Saints). "Although these two cycles are parallel and intertwined, the temporal, because of its Christological foundations and focus, always takes precedence over the sanctoral."⁸¹⁹ The temporal cycle which includes solemnities and feasts that celebrate the historical events of our redemption consists of two major seasons, namely: Easter and Christmas, the solemnities of which are the greatest and marked by their extension over eight days known as *Octave*.⁸²⁰ The first season in the order of prominence is the Easter season which, spanning from Ash Wednesday to Pentecost Sunday, is divided into three periods: the forty days of Lent, the Easter Triduum, and the fifty days of Easter. This is followed by the Christmas season which includes the four weeks of Advent and the Christmas Octave and comes to an end with the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. The rest of the weeks in this cycle constitute the Ordinary Time of the liturgical year which is the last in the order of importance.⁸²¹ However, each Sunday of the liturgical year (including Ordinary Time) when we celebrate the Paschal Mystery is considered as the first and original feast day. Given its special importance as the day we commemorate the Lord's resurrection, Sunday celebration, except during Advent, Lent and Easter, gives way only to feasts or solemnities of the Lord.⁸²² There are also few exceptions to the principle that Sundays are not permanently assigned to any other celebrations.⁸²³

The sanctoral cycle of the liturgical year which includes the feasts of devotion of our Lord and the feasts of Mary is ranked in this descending order of importance: solemnities, feasts,

⁸¹⁶B. Migut, "Rok Liturgiczny aktualizacja Misterium Chrystusa," *Roczniki Liturgiczno-Homiletyczne*, no 1 (56), 2009, p. 295.

⁸¹⁷Cf. B. Nadolski, *Liturgika: Liturgia I Czas*, (Poznań: Wydawnictwo Pallottinum, 2013), vol 2, p. 34.

⁸¹⁸SVC, SC, no 105; Cf. P. J. Elliott, *Ceremonies of the Liturgical Year: According to the Modern Roman Rite*, (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2002), no 23.

⁸¹⁹R. V. Dolen, C. W. Gusmer (eds.), "Liturgical Year in Roman Rite," [in:] *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, accessed on 23.04.2022, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/liturgical-year-roman-rite>

⁸²⁰CDWDS, *Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the Calendar (UNLYC)*, no 12, accessed on 23.04.2022, <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?id=10842>

⁸²¹J. A. Komonchak, M. Collins, D. A. Lane (eds.), *The New Dictionary of Theology*, p. 594.

⁸²²CDWDS, *UNLYC*, no 5; Cf. J. G. Miller, "Understanding Our Family's High Feasts," accessed on 23.04.2022, <https://www.catholicculture.org/commentary/understanding-our-familys-high-feasts/>

⁸²³For more details, see CDWDS, *UNLYC*, nos 6-7.

memorials, and optional memorials.⁸²⁴ In this cycle also, the Church commemorates the martyrs and saints in whose lives and deaths the mystery of salvation in Christ was made manifest as aptly described in SC:

The Church has also included in the annual cycle days devoted to the memory of the martyrs and the other saints. Raised up to perfection by the manifold grace of God, and already in possession of eternal salvation, they sing God's perfect praise in heaven and offer prayers for us. By celebrating the passage of these saints from earth to heaven the Church proclaims the paschal mystery achieved in the saints who have suffered and been glorified with Christ; she proposes them to the faithful as examples drawing all to the Father through Christ, and through their merits she pleads for God's favors.⁸²⁵

Let us now discuss these two cycles in greater details. Beginning with the temporal cycle, we shall consider especially those solemnities of the Lord which fall under the two seasons and ordinary time of the year.

1.2.2 *Temporal Cycle*

The whole mystery of Christ unfolds from His incarnation and birth up to His ascension and the Pentecost day; it continues until the expectation of blessed hope and of the Lord's coming.⁸²⁶ As salvific events, these historical acts have an eternal dimension. Every year of man's life, these events which are repeated in a mystical way bring him closer to the final goal of life. But as it is impossible to fit the whole life of Christ into one year, the Church divides the year into periods in which she celebrates the most important mysteries. This division as we see in the Universal Norms on the Liturgical Year and the Calendar (UNLYC) reflects the understanding of the whole mystery of Christ from the perspective of its connection with the Paschal Mystery which has always been and remains the central celebration of the year. The order of liturgical periods is as follows: Paschal Triduum, Easter Season, Lenten Season, Christmas Season, Season of Advent and the Ordinary Season.⁸²⁷

In the discussion of the liturgical celebrations within these periods, there will always be the option to sing an "appropriate" or "suitable" song or psalm instead of what the text prescribes. Suggesting and insisting on particular examples in such a case may limit other numerable possibilities. However, the principle of the "three judgements but one evaluation" which we discussed earlier remains the criterion for selecting what may qualify as appropriate or suitable

⁸²⁴Cf. M. Kowalski, "Posoborowa Odnowa Kalendarza Liturgicznego I Jej Recepcja w Diecezji Kieleckiej," *Roczniki Teologiczne*, no 8 (62), 2015, p. 26.

⁸²⁵SVC, SC, no 104.

⁸²⁶SVC, SC, no 102.

⁸²⁷Cf. I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 360.

“so that the song alternatives carry the same meaning and be of the same nature as the given text.”⁸²⁸

1.2.2.1 *The Paschal Triduum*

According to the Circular Letter Concerning Preparation and Celebration of Easter Feasts, the period beginning from evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday until Vespers of Easter Sunday when the Church yearly celebrates the greatest mysteries of the Redemption is called ‘the triduum of the crucified, buried and risen’ or the ‘Easter Triduum.’ It is also called the Paschal Triduum because of the Paschal mystery which the Church celebrates during the period, that is, the passing of the Lord from this world to his Father. Through liturgical signs and sacramentals by which she celebrates this mystery, the Church is united in intimate communion to Christ, her Spouse.⁸²⁹ The Paschal Triduum is a single festival of three days during which we celebrate the work of human redemption and of God’s perfect glorification by Christ who, by dying destroyed our death, and by rising restored our life. This great festival of our salvation shines out as the high point of the whole liturgical year with such pre-eminence that is comparable to the pre-eminence of Sunday in the week.⁸³⁰

To immerse ourselves deeply and properly into the holy mysteries and celebrations of the Paschal Triduum, C. Pirtle considers liturgical music and liturgical singing as the essential means.⁸³¹ Without such music, in fact, the rites of the Paschal Triduum will be grossly paralyzed, if not dead.⁸³² In line with this, the circular letter by the Congregation for Divine Worship not only confirmed the necessity of singing the liturgy of the Easter Triduum, but also charged the episcopal conferences with the responsibility of producing, where there is none, a collection of texts set to music for those parts of the celebration that are meant to be sung.⁸³³ In Igboland, many dioceses have such a collection in booklet forms as the picture below indicates. While the texts are in the three major languages (Latin, English and Igbo), the music setting is mainly for the Igbo texts of the antiphons, psalms, acclamations, responses, verses, hymns etc.

⁸²⁸G. D. Gill, *Music in Catholic Liturgy*, p. 45.

⁸²⁹CDW, *CLPCEF*, no 38.

⁸³⁰CDWDS, *UNLYC*, no 18.

⁸³¹C. Pirtle, “Music and the Paschal Mystery,” accessed on 23.04.2022, <https://churchlifejournal.nd.edu/articles/music-and-the-paschal-mystery/>

⁸³²Cf. R. Pośpiech, “Muzyka Paschalnej Radosci,” *Liturgia Sacra*, no 1-2 (1995), p. 130.

⁸³³CDW, *CLPCEF*, no 42.

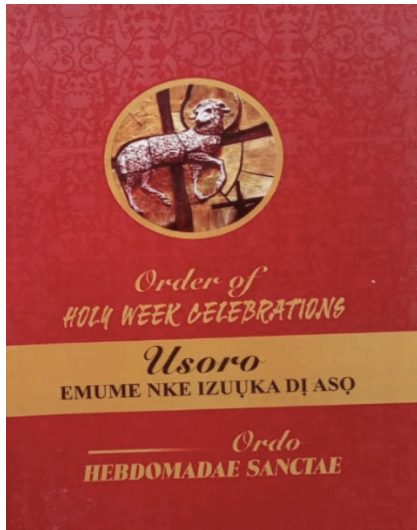


Fig. 6 – Order of Holy Week Celebrations

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops emphasized that the choice of music for this period must aim at leading the whole community to participate fully and to experience the oneness of the three principal moments of this unique celebration. On the use of musical instruments during the sacred period, their directive is primarily based on the instruction of MS:

Musicians ought to be mindful of the movement of the three days – from simplicity and restraint to the outpouring of festive joy. Between the singing of the *Gloria to God* at the Mass of the Lord’s Supper on Holy Thursday and the singing of the *Gloria to God* at the Easter Vigil, the organ and other instruments are to be used only to lead and support the song of the assembly and the other music ministers... During the celebration of the Easter Vigil and throughout the Easter Season a generous use of instruments is desirable to express the Church’s great joy in the resurrection of the Lord.⁸³⁴

In Africa, as in other parts of the globe, one can find two extreme positions concerning the use of musical instruments during Paschal Triduum, especially before the Easter Vigil. As mentioned in chapter two, the researcher witnessed the Paschal Triduum in Kenya in 2019. He discovered that there was no single restriction in the use of musical instruments from the *Gloria* on Holy Thursday to the *Gloria* at the Easter Vigil. The mood of the celebration on these days was musically the same as on the day of Easter Sunday. On further inquiries, he found out that other countries in East Africa, for instance, have similar mode of celebrating the Triduum. In Nigeria, especially in Igboland, the liturgical tradition is different in the aspect under discussion. In most places, the musical instruments are not used at all after the *Gloria* of the evening Mass of the Lord’s supper even to support the singing and this is greatly because of ignorance of what the law

⁸³⁴CCCB, *Guidelines for Liturgical Music*, no 91; Cf. MS no 66.

prescribes. Even though this latter situation seems better than the former, there is need to enlighten and direct the people on the proper use of liturgical music according to the mind of the Church and this is part of the reason for this research work.

According to P. Stanhope, ‘whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well.’ As the greatest mysteries of our redemption, it is both necessary and fruitful to celebrate the Paschal Triduum well. To do so, however, demands a lot of sacrifice in terms of thorough musical preparations. All the liturgical ministers, starting from the celebrant, assistants, choir, cantor, psalmist, organist, other instrumentalists, and all the faithful, should start early enough to prepare for the most important season and the greatest celebration in the liturgical year.⁸³⁵

1.2.2.2 *Easter Season*

The abundance of Easter joys is such that it overflows over a period of fifty days known as the Easter Season or Eastertide. So, while Easter Sunday is the last day of the Paschal Triduum, it is as well the first day of the Easter season. The entire Easter season is celebrated as a single joyful feast, called the ‘great Sunday.’⁸³⁶ The first eight days of the Eastertide referred to as the Octave are celebrated as the Solemnities of the Lord. The fortieth day of this season, a Thursday, is the solemnity of Ascension but, in countries where it is not a Holy Day of Obligation, it is celebrated on the following Sunday which is the seventh Sunday of Easter. The nine days from the Ascension Thursday to and including the Saturday before the Pentecost are days of prayer in preparation for the coming of the Holy Spirit. The form of prayer is called a novena. The Sundays within the Eastertide are called Sundays of Easter.⁸³⁷ The second Sunday is popularly known as the Divine Mercy Sunday whereas the fourth Sunday is also called the Good Shepherd Sunday. The last day or Sunday of the Easter season is the Solemnity of Pentecost. During these days and Sundays within the Paschaltide, “the Church celebrates the victory of the risen Lord with unrestrained joy and moves forward to the feast of Pentecost, which marks the fulfilment of the paschal mystery in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.”⁸³⁸

The songs suitable for the Eastertide, as a single feast day, should be characterized with the same or similar musical setting and “ought to express gratitude for the gift of new life which we have received through the saving death and resurrection of Christ and reflect the joyful character of the season.”⁸³⁹ These songs are better when they are familiar to the people and easy

⁸³⁵I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 374; Cf. R. Tyrła, “Muzyka Liturgiczna w Przeżyciu Misterium Paschalnego,” *Pro Musica Sacra*, no 12 (2014), p. 22.

⁸³⁶Cf. CDW, *CLPCEF*, no 100.

⁸³⁷CDWDS, *UNLYC*, nos 23-26.

⁸³⁸CCCB, *Guidelines for Liturgical Music*, no 107.

⁸³⁹*Ibid.*

to sing, and when their texts originate from the scripture and the liturgical books. Throughout the octave of Easter, which is considered as one great day of joy, the theme of the readings is connected with the event of the Resurrection and the apostles' life of witness to it. The idea of octave implies that, using songs that illustrate this theme, we celebrate each day of the octave like the solemnity of Easter Sunday. Unfortunately, this is not obtainable in practice in most parishes, chaplaincies and cathedrals where Masses are celebrated in a similar manner as in ordinary weekdays, with no additional solemnity. Though it may be difficult for the choir and other ministers of liturgical music to be fully present as on Easter Sunday, the priest, nevertheless, should endeavour to sing the parts that belong to him while the congregation sings, at least, the responses, the dialogues and the acclamations. This will make a great difference with some Easter songs that may be rendered in unison as Entrance, Offertory or Dismissal songs. Examples of these Easter songs in *NCIHB* include: *Christi Ebilitego* (Christ Has Risen); *Kristi Kunitere N'onwu* (Christ Rose From Death); *Unu Ncha Bu Ndi Kwerenu* (All of You are Believers).

The last day of the octave is the 2nd Sunday of Easter, popularly known as the Divine Mercy Sunday. Associated with St. Faustina, this feast was declared to be celebrated throughout the Catholic Church on the occasion of her canonization by Pope John Paul II on April 30, 2000. Being a recent feast, there are not yet many songs composed with the feast in perspective. Composers, therefore, should rise up to the challenge and compose more songs suitable for this feast after perusing the readings, the collect and the preface to discover the themes of the celebration. The 4th Sunday of Easter is celebrated as the Good Shepherd Sunday which is also the World Day of Prayer for Vocations. The songs for this Sunday, just like the readings, the prayers and the responsorial psalm, should also revolve around the central theme of "Jesus as the Good Shepherd," while still expressing the unsurpassing joy of Easter. The same is applicable to the weekdays. The song 'The Lord is my Shepherd' is a typical example.

The Solemnity of Ascension is celebrated in Nigeria as a Holy Day of Obligation on Thursday of the 6th Sunday of Easter. As a historical and transcendent event which is linked both to the Incarnation and the Crucifixion, Ascension marks a transition between the glory of the risen Christ and that of His exaltation to the right hand of the Father from where He eternally exercises his priesthood, interceding for us.⁸⁴⁰ Pope John Paul II, in his homily on the solemnity of the Ascension on May 27, 1979 to all the faithful of England and Wales, stated that the richness of the mystery of Ascension lies both in the instruction Jesus gave his apostles and then, in taking his place at God's right hand. Quoting Leo the Great in the analysis of this second aspect, he added

⁸⁴⁰Cf. CCC, nos 660-663.

that “the glory of the Head became the hope of the body.”⁸⁴¹ The Church today lives by this hope, convinced that Christ’s victory is her victory for ever. Apart from songs which are specifically composed for this solemnity, it is always possible to use Easter songs which have verses related to the mystery of Ascension.

From the Ascension Thursday, as mentioned above, we have the novena to the Holy Spirit which was first decreed for the universal Church by Pope Leo XIII on May 9, 1897 with partial or plenary indulgence to be gained by participants.⁸⁴² As the date already indicates, this period, more often than not, falls in the month of May which is a special month of devotion to Mother Mary – May Devotion. In Igboland, mostly in the evening, it is the custom to have this devotion in the context of the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and benediction within which the rosary is recited. Within the period of the exposition, the novena takes the form of singing a song to the Holy Spirit and its concluding prayer before the *Tantum Ergo* is intoned. Come Holy Ghost Creator Come in the major languages – Igbo, English and Latin – is a suitable song which is most frequently used. In honour of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a Marian song is usually used for the dismissal procession.

After the novena, the Easter season ends with the solemnity of the Pentecost which was originally a Jewish feast of thanksgiving for the firstfruits of the wheat harvest. Later, it began to be used in commemoration of the Law given to Moses on Mount Sinai. Transformed into a Christian festival, it still retains the significance of its Jewish background. The Holy Spirit which the Apostles received on the first celebration of Christian Pentecost is the firstfruit of a new dispensation which follows the inauguration of Christ’s Messianic Kingdom on Ascension, a dispensation which also fulfilled and succeeded the old dispensation of the Law.⁸⁴³ The Pentecost is the completion of Christ’s mission and the birthday of the Church. Christ’s presence and action in the Church will no longer be external but internal through the power of the Holy Spirit. On Pentecost day, the apostles, anointed by this power and acting on Christ’s instruction, proclaimed the gospel in all languages of the Jews gathered for the feast, converting and baptizing about 3000 people. To commemorate the multiplicity of languages the apostles spoke, it may be necessary to mix the languages in the selection of songs for the different parts of the celebration. In Igboland, one can use such popular languages like Latin, Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa, English etc. Different languages and versions of the hymn to the Holy Spirit are most appropriate for this solemnity.

⁸⁴¹Pope John Paul II, “Solemnity of the Ascension of our Lord – Homily.,” accessed on 23.04.2022, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1979/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19790524_seminari-inkl-roma.html

⁸⁴²Pope Leo XIII, *Divinum Illud Munus (Encyclical on the Holy Spirit)*, no 13.

⁸⁴³Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia, “Pentecost,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2020, accessed on 23.04.2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Pentecost-Christianity>

Among the hymns to the Holy Spirit, the one that is used for the sequence on Pentecost is *Veni Sancte Spiritus*. Known as the golden sequence, its use was also extended to the octave of Pentecost before Pope Paul VI eliminated the octave from the Ordinary form of the Roman Rite.⁸⁴⁴ After Vatican II reform, it has remained a compulsory sequence together with the sequence of Easter. Though it is now sung in many vernacular languages, many authors still praise the excellence of its Latin version the text of which was likely composed by Pope Innocent XIII around the 13th century. D. Friel wrote:

Veni Sancte Spiritus is a true masterpiece of Latin poetry. In rhyme scheme, it is complex and gorgeous; lines one & two rhyme with each other, and line three always ends in the syllable – ium. In meter, the sequence is a very faithful example of trochaic dimeter. In content, it is a magnificent meditation on the Spirit’s guidance through consolation & desolation. So much is lost when this sequence is not sung in its original Latin.⁸⁴⁵

To conclude on the season of Easter, let us mention that the celebration of infant baptism, confirmation and First Holy Communion during this period is desirable and recommended, preferably on Sundays. But most appropriate on Pentecost Sunday is the Sacrament of Confirmation. During these celebrations, it is important to select songs that also reflect the jubilant mood of the season.

1.2.2.3 *Lenten Season*

The weighty significance of Easter as the greatest celebration of the Paschal Mystery makes its preparation a necessity. Such a period of preparation is called the Lenten Season. Starting from Ash Wednesday, it ends on Holy Thursday before the Mass of the Lord’s Supper in the evening.⁸⁴⁶ The Lenten season possesses a double character. While it prepares the catechumens for the reception of the sacraments of Christian initiation, it also prepares the faithful, through listening to the word of God, prayer and penance, for the renewal of their baptismal promises.⁸⁴⁷ The last week of Lent is called the Holy Week during which the mysteries of salvation accomplished by Christ in the last days of his earthly life are celebrated, starting from his triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.⁸⁴⁸

⁸⁴⁴Cf. E. Pentin, “Pentecost Octave – Where Art Thou?” accessed on 23.04.2022, <https://www.ncregister.com/blog/pentecost-octave-where-art-thou>

⁸⁴⁵D. Friel, “A Mini History of the Sequences,” accessed on 23.04.2022.

⁸⁴⁶CDWDS, *UNLYC*, no 28.

⁸⁴⁷CDW, *CLPCEF*, no 6.

⁸⁴⁸*Ibid.*, no 27.

During the season, both the Sundays and weekdays are considered more important than other celebrations; while Sundays have precedence over all feasts and solemnities, the weekdays take precedence over obligatory memorials. And first consideration is also given to the days of Holy Week, from Monday to Thursday inclusive, over all other celebrations.⁸⁴⁹ In all these Lenten celebrations, however, it is of utmost importance to preserve its penitential character. Geared towards this are some of these basic regulations in the area of music. Firstly, the use of musical instruments is only to assist the singing; it is prohibited to play them as solo.⁸⁵⁰ Secondly, there is no singing of “Alleluia” in any celebration, even on feast days and solemnities, starting from Ash Wednesday to Holy Saturday exclusive of Easter Vigil.⁸⁵¹ Thirdly, *Gloria* is not permitted except on feast days and solemnities, and at particular Eucharistic celebrations of a more solemn character.⁸⁵² On these feast days and solemnities also, just like on the fourth Sunday of Lent which is popularly known as “Laetare Sunday,” musical instruments may be played.⁸⁵³ The circular letter by CDWDS also mentioned that the first Sunday of Lent which marks the beginning of the annual Lenten observance should be characterized by some distinctive elements such as the litany of the saints during the entrance procession. Lastly, it directs that the music to be used during Eucharist celebrations and devotional exercises has to be in accord with the spirit of the season and the texts of the liturgy.⁸⁵⁴

We shall now consider especially the musical aspect of each of the key celebrations of this period according to the rubrics of the Roman Missal. On Ash Wednesday, the *Kyrie* as part of the penitential act is to be replaced by the distribution of ashes during which different antiphons as suggested in the *RM* could be sung or any other appropriate chant. The antiphon ‘Blot out my Transgression, O Lord’ may be interspersed with the verses of psalm 51. A responsory ‘Let us Correct our Faults... Hear us, O Lord’ or another appropriate chant may also be used.⁸⁵⁵ In *NCIHB*, some of the processional songs used throughout the Lenten season at Mass are *Aga M Ekuli* (I Shall Arise); *Obe Nso* (Holy Cross).

On Palm Sunday of the Lord’s Passion, the memorial of Christ’s messianic entrance takes place by means of the Procession or the Solemn Entrance before the major Mass or by the Simple Entrance before other Masses. Before the procession takes off, the faithful gather in a smaller church or a suitable place apart from the church where the procession will lead into. As the priest

⁸⁴⁹Ibid., nos 11 & 27.

