



# The Church's Song



# Part I: Chant

# The Song of the Sea

---

Exodus 15: 1-18

# The Song of the Sea

---

## Verse 1

Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to LORD, and they said,

# The Song of the Sea

---

## Verse 1

Then Moses and the children of Israel sang this song to LORD, and they said, “I will sing to the LORD, for he is majestic in might. Horse and rider has he cast into the Red Sea.”

# The Song of the Sea

---

## Verse 2

The LORD is my strength and song and has become my salvation. This is my God and I will adorn him, my father's God, and will I exalt him.

# The Song of the Sea

---

## Verse 3

The LORD is a man of war. The LORD is his name.

# The Song of the Sea

---

## Verse 4

He has thrown Pharaoh's chariots and his army into the sea. His choice officers were sunk in the Red Sea.

# The Song of the Sea

---

## Verse 5

The depths covered them, they sank in the deep like a stone.

# The Song of the Sea

---

## Verse 6

Your right hand, O LORD, is majestic in power. Your right hand, O LORD, shatters the enemy.

# The Song of the Sea

---

## Verse 7

In your great might, you cast down those who rise against you. You send out your anger and it consumes them like chaff.

# The Song of the Sea

---

## Verse 8

By the breath of your nose the waters are stacked up. The floods stood like a heap; the depths congealed in the heart of the sea.

# The Song of the Sea

---

## Verse 9

The enemy said, “I will pursue, I will overtake, and I will divide spoil. My soul will have its fill of them. I will unsheathe my sword and my hand shall dispossess them.”

# The Song of the Sea

---

## Verse 10

You blew with your breath and the sea covered them. They sank like lead in the mighty waters.

# The Song of the Sea

---

## Verse 11

Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like you, glorious in holiness, awesome in praises, working wonders?



# Chant

---

The iterative speaking or singing of words or sounds, often primarily on one or two main pitches called reciting tones.

# Monophony

---

A musical texture comprising a single line of musical tones: that is, a single melody, or intonation, or cantillation. It makes no difference whether there is one singer, or several, or many singers - so long as they all sing the same notes together, it is monophony.

# A Cappella

---

Literally, as performed in the chapel. Singing without the use of instruments. The chapel in question is the Pope's Chapel where all music is performed without the use of instruments.



# Chanting the Torah

---

“Whosoever reads [the Torah] without melody and studies [Mishnah] without song, to him may be applied the verse (Ezekiel 20:25): ‘Moreover I gave them laws that were not good, and rules by which they could not live.’” (Talmud, B. Megillah 32a)

# Music as Pedagogy

---

“Behind every pedagogy is a philosophical anthropology; that is, implicit in every constellation of educational practices there is a set of assumptions about the nature of human persons.”

- James K.A. Smith, Professor of Philosophy, Calvin University.

Desiring the Kingdom, p. 37

# Interrogating Tradition

---

It ain't necessarily so.

# Music in the Early Church (c.30-590)

---

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

- Ephesians 5:18-21

# What did they Sing?

---

Psalms

# What did they Sing?

---

## Canticles

Any scriptural songs that are not Psalms and a few songs that are so old and contain so much scriptural allusion, they are considered essentially scripturally adjunct.

# What did they Sing?

---

## Canticles

- Magnificat (Song of Mary, Luke 1:46-55)
- Benedictus (Song of Zachariah, Luke 1:68-79)
- Nunc Dimittis (Song of Simeon, Luke 2:29-32)
- Gloria in Excelsis (Glory to God in the Highest, Luke 2:14)
- Te Deum Laudamus (We Praise Thee, O God)

# What did they Sing?

---

## Other Congregational Responses

- Kyrie Eleison (Lord Have Mercy)
- Trisagion (Holy God, Holy and Mighty, Holy and Immortal, Have Mercy)
- Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of Hosts)

