

# P R E F A C E

Welcome to a project that is finally finished after 22 years in the making, maybe even more than that. Perhaps 32 years. That's it! Thirty-two years ago was when I first attempted to write my first series of Responsorial Psalms, in the break room at a cabinet factory in Holliston, Massachusetts, less than a mile from the church at which the venerable Leo Abbott was organist before making his move to where he is today, the Cathedral of the Holy Cross in Boston. One of my co-workers had told me about Mr. Abbott and how great of an organist he was. At that time, I was at my first ever music director position at Sacred Heart Church in Woonsocket, Rhode Island (the cabinet factory was my "day job" then). Sacred Heart was once served musically by the late great C. Alexander Peloquin, who prospered in his 40 years at Providence's Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul. I had the pleasure of serving another of Dr. Peloquin's former parishes later on, Precious Blood Church, also in Woonsocket. His "Songs of Israel" project, two volumes of seasonal Psalms for Mass, was a major influence on my early work on this project. At that time, my focus was only on Responsorial Psalms.

A decade later, give or take a couple of Psalm settings in between, I found myself improving on this project, again, using Alex Peloquin's style as my main influence, this time in my car in the parking lot at a Ford dealer in Franklin, Massachusetts, while on lunch breaks there. Some of these were put to use at the aforementioned Precious Blood Church while I was there, and some parishes at which I later served, most notably Holy Name of Jesus Church in Providence.

Holy Name Church was one of those parishes where I really got to grow liturgically, as they had not only two Masses each weekend in the Ordinary Form, but also a Sunday Mass in the Extraordinary Form. This was my first experience with actual Propers of the Mass (Introit, Gradual, Alleluia or Tract, Offertory, and Communion). We actually sang the Mass, not just sang at Mass. While there, I received from Reuel Gifford, a longtime mentor who was also a predecessor of mine from Holy Name, a copy of *The Complete Proper of the Mass*, written by Msgr. Koch and Fr. Green in the mid 1940's, and published by McLaughlin and Reilly.

I was thinking of doing an English language project in the style of Koch and Green, but about a third of the way my brain said, "Go away, Brian! You're fried!" Well, there will be another project in the not-too-distant future based on the Koch and Green collection, which will be discussed later. Right now, before your very eyes is a collection of Propers for the Ordinary Form, combining the *Roman Missal* with the *Roman Gradual*, most of them in English, most of which are written in chant style, and dubbed with the rather sophomoric sounding title I've been wanting to use since 1985 (mind you, I was barely old enough to drink back then), *Psalm 151*.

*Psalm 151* is a collection of Introits, Responsorial Psalms, Alleluias (Gospel Acclamation during Lent and Passiontide), Offertories, and Communions. The Introits, Offertories, and Communions are based on those in the *Graduale Romanum* and *Gregorian Missal*, while the Responsorial Psalms and Alleluias are based on those in the *Roman Missal* and the *Lectionary for Mass*. The style emulated in most of these selections is that of the late Theodore Marier, who was a huge contributor to the *Pius X Hymnal* of 1953, and his own later brainchild, *Hymns, Psalms, and Spiritual Canticles*, published in 1984.

Many of the selections have chant-style responses, with a Gregorian psalm tone for the versicles, along with an optional original SATB tone for alternating versicles (emulating such composers as the aforementioned Dr. Marier, Dr. Peter Latona, and Sam Schmitt). Some non-Gregorian tones have been retained because of their popularity with musicians I have run into (albeit mainly via Facebook). Examples of those non-Gregorian tones include those for Psalms 34 and 95. Some responses are based on chants, some from the *Graduale Romanum*, some from more familiar chant hymns (many of the Alleluias in this collection use the latter as their source).

While the Gregorian tones for the versicles come with an accompaniment, such versicles may be even better rendered a capella. Same with the original SATB "alternating" tones. Sometimes one may only have two parts available (e.g., soprano and alto), in which case, one could effectively have the two parts sing the alternating tones with a soft accompaniment, preferably no louder than *piano*.

The Alleluias in this collection contain versicles for a group of Sundays plus any Solemnities that normally run within that group.

The selections are sorted in liturgical order, with the Temporal Cycle (Proper of Time, or Proper of Seasons) first, followed by the Sanctoral Cycle (Proper of Saints). Although Thanksgiving Day is not in the Sanctoral Cycle (it is a "Mass for Various Occasions"), I included it within the November feasts in that cycle for reasons of continuity, as music is often supplied for Mass on that day, at least based on my own experience in Catholic church music. Additionally, any Proper of one day which uses the same response as a Proper for another day will get a reference instead of needless repeating. For example, the Year C Responsorial Psalm for the Fifth Sunday of Lent is the same as that in Year C for the Second Sunday of Advent. Therefore, under the Fifth Sunday of Lent, you would see "Responsorial Psalm (C): See #10." As it is, there are 407 selections in all. Repeating would result in something the size of most full-blown hymnals, if not bigger.

Finally, if you like adding brass, some selections for Christmas, Easter, and Ascension include parts for brass, mainly two trumpets, trombone, and French horn (yes, I use two trumpets and a French horn at my current parish on occasion). Timpani has also been added to some of these, and even handbells for a couple of pieces.

Special thanks to those pastors who have allowed me to expose the work of this project, as well as its earlier conceptions, to parishes at which I've served, namely Fathers Rene Gagne (deceased), Kevin Fiset, and Richard Bucci (my current pastor as of this writing). Also, my dear family (wife Ann, children Christopher, Jessica, Brian, and Brittany, and grandson Anthony, alias "A.J.") who have put up with me over the many years I've worked on this, and for their love and support over my entire career as a church musician and composer.

It is my hope that there is something in *Psalm 151* that is accessible for congregations and choirs alike, whether in large Cathedrals (like the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis in St. Louis, Missouri, who has used some of my work) or small clapboard churches. It is my goal, as well as the goal of a good number of composers today, that our congregations do not just sing at Mass, but SING THE MASS!

Save the liturgy, save the world!

CHRISTUS VINCIT, CHRISTUS REGNAT, CHRISTUS IMPERAT!

Brian Michael Page  
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