⁸⁵⁰Cf. SVC, *MS*, no 66.

⁸⁵¹CDW, *CLPCEF*, no 18.

⁸⁵²Cf. GIRM, no 53.

⁸⁵³CDW, *CLPCEF*, no 25.

⁸⁵⁴Ibid., nos 25 & 19.

⁸⁵⁵Cf. “Ash Wednesday,” [in:] *The Roman Missal*, pp. 194-196.

with other ministers approach the chosen venue, the choir sings the antiphon ‘Hossana to the Son of David’ or any other suitable chant.⁸⁵⁶ When the singing ends, the priest greets the people after the sign of the cross and, blessing the palms, reads the gospel which is followed by a brief homily. Next is the invitation for the procession during which suitable chants are sung by the choir and the people in honour of Christ the King. The *RM* suggests some antiphons and psalms which may be used in the form of refrains and verses and also, a hymn to Christ the King.⁸⁵⁷ As the procession is entering the church, a responsory ‘As the Lord Entered the Holy City’ as we have in the *RM* or any other chant which speaks of the Lord’s entrance may be used. Reaching the altar, the priest continues the Mass with the collect, omitting the other Introductory Rites, and if suitable, the *Kyrie*.⁸⁵⁸ On the occasion of the decree approving a new edition of the chant book for the Lord’s passion by CDWDS, the choirmaster of Solesmes, J. Claire, O.S.B declared: “For many of the faithful, one of the high points of the Holy Week offices was the solemn chanting of the passion, on Palm Sunday and Good Friday, as a recitative using three singers of different timbres and ranges: Christ, the chorista and the synagogue.”⁸⁵⁹ Aside the three solo singers, some melodies composed for the Lord’s passion also include sections for the choir in four parts.

The last celebration that occurs within the Lenten season is usually the Chrism Mass during which, in accordance with the Rite described in the Roman Pontifical, the blessing of the Oil of the Catechumens and of the Sick and the Consecration of the Chrism take place. In this solemn Mass in which *Gloria* is sung, there is also the Renewal of Priestly Promises after the homily which takes the place of the *Credo*. Apart from this, the Mass begins and goes on as usual until the procession with the oils which comes after the general intercessions. In some dioceses in Igboland, Chrism Mass is celebrated according to ecclesiastical regions, and depending on the number of bishops and regions in the diocese, it may take 2 – 4 days within the Holy Week, with the last Chrism Mass occurring on Thursday. And normally, each Chrism Mass records a high degree of attendance of the faithful and the clergy as it is also an occasion, after post-Communion prayer, for all the parishes, institutions, organizations and religious groups to present their gifts to the bishop, in a kind of healthy competition of who gives the best. For pastoral reasons, thus, the Mass is generally celebrated in a podium with an open field, and the solemn procession with the oils, together with the bread and wine for the Eucharist, begins from a prepared position in the field and goes straight to the altar. In place of the song for the presentation of the gifts, the choir, during this procession, leads the people in singing the hymn ‘*O Redemptor*’ or any other

⁸⁵⁶Cf. “Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord,” [in:] *The Roman Missal*, nos 1-4, pp. 257-258.

⁸⁵⁷Cf. *Ibid.*, nos 8-9, pp. 263-266.

⁸⁵⁸*Ibid.*, nos 10-11, p. 266.

⁸⁵⁹CDWDS, “Chant of the Passion for Holy Week,” accessed on 03.11.2021, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/chant-of-the-passion-for-holy-week-2177>

appropriate song.⁸⁶⁰ After the reception of the oils by the bishop, the Mass continues and ends as usual with the blessing of the Oils and the consecration of the Chrism at their proper time as described in the Roman Pontifical. Some verses of the hymn *O Redemptor* may still be used during the dismissal procession or any other appropriate closing hymn.⁸⁶¹

1.2.2.4 *The Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord*

There are two solemnities which almost always occur during the Lenten season but are not part of Lent. In the words of J. G. Miller, they are the oases of Lent and they include the Solemnity of St. Joseph on March 19 and the Solemnity of the Annunciation on March 25, exactly nine months before Christmas. These dates are not fixed but moveable. When any of them falls on a Sunday of Lent, it is transferred to the following Monday. And if it happens that the Solemnity of the Annunciation falls on Palm Sunday or Easter Sunday, it is transferred to the Monday of the second week of Easter since the Holy Week and Easter Octave take precedence.⁸⁶² While we discuss the Solemnity of the Annunciation here since it belongs to the temporal cycle, we shall later discuss the Solemnity of St. Joseph which belongs to the sanctoral cycle.

The Solemnity of the Annunciation, according to CCC, is the inauguration of the ‘fullness of time’ when God’s promises and preparations are to be fulfilled.⁸⁶³ It is a celebration of the good news brought to the Blessed Virgin Mary (BVM) by the Archangel Gabriel concerning the incarnation of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. It is also the celebration of the great day of Mary’s generous ‘fiat’ (Lk. 1:38) to God’s will for her in his plan of salvation, a free consent that marked the actual beginning of her Motherhood. Being a joint feast of Jesus and Mary,⁸⁶⁴ the Annunciation also focuses heavily on the salvific ‘fiat’ of Jesus who, ready to accomplish His Father’s will for our sake and for our salvation, took human nature in the womb of Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit, becoming true God and true man, so that through the saving power of His Resurrection, we may merit to partake of His divine nature and attain eternal joy. Anticipating this joy, the Church celebrates the mysteries of this Solemnity, fully aware that her beginnings lie in the Incarnation of God’s Only Begotten Son. The above theological themes which are contained in the liturgical texts of the Solemnity ought to help in the selection and composition of suitable

⁸⁶⁰*Ceremonial of Bishops*, no 283, accessed on 23.04.2022, <https://www.ibreviary.com/m2/preghiere.php?tipo=Rito&id=543>

⁸⁶¹“The Blessing of the Oils and the Consecration of the Chrism,” accessed on 23.04.2022, <https://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments-and-sacramentals/sacramentals-blessings/blessing-of-oils-and-consecration-of-chrism>

⁸⁶²Cf. J. G. Miller, “The Oases of Lent: Celebrations of St. Patrick, St. Joseph, Annunciation and Family Days,” accessed on 23.04.2022, <https://www.catholicculture.org/commentary/understanding-our-familys-high-feasts/>; CDWDS, *UNLYC*, no 5.

⁸⁶³CCC, no 484.

⁸⁶⁴Cf. Pope Paul VI, *Marialis Cultus (For the Right Ordering and Development of Devotion to the BVM)*, no 6.

songs for the celebration. Such songs are very few in Igboland and because the solemnity falls on a weekday, it is not often celebrated with the required festivity.

1.2.2.5 *The Solemnity of Christmas*

“Those who have not understood the mystery of Christmas, have not understood the crucial element of Christian life.”⁸⁶⁵ This was the way Pope Benedict XVI concluded his catechetical reflection on the meaning of Christmas. In this reflection, the Supreme Pontiff highlighted that the Christian people came to understand that, in the Child Jesus, God’s radiant light shone on those who walked in thick darkness so that they can now perceive His true identity. In the Child Jesus, the invisible and eternal God revealed His face to us and became so close that we can enter into a deep and loving relationship with him. Just as everything was created in and through Him as the Word, everything was also recreated and redeemed in and through Him as the Word made flesh. Manifested in the incarnation is a holy and mysterious exchange whereby God shares in our humanity so as to make us sharers of His divinity, as St. Irenaeus, St. Athanasius, St. Thomas Aquinas and other fathers of the Church differently wrote.⁸⁶⁶ Finally, in his reflection, he stressed that “His condition as a Child also points out to us how we may encounter God and enjoy his presence... Those who do not welcome Jesus with a child's heart, cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven: this is what Francis wished to remind the Christians of his time and of all times, until today.”⁸⁶⁷

Christmas is closely connected to Easter since the Word-made-flesh descended to earth from heaven so that, through the Paschal mystery of his death and resurrection, he might take us back to heaven with him.⁸⁶⁸ In the same way, the joy of Christmas is intimately linked to the joy of Easter; the latter is the culmination of the former. Because of this connectedness, there is also a certain similarity in the musical setting for the songs used in the celebration of both feasts. Primarily, as in the case of Easter celebration, the musical setting of Christmas songs ought to express the feeling of unbounded joy at the gracious gift of “Emmanuel” who has come to bring salvation to humanity. This underlying emotion should also determine our choice of setting for the acclamations, responses, psalms, antiphons and other parts of the Mass. In his selection of songs, the music director should endeavour to include some familiar songs and melodies which parishioners living abroad or visitors who are not regular members of the worshipping community

⁸⁶⁵Pope Benedict XVI, “On the Meaning of Christmas,” accessed on 24.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/on-the-meaning-of-christmas-6734>

⁸⁶⁶Cf. CCC, no 460.

⁸⁶⁷Pope Benedict XVI, “On the Meaning of Christmas.”

⁸⁶⁸CCCB, *Guidelines for Liturgical Music*, no 80.

can easily identify with. Expressing the various theological themes of the celebration, these songs should help the faithful to comprehend and internalize the hidden depth of the mystery of God-made-man. At Christmas, it is remarkable that *Gloria*, which the angels sang at the birth of Christ, is to resound anew after being omitted throughout the season of Advent. The setting for this hymn of joy ought to make it possible for all to join and sing.

1.2.2.6 *The Season of Christmas*

According to the official teaching of the Church, the liturgical season of Christmas begins from the Vigil Mass (or Vespers) on Christmas Eve and ends with the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. This is specifically for the Latin Rite and the Ordinary Form. Shortening it to the Feast of Epiphany when the traditional “twelve days of Christmas” end or extending it to the Feast of the Presentation of our Lord when most people take down the nativity scene, Christmas tree and other decorations is only a matter of longstanding cultural or family tradition.⁸⁶⁹ Within this season, the key celebrations are as follows: the Solemnity of Christmas and its octave; the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph; the Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God; the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord; and the Feast of the Baptism of our Lord. In all these celebrations, the musical setting needs to continuously reflect the fundamental joy of Christmas even as we remain sensitive to their unique character. In fact, it is very appropriate to include a few Christmas songs to the list of songs proper to these individual feasts and solemnities. Some examples of the Christmas songs in the *NCIHB* are *Nuribanu* (Rejoice); *Ka Amuru Jesu* (As Jesus was Born); *Bianu Ndi Kwerenu* (O Come All Ye Faithful).

In the Octave of Christmas, a number of feasts are celebrated. On 26 December, it is the Feast of the First Martyr, Saint Stephen. The Feast of Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist, comes on 27 December. The next is the Feast of the Holy Innocents which comes on 28 December. The Sunday within the Octave is the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. If, however, there is no Sunday, then, it is celebrated on 30 December. The remaining days – 29, 30, 31 December – are simply called days within the Octave. The Octave Day of Christmas is on 1 January and is the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God.⁸⁷⁰ As her greatest gift from God, Mary's Motherhood is the source of all other blessings. “Although not a holyday of obligation... every Catholic should try, if possible, to go to Mass on this day.”⁸⁷¹ In Igboland, just like on Christmas

⁸⁶⁹J. Pronechen, “How Long Should We Celebrate the Christmas Season?” accessed on 24.04.2022, <https://www.ncregister.com/features/how-long-should-we-celebrate-the-christmas-season>; Cf J. G. Miller, “Christmas to Candlemas: When is the Real End of the Christmas Season?” accessed on 24.04.2022, <https://www.catholicculture.org/commentary/christmas-to-candlemas-when-is-real-end-christmas-season/>

⁸⁷⁰CDWDS, *UNLYC*, no 35.

⁸⁷¹M. Hains, “Marian Feasts in the Roman Calendar,” accessed on 24.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/marian-feasts-in-the-roman-calendar-11127>

day, majority of the faithful, especially young people, prefer to attend Mass on the New Year's Eve. The comment we made concerning the Octave of Easter similarly applies in the case of Christmas Octave and needs no repetition. In Igboland, suitable songs proper to the feasts within this Octave are not many. However, it is possible to use some suitable Christmas songs during the period. The song '*K'anyi Kwee Ka Ndi Otu Kristi*' (Let Us Sing How Christians Fought for Christ's Sake) can be used both on 26 and 28 December and any Marian song can as well serve on the new year day, especially if it emphasizes any aspect of the mystery of Mary's motherhood. Examples are *Anyi Na Ekele Gi, Virgin Maria* (We Thank You, Virgin Mary) and *O Maria* (O Mary).

After the Octave, the remaining celebrations are the Solemnity of the Epiphany and the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. In countries where it is a holy day of obligation, Epiphany is celebrated on January 6. In Igboland, it is not a holy day of obligation and so, its celebration falls on a Sunday between January 2 and 8 whereas the Baptism of the Lord comes on the Sunday after Epiphany. Starting from the early Christian centuries in the Eastern Rite, Epiphany is celebrated as the baptism of the Lord linked to his birth. According to its Greek etymology (*epiphaneia* – manifestations), it originally commemorated the different manifestations of Christ to the world – at His birth, at the visitation of the Magi, at His baptism and at the wedding at Cana. In the Latin Rite, since the 5th century, Epiphany and the Lord's Baptism have been celebrated on separate days.⁸⁷²

On the day of Epiphany in the year 2000, Pope John Paul II, during his homily, highlighted the connection between Epiphany and Christmas. He said that the light which appeared on Christmas extends its rays in the light of God's epiphany not only to the Magi but to all the peoples and nations of the whole world whom the same light continues to guide on the same journey. For this reason, he concluded, "today's liturgy urges us to be joyful"⁸⁷³ just as the search, discovery, worship and faith in Jesus filled the Magi with great joy.⁸⁷⁴ Another aspect of this connection as E. Chaney pointed out is that "the feast of Christ's divinity completes the feast of His humanity."⁸⁷⁵ Epiphany provides the other side of the mystery of the Incarnation. In Epiphany, she explained, the seemingly helpless child whom we celebrate at Christmas is also manifested as the omnipotent God, the King of kings and the Ruler of the cosmos whom the Magi have come with gifts to

⁸⁷²D. Gregson, "The Baptism of the Lord," accessed on 24.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/baptism-of-the-lord-14232>

⁸⁷³Pope John Paul II, "Epiphany Celebrates Church's Catholicity," accessed on 24.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/epiphany-celebrates-churchs-catholicity-8105>

⁸⁷⁴H. Kracht, "For the Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord," accessed on 24.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/for-the-solemnity-of-the-epiphany-of-the-lord-1623>

⁸⁷⁵Cf. E. Chaney, "The Twelve Days of Christmas," accessed on 24.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/twelve-days-of-christmas-10410>

worship. Depending on their theological significance, some Christmas songs may be selected and used on the day of Epiphany because of the connection just mentioned. However, efforts should be made to compose more suitable songs that are proper to the solemnity.

Just as Pope John Paul II showed the connection between Christmas and Epiphany, Pope Benedict XVI demonstrated how both are related to the Baptism of the Lord. During his homily on the feast of the Baptism of the Lord in 2009, he said: “And if Christmas and Epiphany serve primarily to render us capable of seeing, of opening our eyes and hearts to the mystery of a God who comes to be with us, then we can say that the Feast of the Baptism of Jesus introduces us into the daily regularity of a personal relationship with him.”⁸⁷⁶ John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance and so, being sinless, Jesus did not need baptism. Surrendering himself to baptism, therefore, “Christ renounced not His own sins, but the sins of mankind.”⁸⁷⁷ This purpose of His baptism finds its culmination on the Cross where, though sinless, He freely offered himself as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. During this baptism at Jordan, which was accompanied by signs and wonders as contained in the Preface, the voice of God the Father, thundering from heaven, bore witness that Jesus was His beloved Son in whom He is well pleased; He has been sent to bring good news to the poor, having been anointed by the Holy Spirit. All this theological explanation provides content for new compositions and helps in music selection for the feast.

Most of the events at Christ’s baptism symbolize and remind us of our own baptism, the day God the Father in the Holy Spirit acknowledged us as His adopted children and co-heirs of the heavenly inheritance.⁸⁷⁸ Thus, apart from the Easter Vigil, the Feast of the Lord’s baptism is one of the best days to celebrate the Sacrament of Baptism. Starting from Pope John Paul II who initiated it, the popes have continued the custom of baptizing a number of babies in the Vatican’s Sistine Chapel.⁸⁷⁹ During the celebration, the faithful have the opportunity to renew their baptismal promises. But even when there is no baptism, songs that may be used for the celebration of the sacrament of baptism discussed above may equally be used on this day.

1.2.2.7 *The Season of Advent*

Advent (from the Latin etymology *adventus*, that is, *ad* + *venire* – “coming to”) begins from the Evening Prayer I of the Sunday that falls on or is closest to the feast day of St. Andrew

⁸⁷⁶Pope Benedict XVI, “Baptism of the Lord,” accessed on 24.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/baptism-of-the-lord-2009-6177>

⁸⁷⁷D. Gregson, “The Baptism of the Lord,” accessed on 24.04.2022.

⁸⁷⁸R. G. Badas, “Feast of the Baptism of the Lord,” accessed on 24.04.2022, <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2021-01-10>

⁸⁷⁹C. Hermoso, “Feast of the Baptism of the Lord,” accessed on 24.04.2022, <https://mb.com.ph/2021/01/10/feast-of-the-baptism-of-the-lord/>

(November 30) and ends before the Evening Prayer I of Christmas. Celebrating the liturgy of Advent, the Church annually commemorates, as CCC puts it, the “ancient expectancy of the Messiah, for by sharing in the long preparation for the Saviour's first coming, the faithful renew their ardent desire for his second coming.”⁸⁸⁰ This explanation delineates the twofold character of Advent. Firstly, it is a season when, preparing for Christmas, we remember the First Coming of the Son of God to humanity. And secondly, it is a season when, remembering Christ’s First Coming, we look forward mentally and spiritually to His Second Coming at the end of time.⁸⁸¹ Between these two visible comings, one of which is a past event in history and the other a future event, there is a third coming which is a present but invisible event. In his sermon on Advent, St. Bernard of Clairvaux explained that the season of Advent also involves a preparation for this intermediary coming of Christ in spirit and in power, for our rest and for our consolation.⁸⁸²

The present system of ordering the liturgical calendar places Advent as the first in chronological order. After the 9th century, it was already common to find liturgical books beginning with the first Sunday of Advent which often has also become the chosen date for introducing new liturgical books. But while the reason for this chronological order might be to make everything in the Church begin with Christ’s coming, it does not mean, however, that Advent is the first in theological significance. That preeminent position belongs to Easter.⁸⁸³

In her liturgical prayers, from the first Sunday of Advent to December 16, the Church emphasizes the eschatological dimension of Advent, urging her members to look towards the second coming of Christ in glory and majesty. But from December 17-24, this emphasis shifts to concentrate more directly on the preparation for Christ’s birth in the flesh and in weakness.⁸⁸⁴ Throughout the season, however, the Church prays: ‘Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus.’ Historically, this was a cry of early Christians in distress and a form of mutual encouragement in faith and anticipation for the coming of the Prince of Peace.⁸⁸⁵

The liturgical celebration of Advent, which would seem to have originated in Spain and Southern France, had in Rome about five or six Sundays before the establishment of the four-Sunday Advent by Pope Gregory the Great towards the end of the 6th century. From the 8th century,

⁸⁸⁰CCC, no 524.

⁸⁸¹CDWDS, *UNLYC*, no 39.

⁸⁸²*The Divine Office: The Liturgy of the Hours According to the Roman Rite*, vol 1, p. 61; Cf. CCCB, *Guidelines for Liturgical Music*, no 77.

⁸⁸³M. Kwatera, “Why is Advent the beginning of the Liturgical year,” accessed on 24.04.2022, <https://thecentralminnesotacatholic.org/advent-beginning-liturgical-year/>

⁸⁸⁴E. McNamara, “Advent as a Liturgical Season,” accessed on 24.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/advent-as-a-liturgical-season-4831>

⁸⁸⁵Cardinal J. Tong, “Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus!” accessed on 24.04.2022, <https://www.examiner.org.hk/2019/11/29/maranatha-come-lord-jesus-pastoral-letter-for-advent-2019/news/hongkong/>

the nonpenitential Roman celebration of Advent slowly took a penitential character with the use of violet vestments, fasting, the omission of the *Gloria* and *Te Deum*, the removal of flowers and the silencing of the organ. This penitential character, however, did not affect the liturgical texts of the Mass and Divine Office which largely continued to express the joyful desire to receive the coming Saviour. Today, even though some of these penitential elements have been retained as part of the spiritual preparation for Christmas, the current reforms of the Missal and calendar somewhat mellowed down the penitential aspect of Advent by allowing, for instance, the moderate use of flowers and the organ.⁸⁸⁶ Let us consider the use of church organ during Advent in a greater detail.

In *MS*, as mentioned severally in this work, there is a total prohibition of solo playing of musical instruments during Lent, Advent, Easter triduum and Requiem Masses. This directive still stands valid except that the new GIRM, just like the Ceremonial of Bishops, may have considered that the penitential character of both Lenten season and Advent is not the same in mood or intent or even as CCCB expressed it, that Advent, even though it is a season of preparation like Lent, is not to be considered as a penitential season.⁸⁸⁷ Thus, it states: “In advent the use of the organ and other musical instruments should be marked by a moderation suited to the character of this time of year, without expressing in anticipation the full joy of the Nativity of the Lord. In Lent, the playing of the organ and musical instruments is allowed only in order to support the singing. Exceptions, however, are *Laetare* Sunday (fourth Sunday of Lent), Solemnities, and feasts.”⁸⁸⁸ Though not explicitly expressed, many authors interpret this to mean that solo playing of musical instruments is allowed but moderately during Advent.⁸⁸⁹ Nevertheless, there are a few authors who maintain that Advent has such a penitential character that playing of organ and other musical instruments as solos should remain prohibited as contained in *MS*. To settle these issues decisively, therefore, a definitive document is much needed.⁸⁹⁰

Since Advent “is a season filled with a spirit of hope and expectation, of excitement and increasing joy,”⁸⁹¹ the choice of musical setting for its liturgical celebration ought to differ from that of Lent. Festive songs and hymns may be selected but their festivity must be marked by a moderation that does not express the full joy of the Lord’s nativity. A typical example of the songs for advent in *NCIHB* is *Bia Leta Anyi* (Come and Visit Us). Because the season remains a time of spiritual preparation for Christmas, *Gloria* is omitted. Nonetheless, *Alleluia* is sung as the Gospel

⁸⁸⁶E. McNamara, “Advent as a Liturgical Season,” accessed on 24.04.2022.