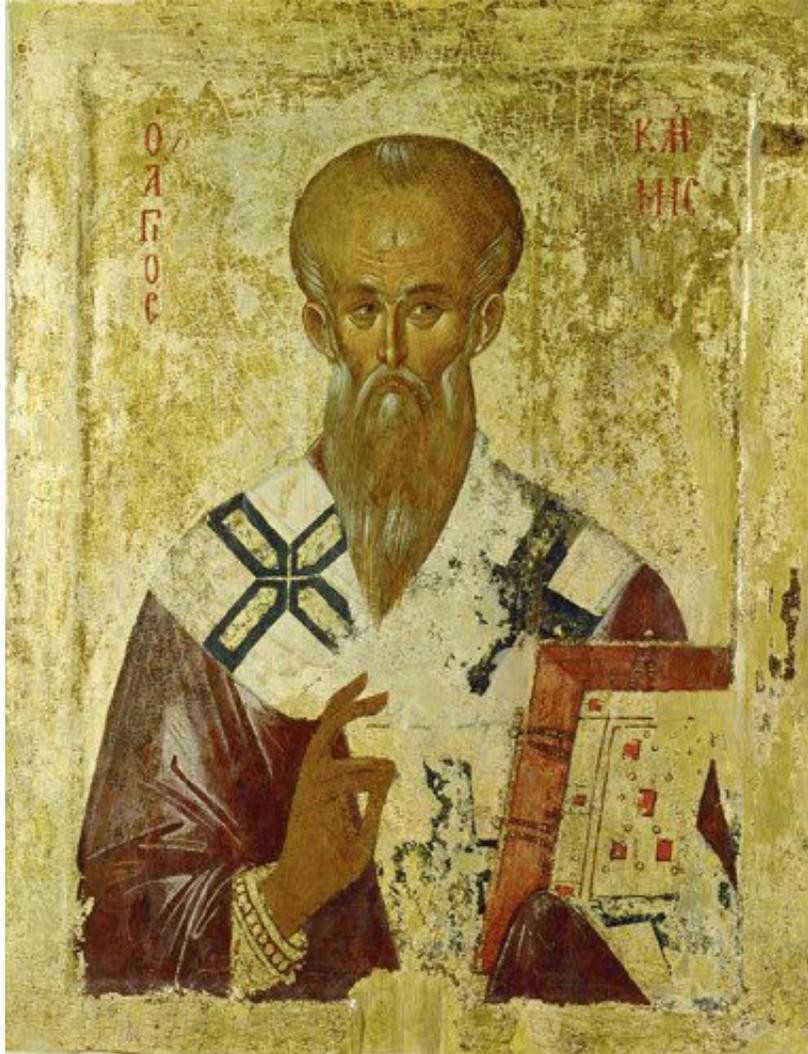
# How Did They Sing?

---

No instruments, please.