⁸⁸⁷Cf. CCCB, *Guidelines for Liturgical Music*, no 77.

⁸⁸⁸GIRM, no 313; Cf. *Ceremonial of Bishops*, nos 41, 252 & 236.

⁸⁸⁹For details, see E. McNamara, “Use of the Church Organ During Advent,” accessed on 24.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/use-of-the-church-organ-during-advent-4841>

⁸⁹⁰G. D. Penkala, “CNP Feedback – The Organ in Advent,” accessed on 24.04.2022, <https://www.canticanova.com/articles/feedback/arte51.htm>

⁸⁹¹CCCB, *Guidelines for Liturgical Music*, no 77.

acclamation and may be contained in the songs and hymns used during the season. All the exceptions surrounding *Laetare* Sunday in Lent are applicable to *Gaudete* Sunday which is the third Sunday of Advent. During the last days in the season of Advent, every nook and cranny of the society is awash with the sound of Christmas carols.⁸⁹² Liturgical musicians must not fall into the temptation of using these songs in the liturgy before the Solemnity of Christmas as G. D. Gala rightly advised:

And so, we encourage you, particularly during the last weeks of Advent when the pressure becomes greater to succumb to congregational wishes and society's commercialization, to hold fast to the Advent traditions. Fully explore the music of the season, congregational as well as choral, vocal and organ.⁸⁹³

1.2.2.8 *The Ordinary Time of the Year*

The root meaning of the word “Ordinary” as used in the Ordinary Time of the year is difficult to ascertain. Many sources suggest that it comes from the word *ordinal* which means ‘numbered’ since the Sundays or the weeks of the Ordinary Time are numerically counted in ordinal numbers. Few other sources, however, suggest that it derives from the word ‘ordinary’ (from Latin *ordo*) which gives a connotation of time and order. In either way, the Ordinary Time of the year which translates the Latin *Tempus per Annum* (“time throughout the year”) includes the part of the Christian year that falls outside the seasons of the liturgical calendar. It was after the SVC, when the new Liturgical Calendar came into force in 1969, that the term became the official designation for the period between Epiphany and Lent, and that between Pentecost and Advent, replacing the terms, “Season after Epiphany” and “Season after Pentecost.”⁸⁹⁴

Depending on the year, the Ordinary Time has a span of 33 or 34 weeks and is celebrated in two block periods. While the first period runs from the Monday after the Baptism of the Lord up until the Tuesday before the Ash Wednesday, the second period which begins from the Monday after Pentecost ends before the Evening Prayer I of the First Sunday of Advent.⁸⁹⁵ Each year during the Ordinary Time is named after the years of the two cycles of the Lectionary, for Sundays and for weekdays. The Sunday cycle is split into three years, identified as A, B, or C. In year A, the readings are taken semi-continuously from the Gospel according to Matthew. In year B and C, the

⁸⁹²For the history and classification of Christmas Carols, see F. X. Weiser, *Handbook of Christian Feasts and Customs*, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1958), pp. 77-92.

⁸⁹³G. D. Penkala, “Christmas During Advent?” accessed on 24.04.2022, <https://www.canticanova.com/articles/xmas/art111.htm>

⁸⁹⁴D. Morrison, “Ordinary Time” accessed on 24.04.2022, <https://prayerist.com/ordinary>

⁸⁹⁵CDWDS, *UNLYC*, no 44; Cf. M. Hunt, “What is ‘Ordinary Time’ in the Liturgical Calendar,” accessed on 24.04.2022, <https://www.agapebiblestudy.com/documents/Definition%20of%20Ordinary%20Time.htm>

readings, likewise, come from the Gospel according to Mark and Luke respectively. The Gospel according to John is read for five consecutive Sundays in Year B and during the Easter season in all the three-year cycle. On the other hand, the cycle for the weekdays is divided into two years, Year I and II. The Gospels are the same for both years and are read semi-continuously, starting with Mark, and proceeding to Matthew and Luke. The Gospel according to John is taken during the Easter season.⁸⁹⁶ Knowledge of the readings helps in the composition and selection of suitable songs for each celebration.

The term ‘Ordinary’ should never be understood in the sense of lacking meaning or viewed as a ‘dull moment’ or a ‘break period’ of the Liturgical Year. On the contrary, it should be understood as an important period “in which no particular aspect of the mystery of Christ is celebrated, but rather the mystery of Christ itself is honoured in its fullness, especially on Sundays.”⁸⁹⁷ During this time, apart from Sundays and its weekdays, many important solemnities, feasts and memorials are celebrated. For our consideration here, we shall only concentrate on Sundays and Solemnities of the Lord.

a) *Sundays*

Many documents of the Church throughout history uphold the pre-eminence of Sunday as the day of the Lord, the day of the Resurrection, the day of Christians and our day as St. Jerome would say.⁸⁹⁸ In *SC*, for instance, Sunday is considered as the original feast day, the foundation and kernel of the entire liturgical year. On this day, the Church, following from the apostolic tradition which originated from the very day of Christ’s resurrection, celebrates the paschal mystery. And by gathering to hear the word of God and take part in the Eucharist, the Christ’s faithful commemorate the passion, the resurrection and the glorification of their Lord and thank God who, through the Lord’s resurrection from the dead, has begotten them again unto a living hope.⁸⁹⁹ Seeing the connection between Sunday and the very core of the Christian mystery, Pope John Paul II, in his Apostolic Letter *Dies Domini*, calls it the “Easter which returns week by week.”⁹⁰⁰ And by implication, using the Responsorial Psalm of Easter, he considers Sunday as the day which the Lord has made and in which we ought to rejoice and be glad.

While confirming that each Sunday is the sacrament of the Lord’s resurrection, B. Nadolski adds that its character is expressed by the hymns in the Liturgy of the Hours (for example, Hail

⁸⁹⁶USCCB, “Questions about the Scriptures used during Mass,” accessed on 24.04.2022, <https://www.usccb.org/offices/new-american-bible/liturgy>; Cf. CCCB, *Guidelines for Liturgical Music*, no 114.

⁸⁹⁷CDWDS, *UNLYC*, no 43.

⁸⁹⁸St. Jerome, *In Die Dominica Paschae II*, 52; *CCL* 78, 550.

⁸⁹⁹SVC, *SC*, no 106.

⁹⁰⁰Pope John Paul II, *Dies Domini* (Apostolic Letter on Keeping the Lord’s Day Holy), no 1.

the day – *Salve dies, dierum gloria*), the selection of psalms and the Canticum of the three young men. It is also expressed, over and above all, by the celebration of the Eucharist together with the Rite of the *Asperges* as thanksgiving for the incorporation into the mystery of Christ through baptism.⁹⁰¹ According to CCC, “the Sunday celebration of the Lord's Day and his Eucharist is at the heart of the Church's life”⁹⁰² and forms the “foundation and confirmation of all Christian practice.”⁹⁰³ And this is why, going by the precept of the Church even from the early years of her existence, the faithful are bound to participate actively in the Mass on Sundays and other holy days of obligation.⁹⁰⁴ According to Pope Francis, it is actually the Mass in which we encounter the living presence of Christ among us and for us that makes Sunday Christian.⁹⁰⁵ The Fathers of the SVC also strongly encourage pastors of souls to instruct the faithful and insistently teach them to take their part, on these days, in the entire Mass.⁹⁰⁶ Singing which is the way the entire faithful actively participate in the Sunday celebration should be diligently promoted. In fact, as far as possible, sung Masses (*Missae in cantu*) should be preferred.⁹⁰⁷ When, through singing, we celebrate the Sunday Mass with great solemnity, we deeply highlight one of its most characteristic elements, that is, its communitary and festive aspect.⁹⁰⁸ Since we have discussed extensively in chapter three the musical aspect of the Eucharistic celebration which specifically applies to Sunday Masses, there is no need here for a repetition.

In Igboland, on Sundays, it is also the religious custom to have catechetical instructions in the evening for all the faithful which normally ends with the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction. Depending on the parish, the Recitation of the Rosary comes before or after the catechetical instructions. The origin of the practice of Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament could be traced back to the Middle Ages when it gradually replaced the general practice which prevailed in most countries of people coming on Sunday afternoon to recite the solemn Vespers after which the Magnificat was sung just as the altar was being incensed.⁹⁰⁹ We shall discuss the format for the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction in the next chapter. Now, let us look at the solemnities of the Lord which fall within the Ordinary Time of the year.

⁹⁰¹B. Nadolski, *Liturgika: Liturgia I Czas*, vol 2, p. 41.

⁹⁰²CCC, no 2177.

⁹⁰³Ibid., no 2181.

⁹⁰⁴Ibid., no 2180.

⁹⁰⁵Pope Francis, “The Christian Sunday,” accessed on 25.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/christian-sunday-7430>

⁹⁰⁶SVC, *SC*, no 56.

⁹⁰⁷SCR, *Eucharisticum Mysterium*, no 26.

⁹⁰⁸Cf. M. Garrido, “The Obligation to Attend Mass on Sundays,” accessed on 25.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/obligation-to-attend-mass-on-sundays-1101>

⁹⁰⁹F. X. Weiser, *Handbook of Christian Feasts and Customs*, p. 15.

b) *Solemnities of the Lord*

Because of the special significance of Sundays, we shall, first of all, discuss the solemnities of the Lord that are celebrated on Sundays. They include: The Solemnity of the Holy Trinity, the Solemnity of Christ the King and in Nigeria, the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ. Lastly, we shall discuss the solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus which falls on a Friday.

i) *The Solemnity of the Holy Trinity*

The mystery of the Holy Trinity is the greatest dogma of the Christian faith. For the first millennium of Christianity, as Pope Alexander II (1073) declared, each day of the liturgical year was dedicated to the honour and adoration of the Blessed Trinity, even though no special feast in honour of this mystery was celebrated. A special Mass text in honour of the Blessed Trinity was introduced and incorporated in the liturgical books of the Roman rite in a bid to fight the Arian heresy which denied the full divinity of Christ. Beginning from the 9th century and using a Mass text attributed to Abbot Alcuin (804), many bishops of the Frankish kingdoms promoted a special feast of the Holy Trinity in their different dioceses from where the custom spread to different parts of Europe. The celebration which, in different places, was held on different Sundays was later, in 1334, ordered to be celebrated universally on the Sunday after Pentecost by Pope John XXII who accepted and added the solemnity to the official calendar of the Western Church. This time, a new Mass text was published for this solemnity which has today remained a great annual festival of Christianity.⁹¹⁰

Since the three Persons of the Holy Trinity contributed to and equally shared in the work of human redemption, P. Parsch interpreted this feast as the grand finale of all the preceding feasts which commemorated particular aspects of the mystery of Christ. Expressing this idea, he also demonstrated that each Sunday is actually the day of the Most Holy Trinity:

The feast of the Most Holy Trinity may well be regarded as the Church's *Te Deum* of gratitude over all the blessings of the Christmas and Easter seasons; for this mystery is a synthesis of Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, Ascension and Pentecost... Sunday after Sunday we should recall in a spirit of gratitude the gifts which the Blessed Trinity is bestowing upon us. The Father created and predestined us; on the first day of the week He began the work of creation. The Son redeemed us; Sunday is the "Day of the Lord," the day of His resurrection. The Holy Spirit sanctified us, made us His temple; on Sunday the Holy Spirit descended upon the infant Church. Sunday, therefore, is *the* day of the Most Holy Trinity.⁹¹¹

⁹¹⁰Ibid., pp. 254-255.

⁹¹¹P. Parsch, *The Church's Year of Grace* [in:] "Trinity Sunday," accessed on 25.04.2022, <https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2021-05-30>

The Church does not aim at mere speculative formulation of the mystery of the Holy Trinity, but rather at its proclamation and celebration in liturgical actions. This occurs through the mysteries of the Christian life, especially through baptism, and later also through the other sacraments administered in the name of the Holy Trinity.⁹¹² In the various liturgical celebrations, the sign of the Cross we usually make at the beginning and at the end, the prayers we address to God through Christ in the Holy Spirit, and the different doxologies we sing are some of the ways of invoking, praying to and glorifying the name of the Blessed Trinity. As it concerns appropriate liturgical songs for this feast, there is just one in *NCIHB* and it is very popular in Igboland: *Ato N'ime Otu Chineke* (Three in One God). There is need for more compositions and the great richness of the liturgical texts is enough inspiration for composers.

ii) *The Solemnity of Christ the King*

With the encyclical *Quas Primas* which was promulgated on December 11, 1925, Pope Pius XI inserted a special feast of the Kingship of Jesus Christ which was dear to his heart into the Sacred Liturgy. In this encyclical, based on scriptural passages from the Old and New Testaments, he explained the doctrine of the Kingship of Christ and concluded that it was right that “the Catholic Church, which is the kingdom of Christ on earth, destined to be spread among all men and all nations, should with every token of veneration salute her Author and Founder in her annual liturgy as King and Lord, and as King of Kings.”⁹¹³ The institution of this feast for the universal Church became necessary in a world bedevilled by atheism, secularism, communism, anti-clericalism etc., a world where a greater number of the people have driven Jesus Christ and His holy law away from their lives and refused to submit to His rule, either in their private affairs or in politics.⁹¹⁴ The Supreme Pontiff, therefore, explained that the society at large will receive great blessings of peace, harmony, real liberty and well-ordered discipline when all people, both in public and private life, recognize that Christ is King whose kingdom has no end and then, allow Him to reign in their hearts, wills, minds, and bodies.⁹¹⁵

As action speaks louder than voice, the pope was convinced that the annual liturgical celebration of our sacred mysteries instructs people in the truths of faith and brings them to appreciate the inner joys of religion far more effectively than any official pronouncement of the Church’s teaching.⁹¹⁶ Today, the feast is no longer celebrated on the last Sunday of October as originally decreed but on the last Sunday of the liturgical year. Pope Paul VI effected the change

⁹¹²Cf. I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 412.

⁹¹³Pope Pius XI, *Quas Primas (On the Feast of Christ the King)*, no 12.

⁹¹⁴Cf. *Ibid.*, no 1.

⁹¹⁵Cf. *Ibid.*, no 19.

⁹¹⁶*Ibid.*, no 21.

in 1969 when, promulgating the revised liturgical calendar, he raised the feast to the status of a solemnity. And actually, the shift of the feast day to the end of the liturgical year fits the theme of the solemnity of Christ the King. More strongly, it stresses the connection between the Kingship of Christ and His second coming when everything will be subjected under His dominion.⁹¹⁷ As the scripture says, “when everything has been subjected to him, then the Son himself will be subjected to the One who has subjected everything to him, so that God may be all in all.” (I Cor. 15: 28)

On the solemnity of Christ the King, only songs that mainly emphasize His royal dignity and similar themes as we can find in the liturgical texts should be preferred for use. In Latin, *Christus Vincit, Christus Regnat* which is today used as an interval signal for Vatican Radio is a good example. In Igboland, such liturgical songs are very few and there is need for more compositions. A very popular song commonly used on this day is titled *Ka Pilate Juru Jesu I Bu Onye Eze?* (When Pilate asked Jesus, are You a King?). Because we have already discussed the *Corpus Christi* procession that follows the Mass on this day, we shall not repeat it here.

iii) *The Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ*

In the course of history, festivals have been instituted according as the needs or the advantage of God’s people seemed to demand. Some were instituted, for example, when the people were faced with a common danger or attacked by insidious heresies. Others were instituted in an effort to encourage the faithful to piously reflect on some mystery of faith or some divine blessing. In the case of the feast of Corpus Christi, the specific cultural and historical context for its institution was when the light of devotion and worship of the Blessed Sacrament started to grow dim and the effort was to bring people back to the path of rendering public homage to Christ by means of solemn processions and prayer of eight days’ duration.⁹¹⁸

We have already discussed the theology of the Eucharist in our chapter three and also traced a very brief history of the solemnity in our discussion on the Eucharistic processions. Here, we shall further look at the theological explanation from the aspect which Pope Benedict XVI highlighted in one of his homilies during the Mass for the solemnity on June 6, 2010 in Cyprus. He said that in the Church’s tradition, *Corpus Christi* which is the name given to this feast in the West designates three distinct realities which include the physical body of Jesus, his eucharistic body and his ecclesial body. In his words:

⁹¹⁷D. D. Emmons, “The Solemnity of Christ the King,” accessed on 25.04.2022, <https://simplycatholic.com/the-solemnity-of-christ-the-king/>

⁹¹⁸Pope Pius XI, *Quas Primas*, nos 22 & 23.

By reflecting on these different aspects of the *Corpus Christi*, we come to a deeper understanding of the mystery of communion which binds together those who belong to the Church. All who feed on the body and blood of Christ in the Eucharist are ‘brought together in unity by the Holy Spirit’ (*Eucharistic Prayer II*) to form God’s one holy people. Just as the Holy Spirit came down upon the Apostles in the Upper Room in Jerusalem, so too the same Holy Spirit is at work in every celebration of Mass for a twofold purpose: to sanctify the gifts of bread and wine, that they may become the body and blood of Christ, and to fill all who are nourished by these holy gifts, that they may become one body, one spirit in Christ.⁹¹⁹

The compendium of Catholic theology on the Eucharist is contained in the hymns which St. Thomas Aquinas composed for this feast at the instance of Pope Urban IV. Their relevance for the liturgy remains everlasting, giving us the language of worship and devotion to the Blessed Eucharist. As S. A. Mann commented: “Each of these hymns provides great doctrinal statements of the truths of the Incarnation, the Paschal Mystery, and the Eucharist while expressing devotion to Jesus Christ as Lord and Redeemer.”⁹²⁰ In the same line of commendation, F. X. Weiser stressed that “the splendour, depth, and devotion of the prayers and hymns that Saint Thomas wrote have enriched the liturgy with one of its beautiful rituals. They are still in use today, admired and appreciated by people of all faiths.”⁹²¹

Noteworthy also is the fact that some of the stanzas from the five popular hymns he composed have been used for centuries as independent hymns in honour of the Blessed Sacrament. The five hymns are: *Sacris Solemniis* (the fifth stanza is used as *Panis Angelicus*), *Pangue Lingua Gloriosi* (the last two stanzas are used as *Tantum Ergo*), *Verbum Supernum Prodiens* (the last two stanzas are used as *O Salutaris Hostia*), *Lauda Sion Salvatorem*, and *Adoro Te Devote* (a hymn of Eucharistic thanksgiving). We can finally add *Ave Verum Corpus* which is the most popular non-liturgical hymn he composed in honour of the Blessed Sacrament.⁹²² One of these hymns *Lauda Sion Salvatorem* which is used as an optional sequence at the Mass is greatly admired for its content which is partly epic, but mostly lyric and didactic in character.⁹²³ The last few stanzas of this sequence are used alone as *Ecce Panis Angelorum*. In Igboland, the sequence is generally recited, often because of its length. It is, however, possible to sing its shorter form (that part which forms the *Ecce Panis Angelorum*) as indicated in the lectionary.

⁹¹⁹Pope Benedict XVI, “Holy Mass for the Solemnity of Corpus Christi,” accessed on 25.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/holy-mass-for-the-solemnity-of-corpus-christi-6499>

⁹²⁰S. A. Mann, “Corpus Christi: Our Debt to St. Thomas Aquinas,” accessed on 25.04.2022, <https://catholicexchange.com/corpus-christi-our-debt-to-st-thomas-aquinas>

⁹²¹F. X. Weiser, *Handbook of Christian Feasts and Customs*, p. 260.

⁹²²For more details, *Ibid.*, pp. 262-264.

⁹²³H. Henry, “Lauda Sion,” [in:] *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910), vol 9, accessed on 25.04.2022, <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09036b.htm>

For every Eucharistic hymn or song, its theological and liturgical merit must be considered in order to make a correct decision as to when and where to use it. Some are suitable for the Eucharistic celebration while others are more fitting only for Eucharistic adoration or for Eucharistic processions. Ireneusz Pawlak observed that Polish Eucharistic songs were associated more with the Corpus Christi procession and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament than with the Mass liturgy. From the 14th century when the feast of Corpus Christi was first introduced in Poland, it was not until the 20th century, especially in its second half, that songs related to the Mass liturgy began to be composed.⁹²⁴

In Igboland where the solemnity of *Corpus Christi* is celebrated on the Sunday following the Trinity Sunday with its procession postponed to the Sunday of Christ the King, there are many Eucharistic songs for the Mass liturgy but often, the distinction is not clearly made and so, most people, from time to time, use songs meant for the Mass during Eucharistic adoration or processions and vice versa. This needs to be corrected by means of continued liturgical formation and education. Also, in the next edition or volume of the *NCIHB*, instead of lumping all the Eucharistic songs together under one heading – *Oriri Nso* (Holy Communion), proper demarcation should be made after a critical analysis of the theological content of the songs. The song *Esekpurorom Gi* (I Adore You, God) in *NCIHB* which is popularly used as Communion song can be allowed because of two verses (5 & 6) out of seven that are directly related to Holy Communion. Otherwise, it is, properly speaking, a Eucharistic adoration song in its chorus and verses.

iv) *The Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus*

The historical and cultural circumstance that led to the institution of the feast of the Sacred Heart of Jesus was the coldness of peoples' hearts towards God's love and the hope of salvation occasioned by the sad and gloomy severity of Calvinism and Jansenism in the 16th and 17th century respectively. These movements propounded the heresy of inevitable damnation of a whole section of humanity.⁹²⁵ To rekindle the love and devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Pope Pius IX instituted the feast in 1856 to be celebrated yearly by the universal Church on the Friday after the octave of Corpus Christi. Since then, three papal encyclicals have contributed to a monumental spread of this devotion throughout the Church. Pope Leo XIII on May 25, 1899 wrote the first encyclical with the title *Annum Sacrum* in which he announced that the consecration of the whole world to the Sacred Heart of Jesus would take place on June 11, 1899. This same pope approved the votive Mass of the Sacred Heart on the First Friday of each month and added new invocations

⁹²⁴I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, pp. 414-415.