# How Did They Sing?

---

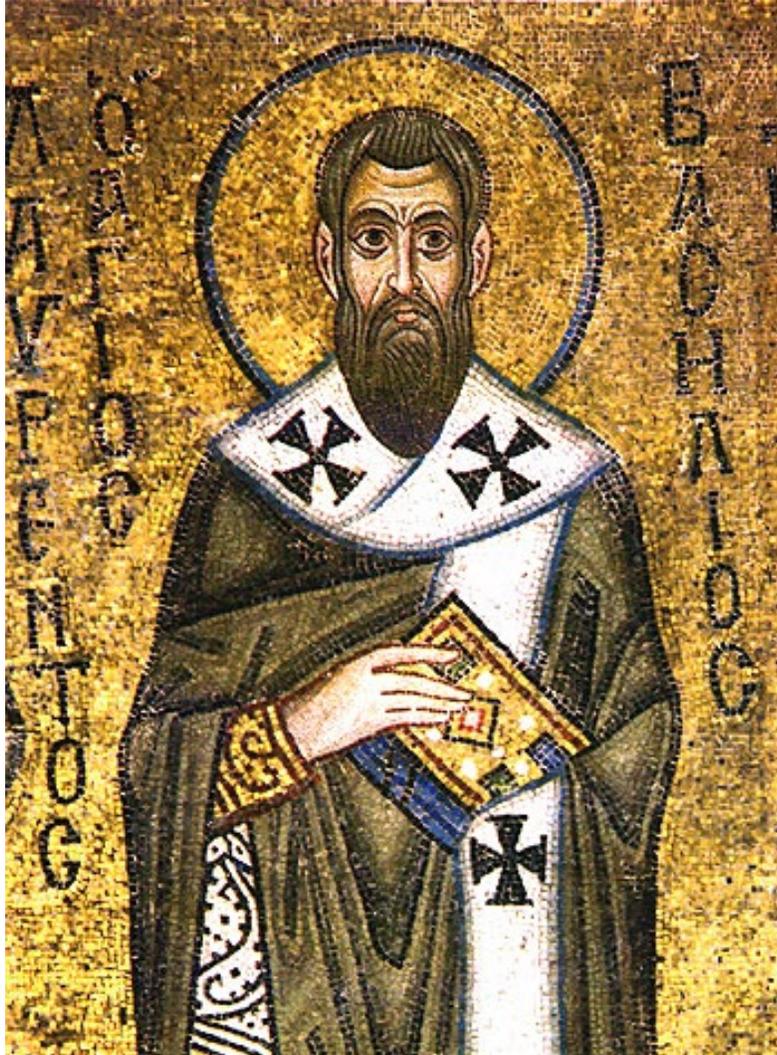


Clement of Alexandria (c.150-215):

“We, however, make use of but one instrument, the word of peace alone by which we honor God, and no longer the ancient psaltery, nor the trumpet, the tympanum and the aulos, as was the custom among those expert in war and those scornful of the fear of God who employed string instruments in their festive gatherings, as if to arouse their remissness of spirit through such rhythms.”

# How Did They Sing?

---



Basil the Great (c.330-379):

There are towns where the inhabitants, from dawn to eve, feast their eyes on the tricks of innumerable conjurers.... They do not know that a theater full of impure sights is, for those who sit there, a common school of vice; that these melodies and meretricious songs insinuate themselves into men's souls, and all who hear them, eager to imitate the notes of [kithara and aulos players], are filled with filthiness.

# How Did They Sing?

---



John Chrysostom (c.347-407):

There are towns where the inhabitants, from dawn to eve, feast their eyes on the tricks of innumerable conjurers.... They do not know that a theater full of impure sights is, for those who sit there, a common school of vice; that these melodies and meretricious songs insinuate themselves into men's souls, and all who hear them, eager to imitate the notes of [kithara and aulos players], are filled with filthiness.

# How Did They Sing?

---

Hold on a sec, Dr. Robert! I remember TONS of verses in the Psalms that talk about instruments in the Temple??

# How Did They Sing?

---

With regard to Psalms, they could be sung:

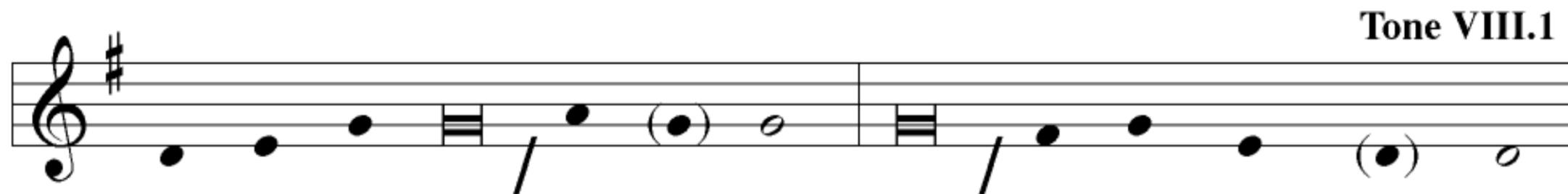
-In Unison: the whole Psalm sung together

-Responsorially: a cantor or choir singing the psalm and the congregation punctuates it with a repeated verse, alleluia, or amen at the end.

-Antiphonally: Congregation is divided into two choirs and alternated verses.

# Psalm 1

---



Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the / wicked,\*  
nor lingered in the way of sinners,  
nor sat in the seats / of the scornful!

# Too Much of a Good Thing?

---



# Augustine and Music

---



I find it difficult to assign [Music] to its proper place. For sometimes I feel that I treat it with more honor than it deserves. I realize that when they are sung these sacred words stir my mind to greater religious fervor and kindle in me a more ardent form of piety than they would if they were not sung; and I also know that there are particular modes in song and the voice, corresponding to my various emotions and able to stimulate them because of some mysterious relationship between the two.

# Augustine and Music

---



But I ought not to allow my mind to be paralyzed by the gratification of my senses, which often leads it astray. For the senses are not content to take second place. Simply because I allow them their due, as adjuncts to reason, they attempt to take precedence and forge ahead of it, with the result that I sometimes sin in this way but am not aware of it until later.

# Augustine and Music

---



Sometimes, too, from over-anxiety to avoid this particular trap I make the mistake of being too strict. When this happens, I have no wish but to exclude from my ears, and from the ears of the Church as well, all the melody of those lovely chants to which the Psalms of David are habitually sung; and it seems safer to me to follow the precepts which I remember often having heard ascribed to Athanasius, bishop of Alexandria, who used to oblige the lectors to recite the psalms with such slight modulation of the voice that they seemed to be speaking rather than chanting.

# Augustine and Music

---



But when I remember the tears that I shed on hearing the songs of the Church in the early days, soon after I had recovered my faith, and when I realize that nowadays it is not the singing that moves me but the meaning of the words when they are sung in a clear voice to the most appropriate tune, I again acknowledge the great value of this practice. So I waver between the danger that lies in gratifying the senses and the benefits which, as I know from experience, can accrue from singing....

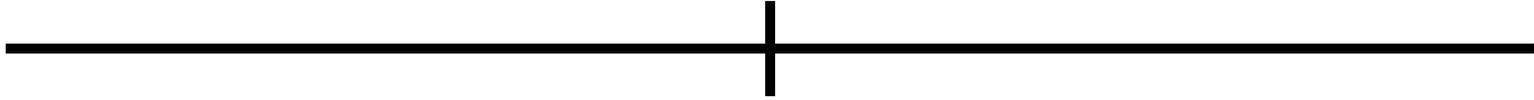
# Augustine and Music

---



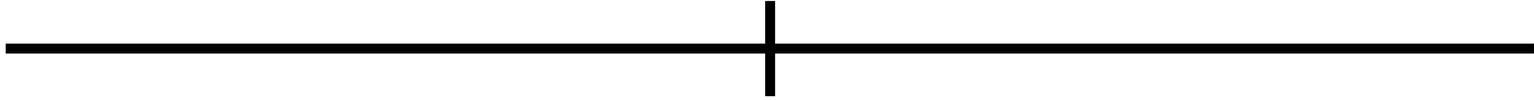
....When I find the singing itself more moving than the truth which it conveys, I confess that this is a grievous sin, and at those times I would prefer not to hear the singer.