⁹²⁵Cf. Pope Pius XI, *Quas Primas*, no 23.

to the existing litany.⁹²⁶ On May 8, 1928, the second encyclical titled *Miserentissimus Redemptor* was issued by Pope Pius XI to declare acts of reparation and atonement every year on the Feast of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. The third which was written on May 15, 1956 by Pope Pius XII on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the institution of the feast day was a landmark encyclical on devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus – *Haurietis Aquas*. Expressing his intention for writing it, the Roman Pontiff said:

Finally, moved by an earnest desire to set strong bulwarks against the wicked designs of those who hate God and the Church and, at the same time, to lead men back again, in their private and public life, to a love of God and their neighbor, We do not hesitate to declare that devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus is the most effective school of the love of God; the love of God, We say, which must be the foundation on which to build the kingdom of God in the hearts of individuals, families, and nations.⁹²⁷

Prayers and devotions to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, it must be mentioned, did not start from the 20th century with the efforts of these popes. The origins are traceable to the Patristic Fathers like St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Irenaeus, Origen, St. Justin Martyr, St. Jerome etc. In the 11th century, the writings of Benedictine and Cistercian monasteries helped to renew the devotion just as new zeal and energy were injected into it during the time of St. Bonaventure and St. Gertrude in the 13th century. The devotion which began to spread around France in 1670 with the genuine effort of St. John Eudes who composed the first Mass and Office of the Sacred Heart was reinvigorated and officially adopted in the country consequent upon the divine revelations to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque in 1675. Finally, it was the message which St. Mary of the Divine Heart received from Christ in the late 19th century that motivated the writing of the first encyclical by Pope Leo XIII.⁹²⁸

In Igboland, the devotion to the Sacred Heart is waxing strong in different parishes and institutions. Because it is not a Holy Day of obligation and falls on a weekday, it is mainly celebrated with the deserved solemnity only in the seminaries and houses of formation. Nevertheless, because it is a celebration with the dignity of the first class and has many devotees, pastors of soul should endeavour, in their celebrations, to upgrade the degree of its solemnity as we also suggested in the case of the octaves of Christmas and Easter. As much as possible, let them make the celebration a sung liturgy with suitable songs that center on the theme of love for Jesus whose heart was pierced for our sake. A liturgical song like *Jesus, Meek and Humble of*

⁹²⁶I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 416.

⁹²⁷Pope Pius XII, *Haurietis Aquas*, no 123.

⁹²⁸Friarmusings, "Solemnity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus," accessed on 25.04.2022, <https://friarmusings.com/2019/06/28/solemnity-of-the-sacred-heart-of-jesus-2/>

Heart is also fitting for the liturgy. One can as well use songs focusing on contrition and repentance from sins which wound the heart of Jesus; this group of songs may also apply during Lent. In *NCIHB*, the songs for this feast which are grouped under the old Igbo songs include: *Anyi Nile No N'uwa* (All of Us in the World); *Obi Di Nso* (Sacred Heart); *Obi Jesu I Bu Nchekwube Nke Anyi* (Heart of Jesus, You Are Our Hope); *Obi Jesu Di Aso* (Sacred Heart of Jesus). For the older generations, the melody of these songs may still be familiar but since they do not have musical notations to sing them, it will be difficult for the choir and for the newer generations to continue to sing. There is, therefore, need to modernize those songs and extend their relevance by providing musical notation and harmony for them.

1.2.3 Sanctoral Cycle

The veneration or cult of saints has been known in the Catholic Church right from its early times, 2nd century in the East and 3rd century in the West. At this early beginning, it had two main characteristics: one, it was only directed to martyrs, confessors, and bishops and two, it was strictly restricted to saints within a given locality.⁹²⁹ By the 5th and 6th centuries, however, it became possible to include saints outside a particular locality and “this extension, at once geographical and theological, led to the elaboration of a universal sanctoral cycle.”⁹³⁰ From the Middle Ages up to the time of SVC, the sanctoral cycle had continued to undergo systematization and reforms with this norm of universality as the main guiding principle. For the purpose of our discussion here, our attention will be drawn particularly to those fixed solemnities within the sanctoral cycle which are celebrated in the universal Church.

1.2.3.1 Marian Solemnities

The Church uses the Latin theological term *latria* to denote any form of worship or devotion given to God alone. *Latria* is different, both in kind and in degree, from any form of veneration we give to a mere creature of God. The lesser and limited kind of veneration we give to creatures whose co-operation with God’s plan of salvation has benefited us is termed *dulia*. This is applicable to the angels and saints in heaven. Among these creatures, however, we owe a higher form of veneration known as *hyperdulia* to the BVM because of her special and unique role in the redemptive work of God⁹³¹ by which she “is invoked by the Church under the titles of Advocate, Auxiliatrix, Adjutrix, and Mediatrix. These titles, however, are to be so understood that they

⁹²⁹P. Rouillard, T. Krosnicki (eds.), “Sanctoral Cycle,” [in:] *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, accessed on 25.04.2022, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/sanctoral-cycle>

⁹³⁰*Ibid.*

⁹³¹EWTN, “Marian Devotions,” accessed on 25.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/answers/devotions-14223>

neither take away from nor add anything to the dignity and efficaciousness of Christ the one Mediator.”⁹³² In the liturgy, it is thus impossible to omit her whenever we talk about Jesus or the Church; her mystery is integrally incorporated into the whole sphere of liturgical worship which the faithful offer to God as their primary task.⁹³³ “Indeed every authentic development of Christian worship is necessarily followed by a fitting increase of veneration for the Mother of the Lord.”⁹³⁴

Ever before any Marian feast was officially instituted, the early Church had always venerated Mary on account of her dignity as the Mother of God “under whose protection the faithful took refuge in all their dangers and necessities.”⁹³⁵ By this dignity also, she “occupies a place in the Church which is highest after Christ and yet very close to us.”⁹³⁶ But today, having instituted many feasts and solemnities in her honour, the Church continually admonishes all her children to generously foster the cult of the Blessed Virgin, especially the liturgical cult.⁹³⁷ We shall now consider two Marian solemnities with special attention but before then, let us be certain of the intention of the Church when it celebrates these feasts and solemnities in the course of the liturgical year. *SC* says:

In celebrating this annual cycle of Christ's mysteries, holy Church honors with especial love the Blessed Mary, Mother of God, who is joined by an inseparable bond to the saving work of her Son. In her the Church holds up and admires the most excellent fruit of the redemption, and joyfully contemplates, as in a faultless image, that which she herself desires and hopes wholly to be.⁹³⁸

a) *The Assumption of the BVM (August 15)*

The Feast of the Assumption originated around the 5th century and has since been celebrated as one of the oldest, the most solemn and the best loved of the Marian feasts.⁹³⁹ But it was only on November 1, 1950 that the doctrine was officially defined by Pope Pius XII as a divinely revealed dogma. In the bull *Munificentissimus Deus*, the Supreme Pontiff declared infallibly, *ex cathedra* “that the Immaculate Mother of God, the ever Virgin Mary, having completed the course of her earthly life, was assumed body and soul into heavenly glory.”⁹⁴⁰ Before this pronouncement, the Pope, first of all, highlighted the close connection between the

⁹³²Cf. *SVC, LG*, no 62.

⁹³³Pope Paul VI, *Marialis Cultus*, Introduction; Cf. I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 418.

⁹³⁴Pope Paul VI, *Marialis Cultus*, Introduction.

⁹³⁵*SVC, LG*, no 66.

⁹³⁶*Ibid.*, no 54.

⁹³⁷Cf. *Ibid.*, no 67.

⁹³⁸*SVC, SC*, no 103.

⁹³⁹Cf. Pope Benedict XVI, “Homily on the Solemnity of the Assumption of BVM,” accessed on 25.04.2022, https://www.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2011/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20110815_assunzione.html

⁹⁴⁰Pope Pius XII, *Munificentissimus Deus (Apostolic Constitution Defining the Dogma of the Assumption)*, no 44; Cf. *CCC*, no 974.

special privilege of Mary's Assumption with the unique privilege of her Immaculate Conception, the dogma of which was solemnly proclaimed by his predecessor, Pope Pius XI. He explained that God willingly exempted the BVM from the general law which specifies that even the just are corrupted after death until the last day when each body rejoins with its glorious soul. Mary, "by an entirely unique privilege, completely overcame sin by her Immaculate Conception, and as a result she was not subject to the law of remaining in the corruption of the grave, and she did not have to wait until the end of time for the redemption of her body."⁹⁴¹

The definition of this dogma has greatly doused the heat of theological debate over the centuries on this doctrinal issue just as the readings and the prayers at Mass have helped to expound its liturgical and theological understanding. The first reading speaks about the woman who gives birth to a Son destined to rule all the peoples and nations. That woman is the queen who is to take the place prepared for her at the King's right hand as the Responsorial Psalm indicates. In the Gospel, Mary sang the Magnificat, humbly acknowledging her blessedness and thanking God for the special prerogatives by which her glorification was possible. Mary's Assumption follows the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ since she always shared her Son's lot.⁹⁴² This is in line with what St. Paul says in the second reading that after Christ, the firstfruits; then comes all those who belong to him. This is also the reason Mary's Assumption is a feast of hope and expectation for the pilgrim Church on earth as the Collect and the Preface mention and as Pope John Paul II stressed in one of his homilies on the Solemnity of Assumption:

In her, assumed into heaven, we are shown the eternal destiny that awaits us beyond the mystery of death: a destiny of total happiness in divine glory. This supernatural vision sustains our daily pilgrimage. Mary teaches about life. By looking at her, we understand better the relative value of earthly greatness and the full sense of our Christian vocation.⁹⁴³

In Igboland, the repertoire of songs composed specifically for the Solemnity of the Assumption is relatively small. As a result, other Marian songs, especially if they contain the truth of the Assumption in one or two verses, are used. But even though it has not been very long since the proclamation of the dogma, efforts should be made to compose more songs that are strictly based on the theological theme and liturgical texts of the solemnity. This will surely make for a better liturgical celebration.

⁹⁴¹Pope Pius XII, *Munificentissimus Deus*, no 5.

⁹⁴²Cf. *Ibid.*, no 38; W. G. Most, "The Assumption," accessed on 25.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/teachings/assumption-208>

⁹⁴³Pope John Paul II, "Homily on the Feast of the Assumption of BVM," accessed on 25.04.2022, https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/homilies/1997/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_15081997.html; Cf. CCC, no 966.

b) *The Immaculate Conception of the BVM (December 8)*

On December 8, 1854, almost a century before the official definition of the Solemnity of the Assumption, came that of the Immaculate Conception by Pope Pius IX in the following words from the bull *Ineffabilis Deus*:

We declare, pronounce, and define that the doctrine which holds that the most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instance of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted by Almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the human race, was preserved free from all stain of original sin, is a doctrine revealed by God and therefore to be believed firmly and constantly by all the faithful.⁹⁴⁴

Let us reiterate that the divine motherhood of Mary is at the center stage of all the feasts which mark the great mysteries of Mary's life and her part in the redemptive work of God. The Immaculate Conception is the special privilege by which God prepared Mary for that motherhood just as the Assumption is the completion and the crowning of God's work in her.⁹⁴⁵ The Collect also expresses this basic truth of Mary's Immaculate Conception which was accomplished as a result of the anticipated Paschal mystery of Christ her Son. The Preface additionally underscores the fact that the Immaculate Conception signifies the beginning of the Church who is Christ's beautiful Bride without wrinkle or spot. Mary who is endowed, at conception, with the full richness of God's grace is to be for the Church an advocate of grace and a perfect example of holiness. More theological and liturgical themes for new compositions can further be gleaned from the psalms and readings at Mass.

While the feast of the Conception of Mary started earlier in the Eastern Church around the 7th century, it was introduced in the West in the 9th century and celebrated under the title "Conception of Saint Anne." Following several 12th-century theologians, Duns Scotus found the key that locked the door of opposition to the Immaculate Conception with his introduction of the concept of Redemption by preservation into theology. Towards the end of the 14th century, the feast continued to gain acceptance in most European countries with the fervent promotion of its annual and solemn celebration, first by the Franciscans, and later by the Benedictines, Carmelites and Cistercians. After the official approval of the Mass of the Immaculate Conception by Pope Sixtus IV in 1477 and the extension of its annual celebration on December 8 to the entire Church by Pope Clement XI in 1708, the stage was set for its eventual definition as an article of Catholic

⁹⁴⁴Pope Pius IX, *Ineffabilis Deus (Apostolic Constitution on the Immaculate Conception)*.

⁹⁴⁵C. Stevens, "The Assumption of Mary: A Belief Since Apostolic Times," accessed on 25.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/assumption-of-mary-a-belief-since-apostolic-times-934>

faith.⁹⁴⁶ There are many Marian liturgical songs in *NCIHB* but most of them belong to the group of old songs about which we earlier discussed. Among them, the following are appropriate for the Immaculate Conception: *Otito Ebebe Diri Nne Anyi* (Everlasting Praise to our Mother); *Ihe Anuri N'elu Uwa Nkea* (A Thing Of Joy in this World). Some of these songs are multithemed in their verses and thus, can be used for different Marian feasts; what is important is to use only the particular verses that relate to the feast being celebrated.

1.2.3.2 *St. Joseph (March 19)*

Although many of the early Patristic Fathers accorded great respect and reverence to St. Joseph in their writings, no special feast of the Church was instituted in his name up to the 15th century. At the time of the Crusades, however, a practice of private devotion to St. Joseph which arose from the Eastern Churches spread around Europe through the encouragement of great saints like St. Bernard, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Gertrude, and especially St. Teresa of Avila who was specially devoted to him. While the Franciscans, the Dominicans and the Carmelites, by the end of the 14th century, had already introduced into their liturgical calendars a Feast of St. Joseph, it was Pope Sixtus IV who established it on March 19 as an annual feast of the lowest rank for the entire Church just as Pope Gregory XV declared it a holy day of obligation in 1621.⁹⁴⁷

On December 8, 1870, Pope Pius IX, the same pope who defined the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, declared St. Joseph Patron of the Universal Church and raised the feast of March 19 to a status of a Solemnity through the decree, *Quemadmodum Deus*, promulgated by SCR. The Church, before this noble declaration, has always honoured and praised St. Joseph most highly and, in times of distress, has constantly asked for his intercession. And all this is because of the sublime dignity which God, *ab initio*, conferred on him.⁹⁴⁸ Subsequent popes after Pope Pius IX have toed his line in rekindling the fire of love and massive devotion to this humble, just and faithful servant of God. Some of them wrote outstanding documents to this effect. His immediate successor, Pope Leo XIII, on August 15, 1889, promulgated an encyclical *Quamquam Pluries* in which he strongly encouraged devotion to St. Joseph, particularly during the month of March which is specially consecrated to him. On the occasion of the centenary of this encyclical, Pope John Paul II wrote an apostolic exhortation *Redemptoris Custos* which dwelt on the person and mission of St. Joseph both in the life of Christ and that of the Church. Lastly, Pope Francis

⁹⁴⁶Cf. F. X. Weiser, *Handbook of Christian Feasts and Customs*, p. 260; Pope John Paul II, "Christ's Grace Preserved Mary From Sin," accessed on 25.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/christs-grace-preserved-mary-from-sin-8039>; R. Schihl, "History of the Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception," accessed on 25.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/teachings/history-of-the-doctrine-of-the-immaculate-conception-117>

⁹⁴⁷F. X. Weiser, *Handbook of Christian Feasts and Customs*, p. 323.

⁹⁴⁸Pope Pius IX (SCR), *Quemadmodum Deus*.

has written an apostolic letter *Patris Corde* and announced a Year of St. Joseph to mark the 150th anniversary of his proclamation as the Patron of the Universal Church.

St. Joseph is universally considered as the greatest saint after the BVM, his spouse. Into his custody, as expressed both in the Entrance Antiphon and in the Preface, “God entrusted his greatest and most precious treasures.”⁹⁴⁹ Thus, Pope Francis explained that “the greatness of Saint Joseph is that he was the spouse of Mary and the father of Jesus.”⁹⁵⁰ These are the sources of his dignity, his holiness and his glory and they are also the special motives for which he “has been proclaimed Patron of the Church, and from which the Church looks for singular benefit from his patronage and protection.”⁹⁵¹ Stemming from the same motive as well is his duty as a special minister of the Divine Economy since the beginnings of the unfolding of the whole mystery of human salvation was entrusted to his faithful care. Expressing this, the Collect also emphasizes his intercessory role through which the Church will continue to celebrate and watch over this mystery to the end of time in spite of her being always weak, under attack and in a state of peril.⁹⁵²

A suitable song for the celebration of this solemnity ought to bring out these various aspects of the faith which the liturgical texts express. In Igboland, songs that are particularly devoted to the liturgical celebration of St. Joseph are very few. The only one that is often used is *Josef Di Maria* (Joseph the Husband of Mary) and so, efforts geared towards more appropriate compositions should be enhanced. March 19 usually falls within the Lenten season and is not a holyday of obligation in Igboland. Hence, what has already been said concerning the category of solemnities which are not holy days of obligation also applies here.

1.2.3.3 *Nativity of St. John the Baptist (June 24)*

Apart from the birth of Christ Himself at Christmas, the Church liturgically commemorates the birthday of only two saints: On September 8, exactly nine months after the Immaculate Conception, she celebrates the birthday of the BVM and on June 24, six months before the birth of Christ, she celebrates the birthday of John the Baptist. The Church celebrates the birthday of John the Baptist as he was born without original sin, being filled with the Holy Spirit even from the womb of his mother (Lk 1: 15). Right from the beginning, the saint was highly venerated throughout the Church largely because of the outstanding testimonial Christ gave to him (Matt. 11:11). The Nativity of St. John the Baptist which is regarded as one of the oldest liturgical feasts in Christianity was listed by the Council of Agde in 506 among the greatest feasts of the liturgical

⁹⁴⁹Pope John Paul II, *Redemptoris Custom*, no 32.

⁹⁵⁰Pope Francis, *Patris Corde*, no 1.

⁹⁵¹Pope Leo XIII, *Quamquam Pluries*, no 3.

⁹⁵²Pope Paul VI, “On the Feast of Saint Joseph,” accessed on 26.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/on-the-feast-of-saint-joseph-9000>

year. Its ranking was so high that three Masses were celebrated exactly as on the day of Christmas.⁹⁵³ Even today, when it falls on a Sunday, its Mass formulary and the readings supersede.

Since the earlier Middle Ages, John the Baptist stood as patron of church music and is one of the four saints known to have achieved symbolic meaning as representatives of music; others include St. Cecilia, St. Wilgefortis, and St. Job.⁹⁵⁴ As described in the four Gospels, John the Baptist was a man of unparalleled virtues: self-denial and prayer, humility and obedience, truth and courage, and ardent zeal for the mission of Christ. Joyfully consecrated in the womb, he served as a great prophet and precursor of Christ who, preparing a people and a nation for the coming of their Messiah, died for the truth of the Gospel which he lived and fearlessly preached.

Going through the liturgical prayers and readings on the solemnity of St. John the Baptist which focus on the different aspects of his life and pastoral ministry, one easily finds enough themes for the composition of suitable songs for the liturgical celebration. Before now, such songs are lacking in Igboland. But if available, they can be used wherever the liturgy is most solemnly celebrated, especially in the seminaries and other houses of formation.

1.2.3.4 Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul (June 29)

When Tertullian, one of the 2nd century Patristic Fathers, said that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of Christianity, he must have also had in mind the two Princes of the Apostles, Peter and Paul, who planted the Church with their blood as we read in the Entrance Antiphon. “It was through their martyrdom,” says Pope Benedict XVI, “that they became brothers; together they founded the new Christian Rome.”⁹⁵⁵ Both of them suffered martyrdom, according to ancient tradition, under the reign of Emperor Nero around A.D. 66 or 67. While Peter’s crucifixion happened in the amphitheatre at the Vatican hill, Paul’s beheading took place outside the city. The Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul – the principal patrons of Rome – which was instituted to pay tribute to their martyrdom began from the early years of Christendom. On June 29, by the end of the 4th century, the faithful thronged the streets of Rome in pilgrimage to attend the pontifical Mass celebrated by the pope first at the Church of St. Peter and later, the same day or the following day,

⁹⁵³F. X. Weiser, *Handbook of Christian Feasts and Customs*, pp. 328-329; Cf. D. D. Emmons, “St. John the Baptist’s Birthday,” accessed on 26.04.2022, <https://simplycatholic.com/st-john-the-baptists-birthday/>

⁹⁵⁴K. Meyer-Baer, “Saints of Music,” *Musica Disciplina*, vol 9, 1955, p. 11.

⁹⁵⁵Pope Benedict XVI, “Mass Homily: Solemnity of Sts Peter and Paul,” accessed on 26.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/mass-homily-solemnity-of-sts-peter-and-paul-6823>

at the Church of St. Paul. From the 5th century, the Feast was observed in both the Eastern and Western Churches as a holy day of obligation.⁹⁵⁶

In one of his sermons on the feast day of these strong pillars of the Church, St. Augustine said: “We are celebrating a feast day, consecrated for us by the blood of the apostles. Let us love their faith, their lives, their labors, their sufferings, their confession of faith, their preaching.”⁹⁵⁷ Saying this, St. Augustine summarized the key elements of their pastoral activities and contributions to the Church which are also highlighted in the liturgical texts – the Collect, the Preface and the readings. Distinctively, this solemnity brings out the unity in diversity which Catholic Church stands for. The Preface particularly underscores how these two great saints, each with his individual charism and missionary focus, worked hard for the same goal of gathering the one family of Christ together and finally shared the one Martyr’s crown.

Appropriate liturgical songs for this solemnity ought to reflect the above elements in their lyrics which will then be expressed with corresponding musical settings. Like the Solemnity of St. John the Baptist, this solemnity also takes precedence when it falls on a Sunday and the remark earlier made about liturgical songs pertaining to the Solemnity of John the Baptist in Igboland applies here as well. Added to that, however, it is possible to use a liturgical song on the theme of martyrdom. A popular one in Igboland is *K’anyi Kwee Ka Ndi Otu Kristi* (Let Us Sing How Christians Fought for Christ’s Sake)

1.2.3.5 Solemnity of All Saints (November 1)

The canonized saints are the “saints whom the Church proclaims explicitly and publicly and without error that they are in heaven.”⁹⁵⁸ Listed both in the general and particular calendars of the Ordinary and Extraordinary Forms, the Church celebrates them during the course of the liturgical year. Besides them, however, there is a host of other saints in heaven who are uncanonized and whose number is probably greater than the officially canonized saints. The Feast of All Saints is thus “to honour not only the canonized but also and especially the uncanonized saints today.”⁹⁵⁹ In the West, this feast originated in Rome on May 13, 609 when Boniface IV, dedicating to the Blessed Virgin and all the martyrs the Pantheon (the temple to all the gods) which the Emperor Foca handed over to the Church, ordered for its anniversary. This anniversary was

⁹⁵⁶F. X. Weiser, *Handbook of Christian Feasts and Customs*, pp. 332-333; Cf. M. V. Sioun, “The Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul,” accessed on 26.04.2022, <https://thecatholicspirit.com/commentary/hotdish/the-solemnity-of-saints-peter-and-paul/>

⁹⁵⁷J. E. Rotelle (ed.), *Sermons: The Works of Saint Augustine*, (New York: New City Press, 1994), part III, vol 8, p. 201.

⁹⁵⁸M. M. Soeherman, “Solemnity of All Saints,” accessed on 26.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/solemnity-of-all-saints-3118>

⁹⁵⁹Ibid.

fixed for November 1 by Gregory III (731-741) after the consecration of a chapel in the Basilica of St. Peter to all the saints. Gregory IV (827-844) accomplished the extension of the annual celebration to the whole Church. The vigil began almost simultaneously with the feast itself, but the octave was added much later by Sixtus IV (1471-1484).⁹⁶⁰

Surely, the Church is made up of sinners, but in the Solemnity of All Saints, according to Pope Benedict XVI, “she recognizes her characteristic features and precisely in them savours her deepest joy.”⁹⁶¹ As the Entrance Antiphon of the liturgical celebration invites us to share, together with the Angels, in this festive joy, the Gospel enunciates the ethical codes of the Christian life by which we, pilgrims on earth, hope to participate eternally in the joy and blessedness of the great multitude in the heavenly Jerusalem (First Reading). In the intercessions of the saints, we rely for an abundance of reconciliation with God (Collect) who spurs us on in our frailty with their strength and good example (Preface). In Igboland, as we do not have a vast repertoire of liturgical songs composed specifically with this solemnity in mind, there is need for more suitable compositions.

1.2.3.6 *Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (November 2)*

In some countries like Poland, there is a long tradition of joining and celebrating together the Solemnity of All Saints and All Souls’ Day as two holy days of obligation.⁹⁶² In other countries like Nigeria and in Igboland, however, they are celebrated separately. While the Solemnity of All Saints is a holy day of obligation, the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed is not except if it falls on a Sunday. And when it does, it liturgically takes precedence over Sunday. The origin of this liturgical celebration on November 2 is attributed to St. Odilo, fifth Abbot of Cluny, who instituted in 948 A. D., an annual commemoration of the faithful departed in a vast family of his monasteries in Cluny from where it quickly spread to the rest of the Benedictine monasteries. Before the end of the 13th century, it had become a universal practice in the entire Church, immediately after the Solemnity of All Saints, to pray for the souls suffering in purgatory.⁹⁶³ In these two days, therefore, the Church celebrates what is traditionally called the Communion of Saints (*Communio Sanctorum*). This terminology which we constantly mention in the Creed, as CCC explains, is about the unity and cooperation that exist among brothers and sisters in Christ in

⁹⁶⁰F. Mershman, “All Saints’ Day,” [in:] *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1907), vol 1, accessed on 26.04.2022, <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01315a.htm>; Cf. M. Hargreaves, “All Saints and All Souls,” accessed on 26.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/all-saints-and-all-souls-5174>

⁹⁶¹Pope Benedict XVI, “Celebrating the Solemnity of All Saints 2006,” accessed on 26.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/celebrating-the-solemnity-of-all-saints-2006-6120>

⁹⁶²I. Pawlak, *Muzyka Liturgiczna*, p. 425.

⁹⁶³Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia, “All Souls’ Day,” *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2020, accessed on 26.04.2022, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/All-Souls-Day-Christianity>; Cf. E. McNamara, “All Souls’ Commemoration,” accessed on 26.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/all-souls-commemoration-4704>

the three states of the Church – the Church militant on earth, the Church suffering in purgatory and the Church triumphant in heaven.⁹⁶⁴

It is actually from our faith in the Communion of Saints that flows our loving responsibility to pray for the souls undergoing purification in purgatory. Fulfilling this responsibility, we are propelled by our hope in the mystery of the resurrection. Stressing this in his message to mark the millennium of the Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed established by St. Odilo, Pope John Paul II said: “In praying for the dead, the Church above all contemplates the mystery of the Resurrection of Christ, who obtains salvation and eternal life for us through his Cross... In entrusting them to the Lord we recognize our solidarity with them and share in their salvation in this wondrous mystery of the communion of saints.”⁹⁶⁵ From the afore-mentioned, one could derive the following important themes – communion of saints, prayer of intercession, forgiveness of sin, hope of resurrection and then, eternal life of happiness – which also reflect here and there in the Mass formulary and in the different options for the preface and the reading on All Souls’ Day.

Expectedly, these themes ought to reflect also in the songs to be used for liturgical celebration. In Igboland, there are many liturgical songs used for Christian funerals and those of them that express direct themes based on the scriptural and liturgical texts of the day’s liturgy should always be preferred. Some of these songs in *NCIHB* are: *Etu Jesu Siri Nwuo Kunitekwa N’onwu* (As Jesus Died and Rose); *Ukwe Laa Mma* (Farewell Song); *Jerusalem Ulo Ndokwa* (Jerusalem, Home of Peace); *Eligwe Obodo Anyi* (Heaven Our Homeland); *Dinwenu Nye Ha Ezumike Ebighiebi* (Lord Give Them Eternal Rest). The sequence of the Mass for the dead *Dies Irae* which is optional is not normally used in All Souls’ Day in Igboland.

1.2.4 Musical Analysis of Selected Songs

As we did in chapter three, we shall choose two out of the songs selected from the *NCIHB* for a brief formal analysis. The criterion for selection remains the same.

⁹⁶⁴For more details, see *CCC*, nos 954-962; Cf. *SVC, LG*, no 49.

⁹⁶⁵Pope John Paul II, “Message for Millennium of All Souls Day,” accessed on 26.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/message-for-millennium-of-all-souls-day-8408>

a) *Bianu Ndi Kwerenu – Come All Ye Faithful*

Bianu Ndi Kwerenu
Przyjdźcie, wy, wierni!

Tune: *Adeste Fideles*

♩ = 96

Bia - nu ndi kwee-nu n'a-nu-ri na ngo - ri k'u - nu we-r'o - so bia na Be - thle - hem

9 A - mu-ru ta - ta Di-nwe-nu ndi Muo - o-ma Bia - nu g'e - se-kpue - re ya bia - nu g'e - se-kpue -

16 re Ya bia - nu g'e - se - kpue - re - nu Di - nwe - nu

This song is in the key of G major and four-four time signature. It is a typical example of those songs whose texts were fitted into the foreign tune. In this case, the tune comes from the song: *O Come All Ye Faithful* composed by John F. Wade (1710-1786). As already mentioned, the major problem with this type of arrangement in Igbo language is the failure to observe the tonal requirements of the language. In this song, for instance, the words *kweenu* – believe, *wer’oso* – speedily, *Dinwenu* – Lord, *amuru* – was born etc. almost lost their meaning, having been twisted by the melodic structure of the song. However, this group of songs have a good characteristic feature of producing nice sounds simply because they followed the rules of voice leading and harmony based on chord functions.

This song which is a four-part song for the choir is in a form of refrain and verse with 20 bars and 4 verses. The ambitus of the melody is an octave. The notes used include the following: quaver, crotchet, dotted crotchet, minim and dotted minim. The intervals contained in the song are basically minor and major seconds, minor and major thirds, perfect fourths, perfect fifths and an octave. The melody is a mixture of stepwise and skipwise melodic motion. In few places, the skip is up to an interval of a perfect fifth (bar 2), a major sixth (bar 3, 14) and even an octave (bar 9). The harmonic chords and the chord progression manifest the expertise of a good composer. However, being a little complex because of the use of chromatic notes and coupled with the skipwise melodic motion, this song may not be so easy for an ordinary person to learn.

The text of the first verse reads thus: Come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant, come speedily to Bethlehem. The Lord of Angels was born today, come and adore Him, the Lord. The texts of the other three verses scripturally elucidate the mystery of the Incarnation. There is no doubt, therefore, that this is a Christmas song.

b) *Christi Ebilitego – Christ Has Risen*

Christi Ebilitego
Chrystus zmartwychwstał

Fr. C. Ezenduka

♩ = 98

Kri - stie - bi-li-te - go Too-nu Chu - kwu K'a - nyi go-ri-be - nu Too-nu Chu - kwu

11 K'a - nyi nu-ri-ba - nu Too-nu Chu - kwu Mesiah e - bi-li-te - go Too-nu Chu - kwu

This is a song written in key F major, three-four time signature and in the form of call and response by Msgr. Cyril Ezenduka who composed the highest number of songs in this hymnbook. Two cantors (a soprano and an alto) give the first short call (a) and there is the first response (rep. 1), they give the second call (b) and the first response is repeated (rep. 1) and finally comes the third call (c) and a second response (rep. 2). If the three calls and the responses make up one verse, then we can say that the song has six verses. The responses are harmonized in four parts (SATB) with simple chord progression; the harmonic chords are simply made up of chord I, IV and V. Each call is made of three bars and the first response has two bars while the second response has seven bars. The major notes used are just the crotchets and dotted minims just as the major intervals are major and minor second, major and minor third and perfect fourth. The ambitus of this piece is an octave from the tonic. As characteristic with the style of composition of Msgr. Ezenduka, this song is simple both in melody and harmony, with stepwise motion mainly.

The text of the first verse reads: Christ has risen – praise God; let us rejoice and be glad – praise God for the Messiah has risen. Based on the scriptural story of the resurrection, the other verses enumerated the witnesses who have seen the Risen Lord who won victory over Satan and death. It is evidently clear, therefore, that the song is an Easter song.

Summary

This chapter has two major parts. In the first part, we focused on the use of liturgical music during the celebrations of the other sacraments apart from the Eucharist. As we know, “liturgical music gives a clearer context for the text and action of Christ and the Church in the Sacrament.”⁹⁶⁶ This is true for all the sacramental rites we discussed above. Even outside the Eucharist, *SC* encourages communal celebration of the sacraments in which music, as much as the capabilities

⁹⁶⁶G. D. Gill, *Music in Catholic Liturgy*, p. 97.

of the congregation allow, plays a vital role. This aspect of the function of liturgical music should be greatly emphasized in Igboland where majority of the texts for the liturgical prayers, responses, acclamations are not often sung during the celebration of such sacraments like baptism, anointing and penance. In most cases, there is no composed music for these texts, especially in the vernacular language. Pastors, music directors and composers have got a responsibility to channel their energy and talent to finding a solution to this problem. When the music is composed, the choir and the different liturgical ministers should endeavour to learn and use them for a more solemn celebration and greater participation in the sacramental mysteries being celebrated. Gerald D. Gill enjoins us all to “choose to sing the Sacraments with the first possibility being the indicated texts and then, with the judgements in mind and a proper understanding of what is ‘appropriate’ or ‘suitable,’ consider an alternative when pastorally necessary. Most of all, sing the Sacraments!”⁹⁶⁷

In the second part, we discussed the notion and the importance of the liturgical year which serves as the context in which the sacraments are celebrated, determining greatly the character of the celebrations and the use of liturgical music during the celebrations. The mystery of Christ (temporal) and the saints (sanctoral) has different aspects to it and our liturgical music, especially the processional songs, must express the distinction. In Igboland, therefore, composers should avoid situations whereby a song emphasizes, for instance, the mystery of Mary’s Motherhood in its chorus, Immaculate Conception in verse one, Assumption in verse two etc. In selecting existing songs with such peculiarities, however, choir masters should limit the singing only to the particular verses that are related to the solemnity or feast being celebrated. Lastly, the lack of appropriate songs in *NCIHB* for most of the celebrations in the sanctoral cycle requires due attention. Here, we reiterate the urgent need for the production of another volume of *NCIHB* that will accommodate other suitable songs that have limited publicity.

⁹⁶⁷Ibid., p. 107.

CHAPTER FIVE: Music and the Other Liturgical Rites

In this final chapter, we shall concentrate on the use of liturgical music in other liturgical celebrations apart from the sacraments such as the Liturgy of the Hours, Holy Communion and Eucharistic Worship outside Mass and the Sacramentals.

1.1 Music and the Liturgy of the Hours

Apart from celebrating the liturgy of the hours alone as a separate prayer of the Church, we can also combine them with the Mass. We shall here consider the forms of liturgical music used for this celebration. But before that, let us, first of all, try to understand in a nutshell what this important prayer is all about and its tight connection with the Eucharist.

1.1.1 *The Notion of the Liturgy of the Hours*

From heaven, Christ came to earth to give human voice to the hymn of praise by which God is eternally glorified in heaven. Fulfilling the command of Christ who prayed unceasingly and asked us to do the same, the Church is always at prayer. The prayer-centred life of the Church could be attested to right from the apostolic times.⁹⁶⁸ Starting with individual prayers at fixed times, the apostles and the early Christians also found it necessary to find common time for prayers with one accord. Apart from prayers at dawn and at dusk which became basic, other hours were gradually added. The example of Christ who prayed at various hours of the day in different Gospel passages and of the apostles in the Acts of the Apostles gave impetus to this. Today, we have a set cycle of hours through which the whole day and the whole range of human activity is sanctified by the praises of God. It is called the *Liturgy of the Hours* or the *Divine Office*. It is also known as the *Canonical Hours* or simply, the *Breviary* which, “enriched by readings, is principally a prayer of praise and petition. Indeed, it is the prayer of the Church with Christ and to Christ.”⁹⁶⁹ One of the primary responsibilities of the Church is to continue to encourage and promote this common and public prayer by God’s people.

We have discussed the Eucharist which is the center and summit of the Christian life of prayer. By providing the necessary disposition for its fruitful celebration, the liturgy of the hours is related to the Eucharist as its excellent preparation and by extending to different hours of the day the fullness of divine worship contained in the eucharistic mystery, it also serves as a kind of necessary complement.⁹⁷⁰ For D. B. Hardy, the divine office points to the Eucharist, flows from it

⁹⁶⁸Cf. CDWDS, “Decree Promulgating the Revised Liturgy of the Hours.” [in:] *The Divine Office: The Liturgy of the Hours According to the Roman Rite*, (London: Wm Collins Sons & Co. Ltd., 1974), vol 1, p. ix.

⁹⁶⁹CDWDS, *GILH*, no 2; cf. *SVC*, *SC*, no 84.

⁹⁷⁰Pope Paul VI, *Laudis Canticum (Apostolic Constitution Promulgating the Revised Book of the Liturgy of the Hours)*; cf. CDWDS, *GILH*, nos 12-13.

and leads back to it.⁹⁷¹ Whenever we pray the divine office, Christ continues the work of human redemption and giving perfect glory to God through the Church and in the power of the Holy Spirit just as He does in the Eucharist and other sacraments.⁹⁷² In other words, “our sanctification is accomplished and worship is offered to God”⁹⁷³ as we respond to Him with the prayers and songs of the divine office. The source of this holiness is the life-giving Word of God which is the major content of the Breviary. Praying the divine office is also an earthly participation in the eternal song of praise in heaven by which the host of heavenly powers glorify the triune God. But aside of praise, the Church, in the name of Christ, uses this means to offer petitions to God for the temporal and spiritual needs of her members. While all the baptized are called to this apostolate of prayer, the bishops, the priests, the religious and other sacred ministers have greater responsibility to it by virtue of their office.⁹⁷⁴ And in order to make this apostolate truly fruitful, those who take part in it “should offer praise and petition to God with the same mind and heart as the divine Redeemer when he prayed.”⁹⁷⁵

Like every liturgical service, the divine office is never a private matter but rather belongs to the whole ecclesial community whose life it clearly expresses and affects. Whether at the diocesan or parish level, the liturgy of the hours should ideally be an ecclesial celebration. Each local church is to celebrate it communally together with her ordained ministers whose duty it is to lead the celebration and prepare the faithful with instructions on the best way to participate fully and actively.⁹⁷⁶ This form of communal celebration, especially for morning and evening prayers which are the chief hours of the day, is highly recommended for sacred ministers, clerics, religious men and women living or meeting together.⁹⁷⁷ Unless for a serious reason, even when the faithful are absent, the bishop and the priests are commissioned by the Church to pray the breviary at the proper canonical hours for the benefit of the flock entrusted to their care and for the salvation of the whole world. Included in this prayer is the Office of the Reading which nourishes them spiritually and also enriches the people of God whom they teach. By this mandate, the Church ensures that the regular duty of the whole community to celebrate the liturgy of the hours is at least fulfilled in their persons and that Christ’s prayer is ever continuous in the Church. Nevertheless, lay groups and families are also called to a communal celebration of some parts of the divine office

⁹⁷¹D. B. Hardy, “Praying with the Church – the Divine Office,” accessed on 27.04.2022.

⁹⁷²Cf. SVC, SC, no 83.

⁹⁷³CDWDS, *GILH*, no 14.

⁹⁷⁴*Ibid.*, nos 16-17.

⁹⁷⁵*Ibid.*, no 19; cf. Pope Paul VI, *Laudis Canticum*.

⁹⁷⁶Cf. Pope Paul VI, *Laudis Canticum*; CDWDS, *GILH*, nos 20-23.

⁹⁷⁷Cf. SVC, SC, no 99.

whenever possible.⁹⁷⁸ But when common celebration is not attainable, individual recitation of the hours in its stead suffices.

1.1.2 *The Liturgy of the Hours outside the Mass*

Generally, the divine office is celebrated as a separate prayer outside the Eucharist. Its essential structure which remains the same, whether in common or in private, is governed by its own set of rules and integrates elements from other Christian celebrations in its own unique way. As a result, after a hymn, there is always a psalmody, followed by a long or brief reading of Holy Scripture, and ultimately a petition prayer.⁹⁷⁹ Other elements of this prayer include the invitatory antiphon and the canticles.⁹⁸⁰ The fundamental principles governing the use of these elements as musical forms used at Mass similarly apply here and having discussed them, there is no need for repetition. The only musical form here that requires a further explanation is the canticle. Though it can be used at Mass for thanksgiving after Holy Communion, we decided to discuss it under the liturgy of the hours where it is predominantly in use.

Etymologically, it is a derivative from Latin *canticulum* (diminutive of *canticum* – a song, *canere* – to sing). Canticles are songs expressive of the soul’s joy; a joyful litany in thankful response to God’s prodigious and decisive intervention in human existence.⁹⁸¹ They are liturgical hymns taken from the scriptures which, even though do not belong to the Book of Psalms, resemble the psalms in form and content.⁹⁸² Making a distinction, however, between a canticle and a psalm, Cardinal Giovanni Bona mentioned that the former is an unaccompanied vocal song whereas the latter is an accompanied vocal song.⁹⁸³ The use of canticles in Christian liturgy began earlier in the East where it was possibly borrowed from the Jewish custom. But by the 4th century, its use had already spread to the West.⁹⁸⁴ From the *General Introduction to the Liturgy of the Hours* (GILH), we can distinguish three categories of canticles in accordance with its current use in the liturgy of the hours. The first are the Old Testament canticles which are used at morning prayer in between the first and second psalm. Apart from the canticle of the three children which is alternated on Sundays, each weekday of the four-week cycle has its proper canticle. These canticles are regarded as *cantica minora* or “lesser canticles.” The second are the New Testament

⁹⁷⁸CDWDS, *GILH*, nos 27-28.

⁹⁷⁹*Ibid.*, no 33.

⁹⁸⁰For more explanations regarding these elements, see A. G. Martimort, I. H. Dalmais, P. Jounel, *The Church at Prayer: The Liturgy and Time*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1986), vol 4, pp. 207-232.

⁹⁸¹L. Deiss, *Visions of Liturgy and Music for a New Century*, p. 100.

⁹⁸²Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia, “Canticle,” [in:] *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2018, accessed on 25.05.2021, <https://www.britannica.com/topic/canticle>

⁹⁸³H. Henry, “Canticle,” [in:] *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1908), vol 3, accessed on 27.04.2022, <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/03301a.htm>

⁹⁸⁴L. F. Hartman, “Canticles, Biblical,” [in:] *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, accessed on 27.04.2022, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/canticles-biblical>

canticles taken from the Epistles or the Book of Revelation which occur after the two psalms at evening prayer. The last are the gospel canticles of Zechariah, of Mary and of Simeon which are referred to as the *cantica majora*, “the greater canticles,” or the “evangelical canticles.”⁹⁸⁵ While the first two which are placed under the psalmody are sung once in a four-week cycle, the gospel canticles which have a different position before the intercession are sung everyday while standing, during the morning, evening and night prayers. Actually, they “are to be treated with the same solemnity and dignity as are customary at the proclamation of the gospel itself.”⁹⁸⁶

Like we said concerning Mass, “the sung celebration of the Divine Office is the form which best accords with the nature of this prayer. It expresses its solemnity in a fuller way and expresses a deeper union of hearts in performing the praises of God.”⁹⁸⁷ Excepting the readings, all the elements of this prayer such as the dialogues, hymns, psalms, canticles and responsories, by their nature and function, require singing and deliver their fuller meaning when sung. Even the Lord’s prayer and the intercessions are also suited to singing.⁹⁸⁸ Thus, the sung form of its celebration is recommended not only for the clergy and the religious but for all Christian communities praying the divine office in common or in choir, particularly on Sundays and holy days of obligation. For its practical reasons and useful advantages, the principle of progressive solemnity which we mentioned in our discussion of the Mass also applies here. “Its application offers the possibility of a rich and pleasing variety. The criteria are the particular day or hour being celebrated, the character of the individual elements comprising the office, the size and composition of the community, as well as the number of singers available in the circumstances.”⁹⁸⁹ More information and explanations about singing the liturgy of the hours are found in GILH.⁹⁹⁰

In Igboland, the ideal which is singing the entire divine office, especially for morning and evening prayers, is observed only in the seminaries and houses of formation on Sundays and Solemnities. Among priests and religious living together, even during retreats and recollections, only the hymn, the gospel canticle and the Lord’s prayer are often sung, and sometimes too, the invitatory antiphon and its psalm. Worse situation is found among the people of God, many of whom have little or no idea of this important prayer of the Church. But the example of a few pastors who, in accordance with the directive of *SC* and *MS*, have tried to instruct and introduce the faithful to the practice of reciting, or better, singing the Liturgy of the Hours together as a community, especially Vespers on Sundays, is worthy of emulation. If we can make real effort to

⁹⁸⁵CDWDS, *GILH*, nos 136-138; cf. Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia, “Canticle.”