Confessions: Book 10, Chapter 33



Music entirely  
subservient to the text

Music for  
music's sake

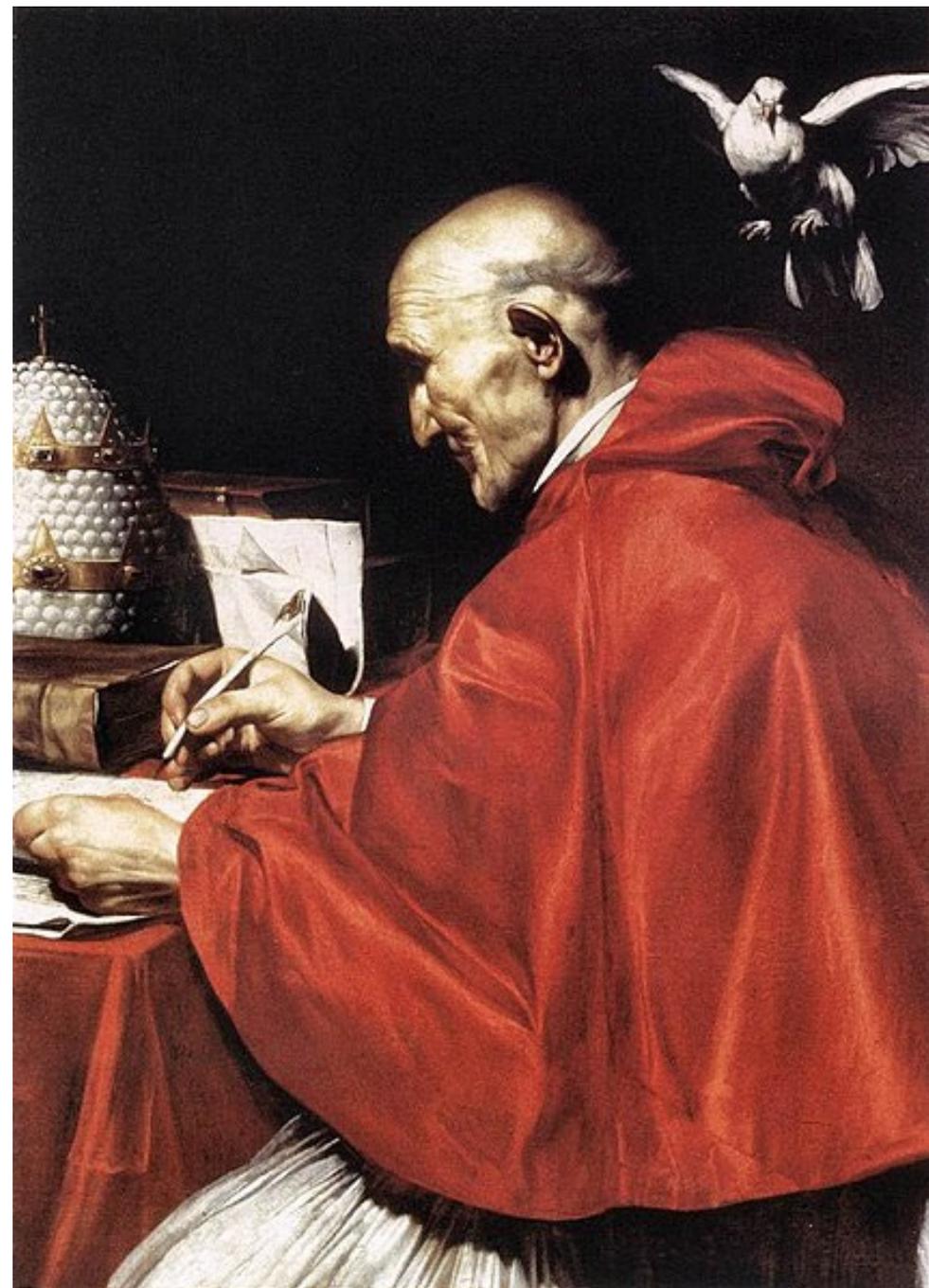


Amateur-friendly

Fully professionalized

# Gregorian Chant

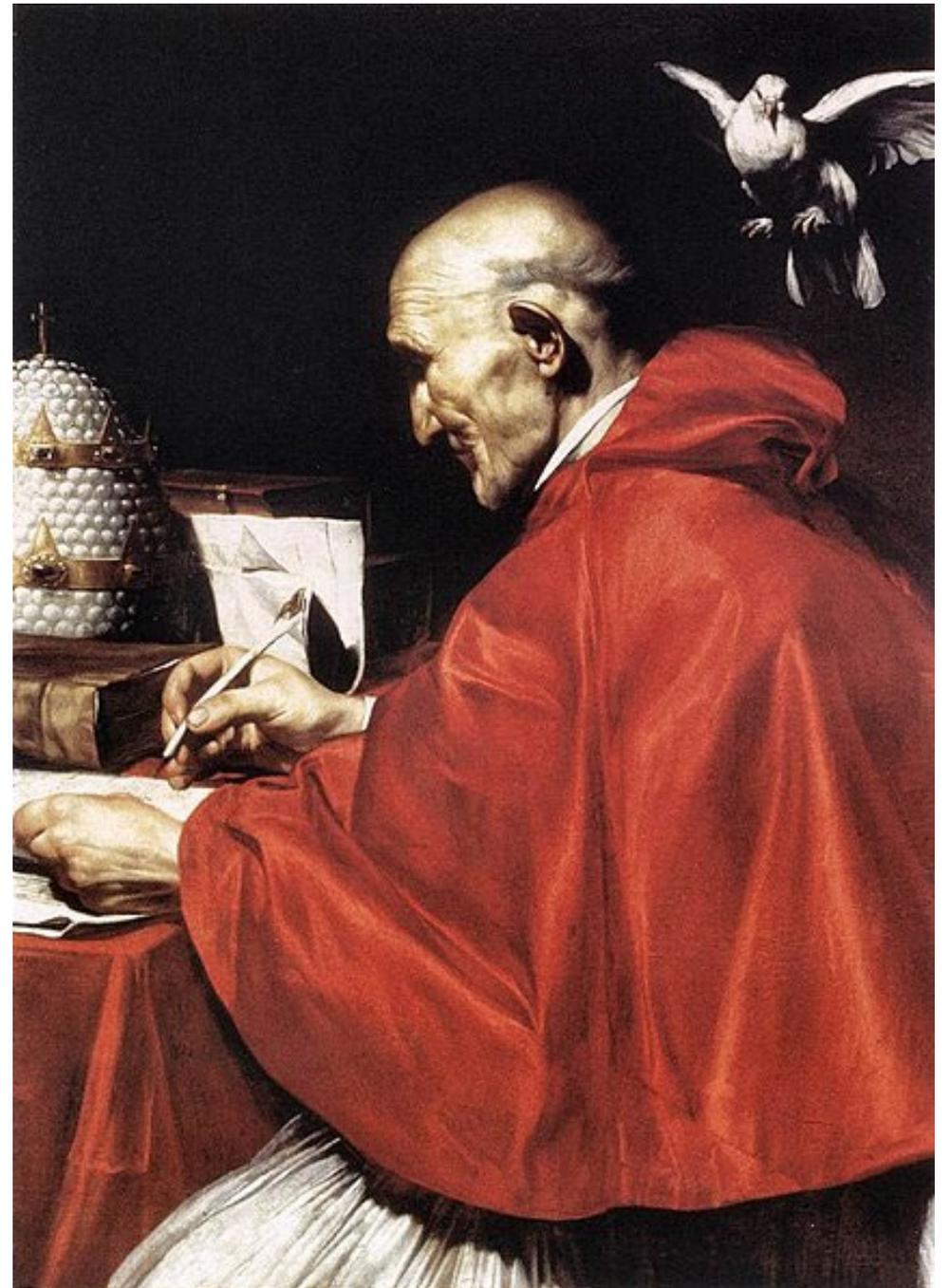
---



# Gregorian Chant

---

Gregorian chant (also called Plainsong or Plainchant) is the central tradition of monophonic, unaccompanied sacred song in Latin of the Western Roman Catholic Church. It is a corpus of thousands of sacred melodies covering all of the liturgical texts for all services of Catholic worship.