⁹⁸⁶CDWDS, *GILH*, no 138.

⁹⁸⁷SVC, *SC*, no 37; cf. CDWDS, *GILH*, no 268.

⁹⁸⁸Cf. USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, nos 232 and 240; CDWDS, *GILH*, no 269; SVC, *SC*, no 38.

⁹⁸⁹CDWDS, *GILH*, no 273.

⁹⁹⁰*Ibid.*, nos 267-284.

deepen our knowledge of the breviary, especially the psalms, we shall be more convinced that there is no time well spent as the time spent together in singing the divine office.⁹⁹¹

1.1.3 *The Liturgy of the Hours within the Mass*

The GILH permits, in particular cases and when the circumstances require it, the celebration of the Mass together with the divine office in public or in common, provided that both belong to one and the same office.⁹⁹² Known as the “Conventual” Mass or Mass “in Choir,” this Mass constitutes in conjunction with the divine office “the sum of all Christian worship – that full praise which is offered daily to Almighty God with a solemnity that is also outward and public.”⁹⁹³ By their law or constitution, it is the norm for the Orders of canons, of monks and of nuns to celebrate and participate in daily conventual Mass (*missa conventualis*).⁹⁹⁴ This type of Mass celebrated in churches where the Divine office is meant to be recited or sung publicly every day is also known as “chapter” Mass (*missa capituli*) because the cathedral or collegiate chapters are also enjoined to do so.⁹⁹⁵ Because of its solemnity and dignity, this form of celebration is most fitting for singing, with the full and active participation of the entire community, whether of religious or of canons.⁹⁹⁶

According to GILH, in celebrating morning prayers, in choir or in common, with the Mass, the celebration may begin either with the introductory verse and hymn of morning prayer, particularly on weekdays, or with the entrance song, procession, and the celebrant’s greeting, particularly on Sundays and holy days. In that case, one of the introductory rites is thus omitted. The psalmody which is then to follow replaces the penitential rite and is followed by the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* if the rubric requires so. The Mass continues as usual with the collect, the readings, the homily, and the general intercessions. But on weekdays, the intercessions of morning prayer can replace the customary form of the general intercessions at Mass. The canticle of Zechariah with its antiphon from the morning prayer comes after the communion song. From the prayer after communion which follows the canticle, the rest is as usual.⁹⁹⁷

⁹⁹¹Cf. SVC, SC, no 100; SVC, MS, no 39; R. Lowry “The Divine Office and the Priest’s Personal Prayer,” *The Furrow*, vol 18, no 8, 1967, p. 434, accessed on 27.04.2022, https://www.jstor.org/stable/27659456?seq=8#metadata_info_tab_contents

⁹⁹²CDWDS, *GILH*, no 93.

⁹⁹³C. Cicognani, A. Carinci, “Instruction on Sacred Music and the Sacred Liturgy,” p. 52.

⁹⁹⁴Cf. F. J. Griffiths, “The Mass in Monastic Practice: Nuns and Ordained Monks, c. 400-1200,” p. 731, accessed on 27.04.2022,

https://www.academia.edu/44494944/The_Mass_in_Monastic_Practice_Nuns_and_Ordained_Monks_c_400_1200

⁹⁹⁵Cf. A. Fortescue, “Chapter and Conventual Mass,” [in:] *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, (New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910), vol 9, accessed on 27.04.2022, <https://www.newadvent.org/cathen/09790a.htm>; SVC, SC, no 95.

⁹⁹⁶GIRM, no 114.

⁹⁹⁷CDWDS, *GILH*, no 94.

When any of the daytime hours or the evening prayer is to be celebrated immediately before the Mass, the format is practically the same as with the morning prayer. It is different, however, when they have to come after the Mass. Here, the Mass is celebrated normally until the prayer after communion which is then followed by the psalmody of the hour without introduction. After the psalmody, in either case, the short reading is omitted. What follows, therefore, at daytime hour is the concluding prayer and the normal dismissal at Mass. But in the case of the evening prayer, the canticle of Mary with its antiphon follows the psalmody before the concluding prayer and the priest's final blessing. The intercessions and the Lord's prayer of the Vespers are also omitted.⁹⁹⁸

In Igboland, the divine office is often recited within the Mass during the priests' retreats and recollections. As observed in some cathedrals also, the office of the dead, sometimes in vernacular, is sung by the whole faithful within the funeral Mass for departed clergymen. But still to be encouraged more, within or outside the Mass, is the singing together of the divine office among priests, religious men and women living or staying together for a common purpose. It is always a thing of great joy to do so.

1.2 Music during Holy Communion and Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass

Here, we shall discuss the use of liturgical music during Holy Communion and Eucharistic worship outside the Mass after a brief introduction in order to understand the history and practice of these liturgical activities.

1.2.1 Brief Introduction

The Reservation of the Eucharist is an ancient practice dating back to the 2nd century of the Church's history. Among other Patristic Fathers, St. Justin Martyr and St. Cyprian of Carthage described it in their different writings.⁹⁹⁹ While the principal and original reason for this practice which is strongly founded on the doctrine of the Real Presence is the administration of viaticum, the secondary reasons pertain to the giving of communion outside Mass and for the adoration of Jesus Christ present in the Blessed Sacrament.¹⁰⁰⁰ The official post-conciliar teaching of the Church on these practices is contained in the ritual book, *Holy Communion and the Worship of the*

⁹⁹⁸Ibid., no 97.

⁹⁹⁹New York Archdiocesan Office of Liturgy, "Guidelines for the Worship of the Eucharist Outside of Mass," p. 2, 27.04.2022, <https://nyliturgy.org/wp-content/uploads/ADNYEucharisticAdorationGuidelines.pdf>

¹⁰⁰⁰Cf. N. D. Mitchell, "Eucharist Outside Mass, Worship Of The," [in:] *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, accessed on 27.04.2022, <https://www.encyclopedia.com/religion/encyclopedias-almanacs-transcripts-and-maps/eucharist-outside-mass-worship>; CDWDS, *Eucharistiae Sacramentum*, no 5, accessed on 27.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/eucharistiae-sacramentum-2209>

Eucharist Outside Mass which was promulgated with the decree, *Eucharistiae Sacramentum* (21 June, 1973) by the CDWDS. This ritual book greatly reflects the earlier teaching from the Instruction on the worship of the Eucharist, *Eucharisticum mysterium* (1967), by the SCR.¹⁰⁰¹

The reception of Holy Communion at Mass is no doubt the ideal. All the faithful must be encouraged always to attain such sacramental participation in true disposition of mind and soul. Nonetheless, it is also proper to give communion as frequently as possible to the faithful, especially the sick, the aged and the dying, who are not able to participate in the Eucharistic sacrifice. “In this way they may realize that they are united not only with the Lord’s sacrifice but also with the community itself and are supported by the love of their brothers and sisters.”¹⁰⁰² From communion outside Mass, the common practice of Eucharistic worship outside Mass emanated around the 11th and 12th centuries.

The CCC (1994) confirmed that Jesus who is really present in the Eucharist is to be honored with the worship of adoration as a proof of our gratitude and an expression of our love.¹⁰⁰³ Thirty years after the promulgation of the ritual book, Pope John Paul II reiterated that this worship outside Mass which is of inestimable value for the life of the Church is strictly linked, just as Holy Communion outside Mass, to the Eucharistic celebration. He explained: “The presence of Christ under the sacred species reserved after Mass – a presence which lasts as long as the species of bread and of wine remain – derives from the celebration of the sacrifice and is directed towards communion, both sacramental and spiritual.”¹⁰⁰⁴ As CDWDS put it, the Eucharistic sacrifice of the Mass is truly the origin and the purpose of the Eucharistic worship outside Mass.¹⁰⁰⁵ Expanding further, the Pope wrote: “The Eucharist is a priceless treasure: by not only celebrating it but also by praying before it outside of Mass we are enabled to make contact with the very wellspring of grace. A Christian community desirous of contemplating the face of Christ in the spirit... cannot fail also to develop this aspect of Eucharistic worship, which prolongs and increases the fruits of our communion in the body and blood of the Lord.”¹⁰⁰⁶ The Supreme Pontiff, having personally drawn strength, consolation and support from it, finally challenged pastors to champion and encourage this form of spiritual and prayerful encounter with the Lord by their word

¹⁰⁰¹Encyclopedic Dictionary of Bible and Theology, “Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass,” accessed on 27.04.2022, <https://www.biblia.work/dictionaries/eucharisticworship-outside-mass/>

¹⁰⁰²CDWDS, *Eucharistiae Sacramentum*, no 14.

¹⁰⁰³CCC, no 1418; Cf. Pope John Paul II, *Dominicae Cena*e (Letter on the Mystery and Worship of the Eucharist), no 3.

¹⁰⁰⁴Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, no 25; cf. SCR, *Eucharisticum Mysterium* no 50.

¹⁰⁰⁵CDWDS, *Eucharistiae Sacramentum*, no 2.

¹⁰⁰⁶Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, no 25; cf. CDWDS, *Eucharistiae Sacramentum*, no 81.

and example as many saints did.¹⁰⁰⁷ With this introduction, let us consider the place of liturgical music in Holy Communion and different forms of Eucharistic worship outside Mass.

1.2.2 Music and Holy Communion Outside Mass

Generally, the situation surrounding communion outside Mass in the homes of the sick, the aged or the dying does not give much room for singing. Though one or two family members are sometimes available, it is very often a spiritual exercise between the priest and the individual person. When communion outside Mass, however, is to be celebrated in the Church or oratory or any other suitable place for the liturgical assembly by the local community, especially for a group of the faithful, in accordance with the rite of distributing Holy Communion outside Mass, singing may be incorporated. In the structure of this rite, we have the introductory rites, celebration of the Word of God, Holy Communion and the Concluding rite.¹⁰⁰⁸ Just as we do at Mass, some of the elements under the major parts of this celebration could be done in the form of singing. Under the introductory rites, for instance, the greeting and the penitential rite could be sung. One can also sing the acclamation after the reading(s) and the general intercessions coming under the celebration of the Word of God. Under the section of Holy Communion, the Lord's prayer could be sung. Depending on the number of communicants, appropriate songs could be rendered during communion and a hymn of thanksgiving after communion. The officiating priest may sing the concluding prayer after communion just as a dismissal song may be used to end the celebration.

1.2.3 Music and the Eucharistic Worship Outside Mass

The Church itself has established, based on solid and valid principles, three major forms of Eucharistic worship outside Mass which are public and communal. They include: Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Eucharistic Processions and Eucharistic Congresses.

1.2.3.1 Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

The exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, either in a monstrance or in a ciborium, is meant to lead us from an acknowledgment of Christ's abiding presence among us – which derives from the Eucharistic sacrifice – to a spiritual union with Him that culminates eventually in sacramental communion at Mass. Here lies the relationship between the exposition and the Mass. But since the Eucharistic celebration in itself includes in a higher way that spiritual communion to which exposition is intended to lead the faithful, the Church does not allow the celebration of the Mass in the same part of the Church where the Blessed Sacrament is exposed.¹⁰⁰⁹ As a public liturgical

¹⁰⁰⁷CDWDS, *Eucharistiae Sacramentum*, no 80.

¹⁰⁰⁸Ibid., no 25.

¹⁰⁰⁹Ibid., no 83; cf. SCR, *Eucharisticum Mysterium* no 61.

rite celebrated by the Church community, the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament must be scheduled at periods when it is possible for a sufficient number of the faithful to come and pray before the exposed Sacrament. Exposition of the Blessed Eucharist merely for private devotion is never allowed just as it is prohibited when it is just for the purpose of blessing the people.¹⁰¹⁰

Apart from exposition for a brief time which, in times past, was commonly called a ‘holy hour,’ there is the Solemn Annual Exposition for an extended period of time in Churches where the Blessed Sacrament is normally reserved. Though such a protracted form of exposition or ‘Forty Hours’ as it was previously called may not be strictly continuous, it offers the local community every year the opportunity of a deeper and more fervent adoration and reflection on the mystery of the Eucharist.¹⁰¹¹ A solemn exposition will be strictly continuous if the diocesan bishop, in the case of grave and general need, gives an order for an organized prayer before an exposed Blessed Sacrament in Churches where large numbers of the faithful can easily be found. It is possible, however, to interrupt a period of exposition once there is no sufficient number of the faithful to continue with the adoration. This can also happen if there is no separate chapel and Mass has to be celebrated in the same part of the Church where the Blessed Sacrament is exposed. In this case of interrupting exposition, reposition of the Blessed Sacrament at a pre-announced time may be done in a simpler manner and without singing. Not more than twice a day, this reposition is similarly followed by a re-exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at another set time by the priest after a brief personal adoration.¹⁰¹² This teaching is quite relevant in Igboland where almost every parish has a separate chapel for perpetual adoration. Pastors of soul have the duty to constantly teach and remind the faithful the implications of this welcome development so that the unfortunate situation observed in some places where the Blessed Sacrament remains exposed over a period of time with no adorers may be minimized or utterly eliminated.

The structure of the rite of exposition and benediction is divided into four stages: exposition, adoration, benediction and reposition. Exposition normally begins with a procession from the sacristy to the sanctuary, led by the altar servers with lighted candles who are then followed by the celebrant. This procession may be accompanied by an entrance song which ought to reflect the liturgical season of the day. But if the situation is such that the Blessed Sacrament is brought from the tabernacle of reservation to the altar of exposition through a procession, a suitable

¹⁰¹⁰New York Archdiocesan Office of Liturgy, “Guidelines for the Worship of the Eucharist Outside of Mass,” p. 5.

¹⁰¹¹Cf. E. Kapitan, “Exposition of the Holy Eucharist – Some Liturgical Catechesis,” accessed on 27.04.2022, https://www.dio.org/uploads/files/Worship/Rites_to_Use/Exposition--LitCatechesis_Feb2015_final.pdf

¹⁰¹²SCR, *Eucharisticum Mysterium* nos 63-65; cf. Episcopal Liturgical Commission, “Solemn Annual Exposition and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament,” *The Furrow*, vol 23, no 5, 1972, pp. 321-323, accessed on 27.04.2022, https://www.jstor.org/stable/27679557?seq=3#metadata_info_tab_contents

song for communion procession may be preferred.¹⁰¹³ However, for a more or less solemn and lengthy exposition which follows immediately after the Mass, the procession is omitted. In this case, the Mass, with no concluding rites, ends with the prayer after communion and the host consecrated within the Mass is fixed into the monstrance which is to be placed on the throne for adoration. Exposition here may be carried out in silence but once the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, the hymn *O Salutaris Hostia* (or its English/Igbo equivalent) or any other suitable Eucharistic song is intoned. At the second stanza of this hymn, the priest prepares and incenses the exposed Sacrament and observing a brief period of silence after the hymn, he genuflects with the servers and returns to the sacristy.¹⁰¹⁴

As mentioned above, the aim of exposing the Blessed Sacrament is not just to bless the people.¹⁰¹⁵ The moment of giving benediction must, first of all, be preceded by adoration which consists of “a reasonable time for readings of the word of God, songs, prayers, and a period for silent prayer.”¹⁰¹⁶ It is good to conclude the readings with a homily which exhorts the faithful and expounds the Eucharistic mystery to them. With appropriate songs or hymns of adoration, they, in turn, respond to the word of God.¹⁰¹⁷ According to the liturgy office of England and Wales, “the use of ostinato chants (such as Taizé) can effectively lead into periods of silence; gentle instrumental music can also be helpful. Where there are the resources, it may be appropriate for a choir or other group of musicians to sing a motet or piece of music by themselves.”¹⁰¹⁸ It is also necessary to select songs that harmonize with the themes of the chosen Scriptural passages and can be an aid to meditation and prayer. While common prayers such as the rosary and the Liturgy of the Hours (especially morning and evening prayers) may be celebrated within the context of the Eucharistic worship of the exposed Sacrament, the Stations of the Cross may not.¹⁰¹⁹ Above all, sufficient time should be allotted to silent prayer.

As the third stage, benediction begins when the priest and the altar servers return to the front of the sanctuary after the service of adoration. Genuflecting and then kneeling down as the *Tantum Ergo* (or its English/Igbo equivalent) or any other Eucharistic hymn is intoned, the priest incenses the Blessed Sacrament at the start of the second stanza of the hymn. Incensation is

¹⁰¹³Liturgy Office England & Wales, “Music for Exposition of the Holy Eucharist,” accessed on 27.04.2022, p. 2, <https://www.liturgyoffice.org.uk/Resources/HCW/Exposition-Music.pdf>

¹⁰¹⁴CDWDS, *Eucharistiae Sacramentum*, nos 93-94; Cf. E. McNamara, “Mass and Benediction,” accessed on 27.04.2022, <https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/mass-and-benediction-4644>

¹⁰¹⁵Cf. E. McNamara, “Mass and Benediction,” accessed on 27.04.2022.

¹⁰¹⁶CDWDS, *Eucharistiae Sacramentum*, no 89.

¹⁰¹⁷Cf. SCR, *Eucharisticum Mysterium* no 62.

¹⁰¹⁸Liturgy Office England & Wales, “Music for Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass,” accessed on 27.04.2022, p. 2.

¹⁰¹⁹For more explanations, see New York Archdiocesan Office of Liturgy, “Guidelines for the Worship of the Eucharist Outside of Mass,” pp.6-7.

optional if the ciborium is used for exposition.¹⁰²⁰ After the hymn, he chants the *Panem de Caelo...* and *Oremus...* while the people respond appropriately. Following this concluding prayer, the priest or deacon blesses the people in silence with the monstrance or ciborium.

The fourth stage is reposition which comes immediately after benediction and is done either by the priest or deacon who blessed the people or another priest or deacon. He replaces the Blessed Sacrament in the tabernacle and returns to the sacristy after genuflection as the people sing an acclamation.¹⁰²¹ In Nigeria, especially in Igboland, reposition is done a little differently. After blessing the people, the priest comes back to his position in front of the altar and removing the humeral veil, intones the acclamation – the Divine Praises – which he sings together with the entire congregation. This is followed by another acclamation, that is, *Adoremus in Aeternum* or the antiphon *Christus Vincit* if it is within the season of Easter. During the singing of this second acclamation, the priest goes to repose the Blessed Sacrament to the place of reservation. A dismissal song, often a Marian song, finally accompanies the procession of the priest back to the sacristy. While this is similar to what obtains in most countries,¹⁰²² there is no harm if only one acclamation is sung after imparting benediction. But the current practice in some parishes in Igboland where the singing of ‘charismatic songs’ is introduced while the priest blesses the people runs against the rule that recommends silence at that very moment.¹⁰²³ Worse still, the singing sometimes lasts for a long period during which some priests carry the Blessed Sacrament round the Church to bless the people.

As each of the structural stages of the rite of exposition and benediction involves music, let us conclude with this relevant and general instruction given concerning selection of music for exposition of the Holy Eucharist. It reads:

When preparing music for Exposition remember that it is a celebration of liturgy. Music is used to accompany liturgical action, enable participation and deepen people’s prayer. It is an action of the Church and so overly personal and sentimental texts and settings should be avoided. Though the Eucharist will form the core theme of much of the music chosen other themes are also appropriate. These may derive from the theme of Eucharist itself such as praise and thanksgiving, the gift of God’s creation, God’s love for us as well as the life of discipleship the Eucharist nourishes us for. Choices

¹⁰²⁰“Instructions: Exposition/ Adoration/ Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament,” accessed on 27.04.2022, <https://www.davenportdiocese.org/documents/2016/6/litInstructions-EAB2011.pdf>

¹⁰²¹CDWDS, *Eucharistiae Sacramentum*, nos 99-100; Cf. “Instructions: Exposition/ Adoration/ Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament,” accessed on 27.04.2022.

¹⁰²²Cf. New York Archdiocesan Office of Liturgy, “Guidelines for the Worship of the Eucharist Outside of Mass,” p. 7.

¹⁰²³Cf. Liturgy Office England & Wales, “Music for Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass,” accessed on 27.04.2022, p. 2.

may also be made based on the scripture readings chosen for the period of adoration, the liturgical season or a direct aspect of the Eucharist.¹⁰²⁴

1.2.3.2 Eucharistic Processions

Eucharistic processions are liturgical processions with the Eucharistic host which, together with other forms of Eucharistic worship and devotion, began to flourish around the 12th and 13th centuries as a response to questions and doubts concerning Jesus' Real Presence in the Eucharist. During these processions through the streets with songs which center on Jesus as the Eucharistic Lord, the faithful bear public witness to their common faith and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. In liturgical books like *Missale Romanum*, *Rituale Romanum* and *Caeremoniale Episcoporum*, three occasions are mentioned when Eucharistic processions can occur annually: Holy Thursday, Forty Hours Devotion and *Corpus Christi*.¹⁰²⁵ Though allowed by some customs, procession within the walls of the church is not perfectly a true procession.¹⁰²⁶ According to CDWDS, "the *Corpus Christi* procession represents the typical form of an Eucharistic procession."¹⁰²⁷ It is certainly the most popular and the most solemnly celebrated Eucharistic procession in most countries, having "special importance and meaning for the pastoral life of the parish or city."¹⁰²⁸ On June 6, 2021, calling it the hallmark of the Solemnity of *Corpus Christi*, Pope Francis highlighted the evangelical dimension of this procession which reminds us of our vocation "to go out with enthusiasm, bringing Christ to those we meet in our daily lives."¹⁰²⁹ In our description of Eucharistic processions, thus, we shall concentrate on it as a typical example.

Though this procession was solemnly approved and recommended by the Council of Trent as a public profession of the Catholic belief in Real Presence, the custom developed very early in the 14th century and was encouraged, especially by the Popes who granted special indulgences to the participants. It was Pope Urban IV (1261-1265), however, who established the feast day itself for the whole Church following the vision of St. Juliana of Liège around 1230. He also commissioned St. Thomas Aquinas to compose the Mass text for this feast and that of the Divine Office.¹⁰³⁰ Today, using different languages, many composers have put the texts of these hymns

¹⁰²⁴Liturgy Office England & Wales, "Music for Exposition of the Holy Eucharist," accessed on 28.04.2022, pp. 1-2.

¹⁰²⁵L. J. Tofari, "Eucharistic Processions: Some Common Problems," accessed on 28.04.2022, <https://www.romanitaspress.com/eucharistic-processions-common-problems>

¹⁰²⁶For more explanations, see CDWDS, "On Eucharistic Processions," *Notitiae*, vol 11, 1975, p. 64.

¹⁰²⁷CDWDS, *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy: Principles and Guidelines*, no 162.

¹⁰²⁸CDWDS, *Eucharistiae Sacramentum*, no 102.

¹⁰²⁹Pope Francis, "Homily of his Holiness Pope Francis," accessed on 28.04.2022, https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2021/documents/papa-francesco_20210606_omelia-corpusdomini.html

¹⁰³⁰Cf. C. Carstens, "*Corpus Christi* Procession: Q&A," accessed on 28.04.2022, <https://diolc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Corpus-Christi-Procession-2019-QA.pdf>

in different musical settings and some of these compositions qualify for use during Eucharistic processions.

The structure of the rite of *Corpus Christi* procession is quite similar to that of the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament treated above. It begins after Holy Communion with the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament using the Host consecrated at the Mass and ends with benediction and reposition. Singing during exposition, benediction and reposition in both structures also takes the same format. The major difference in the structure, however, lies in the second stage where adoration is replaced with a solemn procession which takes off immediately after the exposition. While depending on the decisions of the local Ordinary in accordance with local customs, the order, time, place, and other arrangements for such a procession must always be such as to respect the dignity and reverence due to the Sacrament. Though local circumstances may require that the procession returns to the same church where it began, it is more fitting when it goes from one church to another. In some places, it is customary for pastoral advantages to have stations with prepared altars where the priest blesses the people with the Eucharist after some scriptural readings, prayers and songs of adoration.¹⁰³¹

In Igboland, the Solemnity of the *Corpus Christi* is celebrated not on Thursday but on Sunday after Trinity Sunday and because it normally falls in the month of June which is the period of acute rainy season, the Bishops' Conference has used their discretion to shift its procession to the last Sunday of the liturgical year, the Solemnity of Christ the King.¹⁰³² On this day, after the post-Communion prayer and the exposition that follows, the Eucharistic procession kicks off. The different associations, organizations and prayer groups in the parish are encouraged to appear in their uniforms, line up according to the announced order of procession and possibly, organize their own singing accompanied by local instrumentation and dancing. The musical part of the celebration is often a point of attraction for non-Catholics. As the procession progresses, bells are rung at intervals for a momentary stop during which the priest blesses the people with the Blessed Sacrament. The custom of stations is non-existent. In cities or towns with more than one parish, a Church venue is chosen in accordance with local custom where the long processions through the streets and villages will terminate. When all the parishes have assembled at the proposed venue, a program of events is followed accordingly. Part of the program is the common address to be read to the Eucharistic Jesus who is the King of kings, expressing the people's joy and gratitude and appeal for more future blessings. There is also time in the program for singing and dancing in the joy of the Lord's presence, just like David before the Ark of the Lord (2 Sam.6:15). Starting with

¹⁰³¹Cf. CDWDS, *Eucharistiae Sacramentum*, nos 101-108.

¹⁰³²Cf. Archbishop V. M. Okeke, *The Holy Eucharist: Our Strength (Pastoral Letter 2019)*, no 62.

the priests and the religious, the different groups are invited to honour the Lord with their voices and dancing steps. At the end of the items on the program, the celebration comes to an end with the normal benediction and reposition of the Blessed Sacrament. There is enough to eat and drink before the people depart to their homes.

Having described briefly how the procession goes, let us make a few suggestions that can better the process. One observes, during the procession, that majority of the songs used are associated with the Solemnity of Christ the King. This leaves one with the wrong impression that the procession is that of Christ the King. Worse still, one sometimes hears songs that are completely unconnected with neither the Solemnity of Corpus Christi nor Christ the King. Some prayer groups occasionally bring in songs which they peculiarly use for their prayer meetings. All these are anomalies which pastors of souls ought to correct with proper information. The people must constantly be reminded that the procession is that of *Corpus Christi* and that the songs should dominantly reflect it. However, given the fact that the Eucharistic Jesus whom we honour and profess to the world is also the King of the universe, some songs relating to the Solemnity of Christ the King may be allowed. Composers have a role here to play as paucity of traditional but suitable Eucharistic songs for procession makes it inevitable for the people to use inappropriate ones. Using different themes pertaining to the Eucharist, they should compose songs which can easily be sung off by heart by the people without the aid of hymnbooks. These songs can take the form of simple choruses or the form of recurring refrains with short verses to be sung by the choir or a cantor.

Finally, given the fact that the population of participants in the procession is usually massive, a portable speaker and microphone may be useful wherever possible. Its use makes it easier for a greater number of people to sing and dance to the same melody and instrumentation. While organizing music according to individual groups may be good, a kind of uniformity that manifests and deepens the unity of faith and brings order within a particular liturgical assembly is more to be encouraged.¹⁰³³

1.2.3.3 Eucharistic Congresses

Eucharistic congresses which were recently introduced into the life of the Church began through the work of Emilie-Marie Tamisier (1834-1910). From organizing pilgrimages to places of Eucharistic miracles in France towards the end of the 19th century, she conceived the idea of a Eucharistic congress which she presented to St. Pierre Eymard and which was later supported by

¹⁰³³Cf. D. Haschka, "Liturgical Differences," accessed on 28.04.2022, <https://www.americamagazine.org/issue/484/other-things/liturgical-differences>

the papal bull of Pope Leo XIII in 1879.¹⁰³⁴ A Eucharistic congress is considered as a large religious gathering, a kind of ‘station’ (*statio orbis* or *nationis*), to which a particular community extends invitation to the entire local Church or to which an individual local Church invites other Churches either at a regional, national or global level. As a special form and manifestation of Eucharistic worship, Eucharistic congresses offer the faithful a greater opportunity in the bond of charity and unity to deeply profess their faith and publicly express their devotion to the Eucharistic mystery.¹⁰³⁵ Giving a similar explanation in his address to the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Ireland in June 2009, Archbishop Piero Marini, the President of the Pontifical Committee for International Eucharistic Congresses, also declared that the historical root of Congresses which consists in a twofold dimension of Eucharistic piety and the social aspect of the Eucharist “has borne fruit in the International, National and Diocesan Eucharistic Congresses which in recent decades have characterised so many local Churches.”¹⁰³⁶ To this twofold historical dimension, he further added the pastoral dimension in which the Eucharist is to be considered as the principle and form which inspires every pastoral action of the Church.

The preparation and planning of a Eucharistic congress involve a lot of efforts. Apart from elaborate studies beforehand to determine the place, theme and the program of the congress, a thorough catechesis adapted to different groups concerning the Eucharist and a research on how to implement its social aspect must be properly carried out. In the celebration of a congress, different programs and devotional services are accommodated such as the celebration of the Word of God, private and common prayers, long periods of the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in designated churches, and Eucharistic processions. There is also time for catechetical meetings, symposia and public conferences to develop the theme of the congress and discuss its practical implications. All these, however, must be directed to the celebration of the Eucharist which should form the high point and true center of the entire congress.¹⁰³⁷

Part of the early preparations for a Eucharistic congress is the formation of committees and sub-committees to take care of the different sections of the event. One of such committees is the Liturgy Committee with a sub-committee on liturgical music charged with the responsibility of preparing music for the different liturgies during the period of the congress, laying particular emphasis on the Eucharistic celebration and the singing of its various parts. While depending much

¹⁰³⁴For more details, see K. Golebiowski, “The History of Eucharistic Congresses,” accessed on 28.04.2022, <http://www.pwt.wroc.pl/kongres/en/historia/dzieje.htm>

¹⁰³⁵CDWDS, *Eucharistiae Sacramentum*, no 109.

¹⁰³⁶Archbishop P. Marini, “The Shape, Significance and Ecclesial Impact of Eucharistic Congresses,” accessed on 28.04.2022, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pont_committees/eucharist-congr/documents/rc_committ_euchar_doc_20090609_fisionomia-congressi_en.html

¹⁰³⁷CDWDS, *Eucharistiae Sacramentum*, nos 110-112.

on the central theme of the congress and using the specified criteria of judgement, the music selection must primarily aim at the full participation of the entire assembly being anticipated. It must consider the language of the cultural communities involved and favour hymns that are most familiar and most commonly used. It is best, early enough, to compile, publish and circulate the list of these hymns for the different days of the event. Specifications indicating the particular melody for the hymns, their composers, the language and the number of verses to be used should be clearly spelt out. All this will facilitate both local and regional rehearsals to be organized at stipulated dates. Individual choristers and choirs that intend to join in the music program must endeavor to be part of the common rehearsals. But the choirs of the participating ecclesial territories, in order to familiarize the faithful with new compositions and other hymns on the list, are highly encouraged to learn and use them repeatedly in their own parish liturgies before the congress event.

The first Nigerian National Eucharistic Congress, which took place in Jos in 1982, came on the heel of the first papal visit of Pope John Paul II to Nigeria earlier the same year. An Igbo clergyman, Archbishop F. Arinze, was the president of the Bishops' Conference that approved these two major events which "made the year unprecedented and unparalleled in the history of the Nigerian Church."¹⁰³⁸ It thus stands to reason that Igboland took an active part in these great events. As the metropolitan of the then Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province which covered about 90% of Igboland, the Archbishop prepared the faithful of this region for the upcoming National Eucharistic Congress with his Lenten Pastoral Letter of the previous year, 1981, which he titled 'The Holy Eucharist Our Life.' In his words, "the reflections in this pastoral letter are meant to help in this religious exercise."¹⁰³⁹ A decade after the first Nigerian National Eucharistic Congress, the second took place in Igboland. Owerri Archdiocese, which hosted it in 1992, celebrates till date a yearly anniversary of the great event and has a Eucharistic congress outreach (Eu-care outreach) which, as a monthly devotional forum, aims at sustaining the spiritual benefits of the congress.¹⁰⁴⁰ Still at the interval of ten years, the third and the fourth Nigerian National Eucharistic congresses have also taken place at Ibadan and Abuja respectively and as national events, both the liturgy and liturgical music have constantly expressed the multicultural and multilingual nature of the country. The fifth National Pastoral and Eucharistic Congresses are slated to hold on November 11-12, 2022 after the celebration at the parish, deanery, diocesan and provincial levels. The theme is: 'Becoming the Eucharist We Celebrate: A Call to Live as One and to Serve the Weak.'

¹⁰³⁸A. O. Makozi, G. J. AfolabiOjo, "Preface" [in:] *The History of the Catholic Church in Nigeria*, p. ix.

¹⁰³⁹Archbishop F. A. Arinze, *The Holy Eucharist Our Life*, (Onitsha: Tabansi Press, 1981), p. 10; Cf. D. O. Eze, *The Eucharist as Orikonso: A Study in Eucharistic Ecclesiology from an Igbo Perspective*, (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2008), p. 188.

¹⁰⁴⁰Cf. J. C. Ike, I. Aguwom, "Catholic Archdiocese of Owerri – A History," accessed on 28.04.2022.

1.3 Music and the Use of Sacramentals

Sacramentals are defined in *SC* as “sacred signs which bear a resemblance to the sacraments: they signify effects, particularly of a spiritual kind, which are obtained through the Church's intercession. By them men are disposed to receive the chief effect of the sacraments, and various occasions in life are rendered holy.”¹⁰⁴¹ Two types of sacramentals can be distinguished: those that are objects and those that are action. Those that are objects remain as such after the liturgical act has occurred (holy water, palm branches, ashes, candles) whereas the ones that are action disappear as the liturgical act ceases (the rite of blessing a house).¹⁰⁴² Among the sacramentals, blessings take the supreme position, and those blessings by which persons are consecrated to God, or objects and places reserved for liturgical purposes are of lasting importance. Examples include the blessing of the abbot or abbess of a monastery; the rite of religious profession; the consecration of virgins; the blessing of certain ministries of the Church such as readers, acolytes, catechists; the dedication or blessing of a church or an altar; the blessing of sacred vessels, holy oils, vestments and bells.¹⁰⁴³ From these examples, we shall only select, for our discussion, the dedication of a church and the altar which involves a greater use of liturgical music. We shall also discuss funeral rites as another example of a sacramental.¹⁰⁴⁴

1.3.1 *Music during the Dedication of the Church and the Altar*

The Church as a visible building signifies in a special way the pilgrim Church on earth and is also a reflection of the triumphant Church in heaven. When its construction work is perfected, it is proper, in line with the ancient custom of the Church, to dedicate it to God with a solemn rite so as to remain a place solely and permanently destined for gathering God's people and for executing sacred functions.¹⁰⁴⁵ Our main focus in this discussion is to consider the use of liturgical music for the ritual actions connected with this celebration, especially as recommended in the *Order of the Dedication of a Church and an Altar*.

The dedication rite is basically divided into four major parts as follows: Entrance into the Church, Liturgy of the Word, Prayer of Dedication and the Anointing of the Church and the Altar, and the Celebration of the Eucharist. Let us look at them one after the other beginning with the entrance into the Church which may take place in three possible ways out of which the one best suited is chosen, depending on the circumstances of place and time. The first option involves a

¹⁰⁴¹SVC, *SC*, no 60; Cf. CCC, no 1677.

¹⁰⁴²A. J. Chupungco, “Sacraments and Sacramentals,” [in:] A. J. Chupungco (ed.), *Handbook for Liturgical Studies: Sacraments and Sacramentals*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2000), vol 4, p. xxvi.

¹⁰⁴³CCC, nos 1671-1672.

¹⁰⁴⁴Cf. SVC, *SC*, no 81; A. J. Chupungco, “Sacraments and Sacramentals,” pp. x & xxvi.

¹⁰⁴⁵*Obrzędy Poświęcenia Kościoła I Ołtarza*, (Katowice: Księgarnia Św. Jacka, 2009), Chapter 2, no 2.

procession to the church to be dedicated. This procession from a nearby church or any other suitable venue is accompanied with prayer and songs. For the singing, Psalm 122 (121) is recommended with the antiphon: ‘Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.’ On reaching the door of the church and receiving the key, the bishop addresses the delegates who perform the handover ceremony and the rest of the people and then, instructs the pastor to open the door of the church. When the door is opened, he invites the people to enter the house of the Lord with songs of thanksgiving. As the procession leads into the church, Psalm 24 (23) may be chanted with the antiphon: ‘Grow higher, ancient doors. Let him enter, the king of glory.’¹⁰⁴⁶

When a procession is not possible, the second option which is a solemn entrance may be chosen. Here, from outside of the church, the bishop and other ministers go to meet the liturgical community that have gathered before the entrance door of the church. After the bishop’s greeting and address to them, some verses of Psalm 122 (121) may be sung with the antiphon: ‘Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.’ At this point, the door is opened as in the first option and the bishop invites the people to enter the house of the Lord with songs of thanksgiving. As the procession leads into the church, Psalm 24 (23) may be chanted with the antiphon: ‘Grow higher, ancient doors. Let him enter, the king of glory.’¹⁰⁴⁷

But if neither of the first two options is realizable, the last option then is the simple entrance whereby the bishop and the rest of the ministers enter the sanctuary in a normal procession from the sacristy when the congregation is already assembled in the church itself. During the procession, the entrance antiphon is sung or Psalm 122 (121) with the antiphon: ‘Let us go rejoicing to the house of the Lord.’ In all the three options, it is always possible to use any appropriate song instead of the Psalms and the antiphons. In the sanctuary, in the case of the third option, the handover ceremony of the key or other documents related to the church building is performed. When the procession to the altar in all the three options is concluded, what follows is the blessing and sprinkling of holy water during which the antiphon *Vidi Aquam* is sung. During Lent, the text that is sung reads: ‘When I prove my holiness among you, I will gather you from all the foreign lands; and I will pour clean water upon you and cleanse you from all your impurities, and I will give you a new spirit.’ In the place of the antiphon, a suitable song may be rendered. As the song ends with the completion of the sprinkling of water, the *Gloria* is intoned after which the Collect leads to the Liturgy of the Word as the second part of the celebration.¹⁰⁴⁸

As it concerns music and singing, this second part (the Liturgy of the Word) and the fourth part (the Liturgy of the Eucharist) follow the same principles as in any solemn Eucharistic

¹⁰⁴⁶For more details about the first option of entering the church, see *Ibid.*, nos 28-35.

¹⁰⁴⁷For more details about the second option, see *Ibid.*, nos 36-42.

¹⁰⁴⁸For more details about the third option and the sprinkling of holy water, see *Ibid.*, nos 43-52.

celebration and, having dwelt much on them in other chapters, there is no need to repeat except to mention that for the Communion antiphon, one may use Psalm 128 (127) with the antiphon: ‘My house shall be a house of prayer, says the Lord; in that house, everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened (Alleluia)’ or ‘Like shoots of the olive, may the children of the Church be gathered around the table of the Lord. (Alleluia).’ Having said that, we go ahead with the third part which begins with the Litany of the Saints. Singing it, all are expected to stand if it is on a Sunday or during the Easter season whereas, on any other day, the deacon invites all to kneel. It is permitted, in appropriate places in the litany, to add the title name of the church, the name of the patron saint of the locality or the saint whose relics will be inserted beneath the altar. Other requests which relate to the spiritual needs of the community or the circumstances surrounding the building of the church can also make up the list. The litany is followed by the insertion of the relics during which Psalm 15 (14) is sung with the following antiphon: ‘Beneath the altar of God you have been placed, O Saints of God – intercede for us before the Lord Jesus Christ’ or ‘The bodies of the Saints are buried in peace and their names will live for all eternity (Alleluia).’

After the insertion of the relics and the prayer of dedication that follows it, the altar and the walls of the church are anointed. During this time, Psalm 84 (83) is sung with the antiphon: ‘Behold God’s dwelling with the human race. He will live with them and they will be his people, and God himself with them will be their God (Alleluia)’ or ‘Holy is the temple of the Lord, God’s own structure, God’s own building.’ The next ceremony is the incensing of the altar, the people and the church. While it goes on, Psalm 138 (137) may be sung in alternation with any of these antiphons: ‘An Angel stood by the altar of the Temple holding in his hand a golden censer,’ ‘In the presence of the Lord arose clouds of incense from the hand of the Angel,’ or ‘Our prayer is like the fragrance of incense.’ The last ritual in this part is the lighting of the altar and the church during which the Cantic of Tobit is sung together with the following antiphons: ‘Your light has come, Jerusalem; the glory of the Lord has risen upon you, and the nations will walk in your light (Alleluia)’ or ‘Jerusalem, city of God, you will shine with splendid light, and all the ends of the earth will pay you homage.’ Alternatively, one may as well sing Psalm 27 (26) with the antiphon: ‘The Lord is my light and my salvation.’ Finally, in place of the Psalms and antiphons in this part of the celebration, appropriate songs are usually permissible.¹⁰⁴⁹

The concluding part of the entire celebration is the inauguration of the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament and the tabernacle. With the end of the prayer after Communion, a procession with candles and incense leads to the chapel as the bishop carries the Blessed Sacrament. During

¹⁰⁴⁹For more details about the third part of the celebration, see *Ibid.*, nos 57-71.

the procession, Psalm 147 is sung with the antiphon: ‘O Jerusalem, glorify the Lord.’ After the inauguration, the bishop may give the final blessings from there if the chapel is visible to the faithful, otherwise, a short procession leads back to the church where the bishop imparts God’s blessing and dismisses the liturgical assembly.¹⁰⁵⁰

From this discussion, it is clearly evident that much singing is involved to cover the different parts of this rite and the big task is to put these recommended Psalms and antiphons into proper musical settings that people can easily grasp or to compose alternative songs that fit the different parts of the celebration. In Igboland, because of the paucity of appropriate songs, this task is necessary and urgent.

1.3.2 *Music in the Order of Christian Funerals*

Christian funeral is a liturgical celebration in which the Church offers to God the Father, in Christ, the child of His grace with whom she [the Church] also expresses an efficacious communion. This offering which is fully celebrated at Mass does not confer a sacrament or a sacramental since a dead person is outside the purview of sacramental economy.¹⁰⁵¹ However, “the blessings before and after Mass are sacramental.”¹⁰⁵² In the ritual book, *the Order of Christian Funerals (OCF)*, one finds a well-detailed discussion on the use of liturgical music for the different stages of the rite for Christian funerals. The *General Introduction*, among other things, highlights the purpose of Christian funeral rites, the importance of music during the celebrations, the parts of the celebrations to be sung, the ministers to sing them and the involvement of the bereaved family in planning the celebrations.

First and foremost, it explains that the purpose of funeral rites which Christians celebrate is to worship, praise and thank God for the precious gift of life which, as the author of life, it has pleased Him to receive back.¹⁰⁵³ Through these rites also, the Church “commends the dead to God’s merciful love and pleads for the forgiveness of their sins. At the funeral rites, especially at the celebration of the eucharistic sacrifice, the Christian community affirms and expresses the union of the Church on earth with the Church in heaven in the one great communion of saints.”¹⁰⁵⁴ It is the duty of all the members of Christ’s Body to participate actively in the liturgical celebration of these rites by which we principally engage ourselves also in the ministry of consolation – caring for the dying, praying for the dead and comforting those who mourn.¹⁰⁵⁵

¹⁰⁵⁰Cf. *Ibid.*, nos 79-84.

¹⁰⁵¹Cf. *CCC*, nos 1683-1684.

¹⁰⁵²*Ibid.*, no 1683.

¹⁰⁵³*OCF*, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2002), no 5.

¹⁰⁵⁴*Ibid.*, no 6.