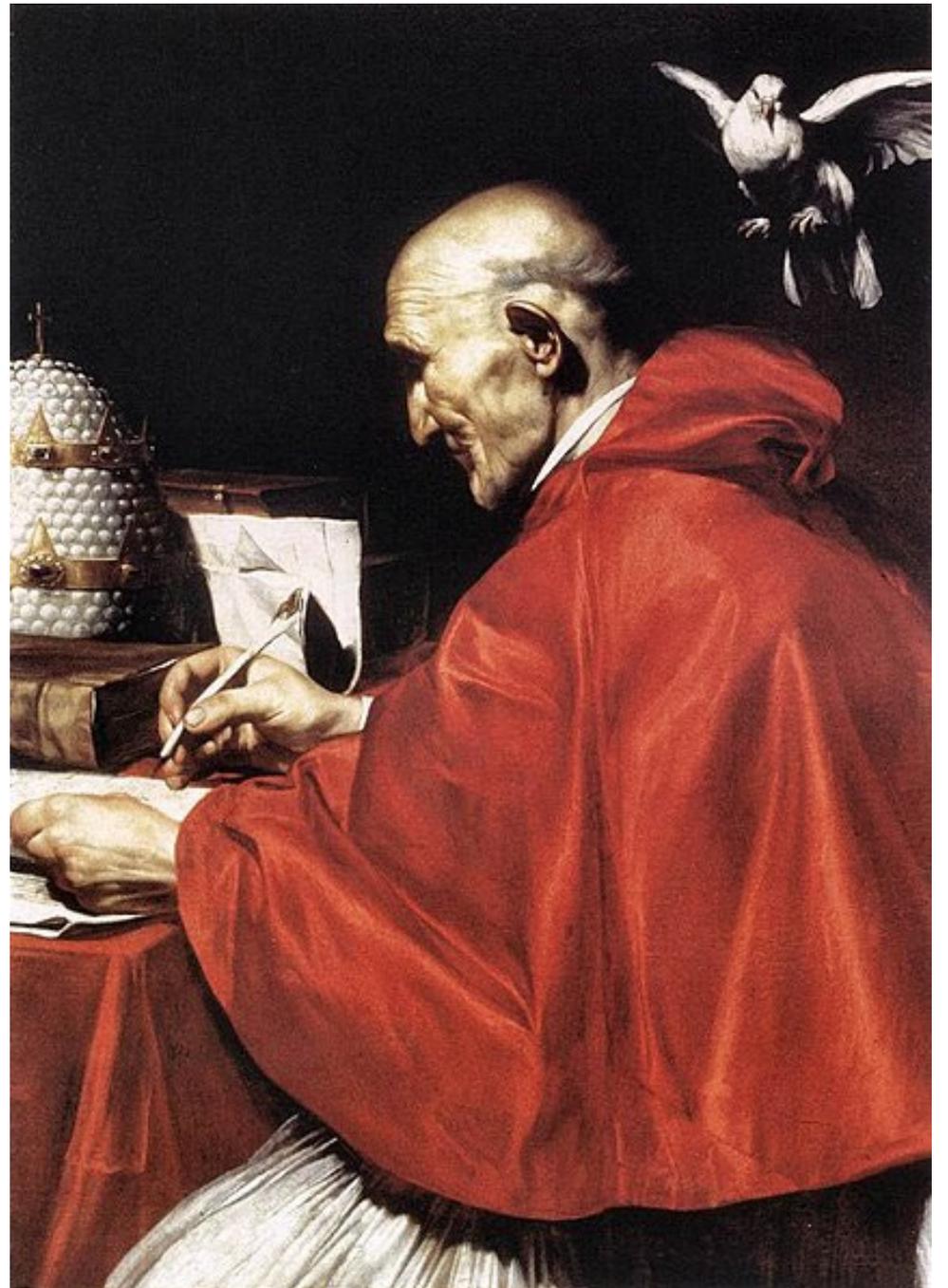


# Gregorian Chant

---

“The Church acknowledges Gregorian chant as specially suited to the Roman liturgy: therefore, other things being equal, it should be given pride of place in liturgical services.”

- Constitution on Sacred Liturgy,  
article 116 (1963)





\* Dies ist der ahralt und bilnusz gleich \*  
\*

Manch man zu Nurnberg alle Jar & alle andern Jahren  
offenbar

Karolus  
impator

Magnus  
Anus. 14.

kaiser karolus der das Reich hat & der weltlichen und der  
keithlichen macht

\* Man man zu Nurnberg alle Jar & alle andern Jahren  
offenbar \*

# Gloria in Excelsis

---

Glory be to God on high  
and in earth peace, goodwill towards men.

# Gloria in Excelsis

---

We praise thee, we bless thee,  
we worship thee, we glorify thee,  
we give thanks to thee, for thy great glory

# Gloria in Excelsis

---

O Lord God, heavenly King,  
God the Father Almighty.

# Gloria in Excelsis

---

O Lord, the only-begotten Son, Jesu Christ;  
O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,  
that takest away the sins of the world,  
have mercy upon us.

# Gloria in Excelsis

---

Thou that takest away the sins of the world,  
have mercy upon us.

Thou that takest away the sins of the world,  
receive our prayer.

Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father,  
have mercy upon us.

# Gloria in Excelsis

---

For thou only art holy;  
thou only art the Lord;  
thou only, O Christ,  
with the Holy Ghost,  
art most high  
in the glory of God the Father.  
Amen.

# Qui Habitat (Psalm 91)

---

He who dwells

# Qui Habitat (Psalm 91)

---

in the shelter of the Most High

# Qui Habitat (Psalm 91)

---

will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.

# Qui Habitat (Psalm 91)

---

I will say to the LORD,

# Qui Habitat (Psalm 91)

---

“My refuge and my fortress,

# Qui Habitat (Psalm 91)

---

my God, in whom I trust.”

# Gregorian Chant

---

Factors that contribute to the decline of congregational participation:

1. The usurpation of the choir over the role of the people from the 5<sup>th</sup> century onward.
2. The imposition of the Latin language on non-Latin speakers, and the linguistic drift of peoples who did speak Latin.
3. The growing complexity of the musical style.
4. Professionalization of music-making.

# Questions? Discussion?

---