¹⁰⁵⁵Cf. *Ibid.*, no 8.

Music is a major element that fosters active participation in every liturgical celebration. Underlining its significance in the funeral rites, the *General Introduction* states as follows:

Music is integral to the funeral rites. It allows the community to express convictions and feelings that words alone may fail to convey. It has the power to console and uplift the mourners and to strengthen the unity of the assembly in faith and love. The texts of the songs chosen for a particular celebration should express the paschal mystery of the Lord's suffering, death, and triumph over death and should be related to the readings from Scripture. Since music can evoke strong feelings, the music for the celebration of the funeral rites should be chosen with great care. The music at funerals should support, console, and uplift the participants and should help to create in them a spirit of hope in Christ's victory over death and in the Christian's share in that victory. Music should be provided for the vigil and funeral liturgy and, whenever possible, for the funeral processions and the rite of committal. The specific notes that precede each of these rites suggest places in the rites where music is appropriate. Many musical settings used by the parish community during the liturgical year may be suitable for use at funerals. Efforts should be made to develop and expand the parish's repertoire for use at funerals. An organist or other instrumentalist, a cantor, and, whenever possible, even a choir should assist the assembly's full participation in singing the songs, responses, and acclamations of these rites.¹⁰⁵⁶

In planning the funeral rites, the ministers should involve the bereaved family whenever possible.¹⁰⁵⁷ This is of particular importance in the area of selection of music for the rites. In order to exercise a positive influence on their spiritual and psychological wellbeing, the text for the songs needs to relate to their present circumstance. Family members, however, need to comprehend what makes for the suitability of music in the liturgy. They must understand, among other things, that "secular music, even though it may reflect on the background, character, interests, or personal preferences of the deceased or mourners, is not appropriate for the Sacred Liturgy"¹⁰⁵⁸ and that liturgical music during the celebration of funeral "is not to memorialize the deceased but rather for divine worship."¹⁰⁵⁹ Explanations must also include the fact that the selection of music suitable for any funeral rite ought to consider the liturgical season. "Easter provides an excellent time to make a connection between the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and our own dying and rising to eternal life. Selections during Advent may focus on our longing for the coming of the kingdom, and music during Lent can highlight God's merciful forgiveness."¹⁰⁶⁰

¹⁰⁵⁶Ibid., nos 30-33; Cf. R. Rutherford, "Burial Rites: And I Will Raise Him Up..." [in] V. C. Funk (ed.), *Music in Catholic Worship – the NPM Commentary*, p. 171.

¹⁰⁵⁷Cf. Ibid., nos 17 & 65.

¹⁰⁵⁸USCCB, *Sing to the Lord*, no 246.

¹⁰⁵⁹G. D. Gill, *Music in Catholic Liturgy*, p. 119.

¹⁰⁶⁰"Celebration of Christian Burial," accessed on 30.04.2022,

https://dwc.org/download/all_files_&_forms/worship_&_sacraments/diocesan_liturgical_guidelines/Liturgical_Guidelines_2012_Christian_Burial.pdf

One form of music that is prominently used in funeral rites is the Psalm. Rich in imagery, emotion, and symbolism, psalms “powerfully express the suffering and pain, the hope and trust of people of every age and culture. Above all, the psalms sing of faith in God, of revelation and redemption.”¹⁰⁶¹ To ensure a better and fuller understanding of these psalms, pastors and other ministers must endeavour to assist their communities through constant and effective catechesis.

The use of psalms is very outstanding during processions which, starting from ancient custom, have special significance in funeral celebrations. In Ancient Rome, funeral rites consisted of three stages or stations which are joined by two processions. One procession led the movement from the home of the deceased to the church with singing of psalms. After the funeral liturgy, a solemn procession also led the movement from the church back to home. During this final procession, the Christian community “sang psalms to praise the God of mercy and redemption and antiphons entrusting the deceased to the care of the angels and saints.”¹⁰⁶²

Till today, processions continue to forge a bond of unity among the faithful, especially when it is accompanied with music and singing. In selecting music for the processions, ministers of music ought to ensure that preference is given “to setting of psalms and songs that are responsorial or litanic in style and that allow the people to respond to the verses with an invariable refrain.”¹⁰⁶³ In many places and circumstances, it may not be possible to have a solemn procession to the church or to the place of committal on foot. If so, the alternative may be to sing, at the end of the funeral liturgy, “an antiphon or versicle and response as the body is taken to the entrance of the church. Psalms, hymns, or liturgical songs may also be sung when the participants gather at the place of committal.”¹⁰⁶⁴

In Igboland, this solemn procession is often not properly organized and the faithful indicate little interest to join as they are not fully informed that it forms part of the liturgical celebration for Christian funerals. In most places, the selection of music by a band group which is hired to accompany the procession is anything but liturgical. To this effect, therefore, the *OFC* has provided a list of psalms with given antiphons from which selection for these processions can be made. They include: Psalm 25, 93, 116, 118, 119 and 122.¹⁰⁶⁵ It is left for the liturgical music composers, on the one hand, to put these scriptural texts into simple melody which all can sing with ease. On the other hand, pastors should gradually introduce, where it does not exist, the singing of the psalms during funeral celebrations, especially during the processions to the church

¹⁰⁶¹*OFC*, no 25.

¹⁰⁶²*Ibid.*, no 42.

¹⁰⁶³*Ibid.*, no 41.

¹⁰⁶⁴*Ibid.*, no 42.

¹⁰⁶⁵*Cf. OFC*, nos 127, 176 & 203.

and the place of committal. Assisted by the liturgical music ministers, they should inform the faithful and emphasize the importance of this practice with the help of catechesis.¹⁰⁶⁶ Let us now consider the place of liturgical music in the three principal rites in Christian funerals: ‘Vigil for the Deceased’, ‘Funeral Liturgy’ and ‘Rite of Committal.’

1.3.2.1 *Vigil for the Deceased*

The vigil is the principal celebration among the prayers and rites that can be performed for the dead by the Christian community between the time of death and the funeral liturgy or, if there should be no funeral liturgy, before the rite of committal. Two vigil services provided are: ‘Vigil for the Deceased’ and ‘Vigil for the Deceased with Reception at the Church.’ And both can take the form either of the Liturgy of the Word or some part of the Office for the Dead.¹⁰⁶⁷ In Igboland, it is the custom to celebrate the Vigil Mass. In the case of a lay person, this Mass is celebrated in the home of the deceased without the body for health reasons and other surrounding circumstances. But for a clergyman, it is, first of all, celebrated at his home parish in the afternoon and towards the evening, at the place of his last pastoral assignment; there is also the reception of the body at the church since it is possible and convenient after the Mass to send it back to the mortuary.

The Liturgy of the Word celebrated as the vigil for the Deceased comprises the Introductory Rites, the Liturgy of the Word, Intercessory prayer, and a Concluding Rite. In these rites for the vigil service, music is absolutely relevant as *OCF* reiterates.¹⁰⁶⁸ The Introductory Rites aim at forming the faithful into a community and preparing them to listen to God’s word. Part of these rites is the opening or entrance song which should “be a profound expression of belief in eternal life and the resurrection of the dead, as well as a prayer of intercession for the dead.”¹⁰⁶⁹ When, however, the Liturgy of the Word serves as the vigil for the Deceased with reception at the church, the Introductory Rites are simply the rite of reception. A hymn or Psalm is sung during the entrance procession. The Introductory Rites end with the opening prayer.¹⁰⁷⁰ Following the Introductory Rites is the Liturgy of the Word which forms the central focus and the high point of this form of vigil. Celebrated in the usual manner, the responsorial psalm is to be sung whenever possible.¹⁰⁷¹ After the Intercessory Prayer which may take the litanic form and the Lord’s Prayer, the vigil comes to an end with a blessing. A liturgical song or moment of silent prayer or both may then follow.¹⁰⁷²

¹⁰⁶⁶G. D. Gill, *Music in Catholic Liturgy*, p. 124.

¹⁰⁶⁷*OFC*, no 54.

¹⁰⁶⁸*Cf. Ibid.*, no 68.

¹⁰⁶⁹*Ibid.*, nos 45 & 58.

¹⁰⁷⁰*Ibid.*

¹⁰⁷¹*Ibid.*, no 59.

¹⁰⁷²*Ibid.*, no 63.

1.3.2.2 *The Funeral Liturgy*

The central liturgical celebration for the deceased member of a Christian community is the funeral liturgy, the purpose of which is essentially “to give praise and thanks to God for Christ's victory over sin and death, to commend the deceased to God's tender mercy and compassion, and to seek strength in the proclamation of the paschal mystery.”¹⁰⁷³ Incidentally, this purpose also forms the theme that must affect and reflect in the composition and selection of songs for funerals. Two forms of funeral liturgy are provided: “Funeral Mass” and “Funeral Liturgy outside Mass.” While the Funeral Mass is the ideal and always to be encouraged, the second option can be used when it is not possible to celebrate Mass. The major difference between the two is that the latter does not have the liturgy of the Eucharist in its structure and content. But like the funeral Mass, it comprises the reception of the body, the celebration of the liturgy of the word, the final commendation and farewell, and the procession to the place of committal.¹⁰⁷⁴ In the choice of music for this funeral liturgy, *OCF* points out the areas of preference – the entrance song, the responsorial psalm, the singing of the acclamations, the communion songs, and especially the song of farewell at the final commendation.¹⁰⁷⁵ Let us now look at the structural components of this celebration one after the other.

After the rite of reception, the priest leads a procession to the altar accompanied by the singing of the entrance song which draws the worshipping community together in prayer. As in the Vigil for the deceased, it also serves as a prayer of intercession for the deceased, expressing our belief in the resurrection.¹⁰⁷⁶ In a situation where the rite of reception had previously occurred, the funeral Mass begins as usual whereas the funeral liturgy outside Mass begins with an entrance song.¹⁰⁷⁷ While the liturgy of the Word is always important in any liturgical celebration, its significant effect in funeral celebrations is also not questionable. This is why the readings, selected in consultation with the bereaved family, need to address particularly their special situation. The responsorial psalm and the gospel acclamation are sung in the normal way at Mass.

Like the liturgy of the Word, the liturgy of the Eucharist is also celebrated as usual. The *OCF*, however, reiterates the necessity of music during this part of the funeral Mass. It states that an instrumental music may accompany the offertory procession with the gifts or a song, for example, Psalm 18:1- 6, Psalm 63, Psalm 66:13-20, or Psalm 138. Since a ritual action is given a greater solemnity through music, it further encourages the singing of the people's parts of the eucharistic prayer, that is, the responses of the preface dialogue and the Eucharistic acclamations.

¹⁰⁷³Cf. *Ibid.*, no 129.

¹⁰⁷⁴Cf. *Ibid.*, nos 128 & 130.

¹⁰⁷⁵*Ibid.*, nos 153, 157 & 181.

¹⁰⁷⁶*Ibid.*, no 135; Cf. nos 45 & 58.

¹⁰⁷⁷*Ibid.*, no 136.

Singing also reinforces and expresses the unity of the faithful more fully during the communion rite; it is, thus, preferable as well to sing the Lord's Prayer, the doxology and the Lamb of God. And for the communion song, Psalm 23, Psalm 27, Psalm 34, Psalm 63, or Psalm 121 can be chosen.¹⁰⁷⁸ The example of songs from *NCIHB* for All Souls' Day may certainly be used as processional songs during Christian funerals.

The rite of commendation and farewell comes at the end of the funeral liturgy. Part of this rite is the song of farewell after the opening words and during which the body may be sprinkled with holy water and incensed. As the climax of the rite of final commendation, this song which should affirm hope and confidence in the paschal mystery, can take the form of a responsory or even a hymn and should be sung in a simple melody which all can sing.¹⁰⁷⁹ The last of these structural elements is the procession to the place of committal. As we have discussed it above, there is no need to repeat.¹⁰⁸⁰

1.3.2.3 *The Rite of Committal*

As the conclusion of the funeral rites, the rite of committal is the final act by which the faithful people of God care for the body of their departed member. This rite which begins with an invitation, Scripture verse, and a prayer over the place of committal, continues with the words of committal, the intercessions, and the Lord's Prayer and finally, ends with a prayer over the people, a blessing, and a song.¹⁰⁸¹ Needed here is a type of liturgical song or a hymn that can help the mourners to affirm their hope in God's mercy and in the resurrection of the dead even as they face the reality of separation.¹⁰⁸² In Igboland, all this is done at the place of interment.

1.4 Musical Analysis of a Selected Song

In this last chapter, for lack of space, we shall only analyze one song which is used for Christian burial – *Eligwe Obodo Anyi* (Heaven, Our Homeland).

¹⁰⁷⁸Ibid., no 144.

¹⁰⁷⁹Ibid., no 147.

¹⁰⁸⁰Cf. Ibid., no 148.

¹⁰⁸¹Ibid., nos 208 & 210.

¹⁰⁸²Ibid., no 214.

Eligwe Obodo Anyi Niebo, nasza ojczyzna

Fr. Azuka

♩ = 96



E - li-gweo-bo-doa - nyi e - li-gweo-bo-doa - nyi o - bo-d-ndi o - ma e - be o - zu-zui -

9
ke O nwa-nnem zu - r'i - ke o - ru u - wae - ri - ka

Fr. Azuka who composed this song is the second person with the highest number of compositions in *NCIHB*. He wrote this song which takes the form of chorus and verse in the key of C major and in two-four time signature. The chorus which begins on the anacrusic beat has 8 bars and is harmonized in four-parts (SATB). Its 10 melodic verses have unequal number of bars. The ambitus of the melody from the tonic is an octave, $c^1 - c^2$. The intervals contained in the melody are minor and major second, minor and major third, perfect fourth and fifth and a major sixth. The melody combines both the conjunct and adjunct motions.

The song has four phrases and the first phrase unusually began with chord IV and ended on chord I. The second phrase is a repeat of the first phrase. The phrase three and four started in chord I and ii respectively and ended similarly in chord I. While the third phrase ended in the first inversion of chord I, the fourth phrase ended in root position. The chords used here are I, ii, iii, IV and vii. The quaver beat that introduces each phrase produces the effect of an earnest desire to jump into this place of rest. The first phrase of the chorus establishes the idea of heaven as our home country and the second emphasizes it by a repetition. The third and fourth call to mind that this place of rest is only reserved for the just. From the meaning of the text of this song, it is rightly used for Christian funerals and for All Souls' Day.

Summary

Apart from the sacraments, the Church has other liturgical activities such as the Liturgy of the Hours, Holy Communion and Eucharistic worship outside the Mass and the Sacramentals. Our discussion in this chapter focused on the use of liturgical music which plays a vital role in these activities as they flow from and lead us back to the Eucharist. In the first part of the discussion, we beamed our searchlight on the liturgy of the hours within and outside the Mass. Greater understanding of what this prayer stands for and devoting our time to sing it in our communities and churches is one of the best ways to spend and sanctify each day. This is true on the part of the laity and especially, on the part of the clergy.

In the second part, we discussed Holy Communion and the three major forms of Eucharistic worship outside Mass which includes the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Eucharistic processions and congresses. Finally, in the last part, we dwelt on the use of liturgical music during the celebration of such sacramentals like the dedication of the church and the altar and the Christian funerals. In these celebrations, music forges our unity, facilitates our active participation, permeates us with the mystery we celebrate and builds up our spirituality. Properly selected songs are the necessary means to this end. And since the liturgical texts prescribed in the rituals for these celebrations reveal more perfectly the mystery we celebrate, more efforts should be made not only to compose them into music but also to use them.

CONCLUSION

This research work with the topic ‘Liturgical Music in Igboland in Nigeria after Vatican II Council’ is not only necessary but also urgent because of the fast-declining standard of liturgical music in this area and in Nigeria as a whole. The main task that faced us was to identify the root causes and then, proffer solutions to the problem so that active participation in the liturgy continues to yield abundant fruits. It was actually after Vatican II Council that originality and ingenuity were added to the practice of liturgical music in Igboland. Efforts to conform to the principles and teachings of the Council greatly reflected in the music. Making this period our reference point helps to return our reflective mind to this period of better liturgical music than now.

Being a student in Poland where Polish is the major language, the researcher encountered a few problems with resource materials in English language. And paucity of written books on liturgical music in Igboland compounded the problem. Nevertheless, materials available through the internet and some books bought online still served the purpose. Because of the pandemic too, the researcher was not able to travel to Nigeria to conduct as many live interviews as he would have preferred; however, previous interviews and current online interviews were helpful.

The researcher basically applied the descriptive, historical and analytic methods; these methods coupled with the methods of observation and interviews were fully effective in the realization of his subject-matter. Since good liturgical music greatly contributes to both quantitative and qualitative growth of Catholicism, we tried to understand the general principles of this liturgical music in chapter one. We did this because sound principles are the first step to an effective practice of liturgical music. The standard of liturgical music is declining because these principles are either neglected or not known at all. As R. Gonzalez wrote: “Not every kind of music is church music. What is and what is not liturgical music is determined by certain basic principles with which every churchman should become acquainted.”¹⁰⁸³ The principles we discussed rotated around the purpose, qualities and functions of liturgical music. Drawing from the different ecclesiastical documents and commentaries, we explained them in simple terms and encouraged everyone to apply and abide by them.

In chapter two, we spelt out clearly the specific functions of the liturgical ministers, highlighting the interrelatedness of these functions and the requirements for their optimal performance. In Igboland, among these ministries, the clergy, the choir, the assembly, the organist and the psalmist are strongly functional whereas the *schola* and the cantor are not popular. We

¹⁰⁸³R. Gonzalez, “Principles of Liturgical Music” accessed on 21.05.2020.

also discussed common issues concerning these ministries as a group. We further considered the various genres/types of liturgical music. We suggested ways the ecclesiastical authorities in Igboland can promote liturgical music: financial and moral support, physical presence and encouragement, good administrative policies etc. Good formation from childhood to adulthood is key to eradicating the devastating cankerworm of ignorance; no effort should be spared to provide avenues for liturgical, musical and spiritual formation. Frequent seminars and workshops are also helpful in this regard. We emphasized that liturgical ministers, whether in vocal or instrumental music, must avoid any form of entertainment in liturgy. The focus is always on God, not man. Inculturation should be encouraged as we explained but it must follow due process; allowing secular or Pentecostal influences to creep into our liturgical music is not part of inculturation. Our African heritage may allow for dance in the liturgy but not every form of dance falls within the limits of liturgy; the line of demarcation must be drawn by the appropriate authority.

Chapter three is aimed at preparing us to sing the Mass rather than to sing at Mass and to participate in the Mass more actively and reap more fruits doing so. We started with explaining the concept of the Mass, the kinds of participation, necessary preparations and the forms of liturgical music. This theoretical and practical knowledge is helpful to all including the presiding minister. It is important to know what to sing at Mass, who to sing it and when to sing it. The principle of progressive solemnity and the criteria for selecting appropriate songs for every liturgical celebration which we discussed will solve a lot of problems in Igboland. Composers, organists and choirmasters will henceforth know what exactly should be given greater priority in their areas of function and in the celebration of the Eucharist. After the emphasis laid on it, no one can afford to underrate the importance of silence in liturgy and liturgical music.

Most books written on liturgical music, including the newly published booklet/guidelines on liturgical music in Nigeria, are limited in scope; they focus exclusively on the Eucharist. But this research work is more extensive; it discussed not only the Eucharist but the other six sacraments. In our discussion, we observed that liturgical music is not given due priority in the celebration of these other sacraments, especially the sacraments of baptism, penance and the pastoral care of the sick, and called for a change of attitude. And from the academic point of view, this research work will add to the few available materials for research purposes. After discussing the sacraments, we also discussed the liturgical year. Our observation here concerns the lack of appropriate songs for many of the solemnities we celebrate. For those ones that do not fall on holy days of obligation, we suggested ways to add some kind of solemnity to distinguish them from the normal weekday celebrations and then, encouraged pastors of soul to put it to practice.

Our final chapter centred on other liturgical rites outside the sacraments. We discussed the Liturgy of the Hours, Holy Communion and the Eucharistic Worship outside Mass and the Sacramentals. Under the sacraments, we selected the Christian funerals and the rite of dedication of the Church and the Altar. In this aspect of the discussion on liturgical music which, as in chapter four above, is not found in many books and which makes the work unique in Igboland, we encouraged the singing of the Liturgy of the Hours on the part of the clergy or religious who are living or working together. And also, pastors of soul should create room and encourage the faithful to participate in the common singing of the Divine Office in the parishes, especially vespers on Sunday. The discussion in this chapter also helped us to emphasize that the choice of Eucharistic songs must be done painstakingly. All Eucharistic songs are not appropriate for the Mass; some are suitable just for adoration while others are better for the Eucharistic procession. We should always apply the three major criteria for the selection of songs. Finally, there is need for more appropriate songs for the different stages in the rite of dedication of the Church and the Altar.

In the course of this work, a few other recommendations were made. Firstly, it has become a necessity to compile a second volume of the *NCIHB* that will take care of many appropriate songs already in circulation but which are not contained in the first volume. Secondly, increase in the number of music experts that will handle liturgical music both at the diocesan and parish levels is a top priority that ought to be attended to. Founding an institute of sacred music where choirmasters and music directors can always upgrade their knowledge is a pressing need. Thirdly, music greatly involves acquisition of different skills in the area of singing, playing of musical instruments, compositions etc. And as skills in any field of learning are acquired easily and effortlessly in early childhood, founding a music academy that will attract especially the younger generation will remarkably enhance the overall musical culture in any diocese. Fourthly, singing competition for parishes and schools should always be promoted as it provides a golden opportunity for the improvement of voice production and musical know-how of choir members. And lastly, there is need to produce a booklet that contains well written texts/lyrics for different seasons and solemnities. This can be done by a joint effort of biblical scholars, theologians and liturgists and will be needed by composers who may wish to write musical settings using such suitable texts.

It was not possible, given the scope of this research work, to engage in a deeper formal analysis of many songs in the *NCIHB*. Such in-depth musical analysis will be the subject for further research. The same applies to the area of inculturation; further work is needed to identify more aspects of liturgical music that require inculturation and to work out the due process for them. Further work can also be done to select appropriate songs for the Sundays and solemnities of the

liturgical years and compile them into a booklet form. This is particularly needed by choirmasters and organists who find it difficult to make such selections.

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