

Three Perspectives on New and Revised Mass Settings

A Composer's Perspective



Ken
Canedo

Ken Canedo is a liturgical composer who has been involved as a pastoral musician and youth minister for more than thirty years. He is co-director of the youth choir at Holy Trinity Catholic Church in Beaverton, Oregon, and he also serves as managing editor of spiritandsong.com. His recent book on the history and influence of the folk Mass is *Keep the Fire Burning: The Folk Mass Revolution* (www.ocp.org/6152TL). His most recent collection is *Doxology* (www.ocp.org/20794TL).

In anticipation of the upcoming changes in the English translation of the *Ordo Missae*, composers have been working with the proposed texts for several years. Text fluidity was a challenge. After composing music for a new text, we would sometimes receive word of yet another revision that required us to go back to the drawing board. This happened several times and we learned to go with the flow.

Composers were mainly involved with setting the assembly's acclamations to music: the Glory to God, the Holy, the Mystery of Faith (formerly known as the Memorial Acclamation), the Lamb of God, etc. Most of the changes involved a single phrase and were easy to adapt. The Holy is a good example: from "God of power and might" to "God of hosts."

However, the Glory to God was problematic. As an example, the first part of the prayer was inverted.

Current text:

Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

Revised text:

We praise you, we bless you, we adore you,
we glorify you, we give you thanks for your
great glory, Lord God, heavenly King,
O God, almighty Father.

Melodically, it is much easier to set the current text to music because a composer can begin with a theme for God the Father and unfold it within the acclamations of praise. In the revised text, the acclamations of praise precede the identification

of who is being praised (God the Father). That changes the melodic nuance somewhat.

Bob Hurd and I went right to work on *Mass of Glory*. Most of our revision was seamless but we spent a lot of time going back and forth on the Glory to God. The new Mystery of Faith acclamations 1 and 3 utilize the word "resurrection," a difficult word to set to music. There were many challenges but our underlying composing principle was to respect the official texts. Bob and I hope that *Mass of Glory's* familiar themes will help ease choirs and assemblies into praying the new *Ordo Missae*.

But familiarity might also be a stumbling block. Try singing the "Happy Birthday" melody with new words: "The happiest of birthdays to you, our esteemed friend..." It might be easier for people to sing an entirely new melody with the revised texts. For this reason, I submitted a new setting to OCP that utilizes a hybrid traditional/contemporary style. The only group that might have difficulty with it is my own parish because we have been singing it with the current text for five years now.

Ironically, the revision seems to be a restoration of the 1964 transitional English texts that were closer to the Latin. This only begs the question of why we went to the 1970 texts in the first place. Having said that, I welcome the new texts and have enjoyed working with them. The transition to the new *Ordo Missae* will be challenging and, perhaps, an inconvenience for some. On the plus side, this is a marvelous opportunity for catechesis. The Mass is once again at the forefront of Catholic discussion in the media and in the parishes on a scale not seen since the days of the Second Vatican Council. That is certainly a good thing.

© 2010 OCP. All rights reserved.

A Music Director's Perspective

Change! You may have heard it said that it's the only real constant in our lives. There can be both difficulties and opportunities in any type of change. I would like to offer a music director's perspective on the revised Mass texts. What are the particular challenges that these texts give me as a music director? What are the opportunities provided with these text changes? Will I use new music, or a revised version of an existing musical setting?

All of us musicians and liturgists need to do our homework. At the 2009 National Association of Pastoral Musicians (NPM) convention in Chicago, Father Paul Turner gave an excellent keynote address about the new translation of the *Roman Missal*. His talk is reprinted in the October 2009 issue of *Pastoral Music*. Check it out. The Internet is another good tool for learning more about the revised texts. Organizations with helpful Web sites include the USCCB (www.usccb.org/romanmissal), NPM (www.npm.org), FDLIC (www.fdlc.org), and Catholic music publishers like OCP, GIA, and WLP.

This is an ideal opportunity for evaluating the settings your community already knows. Which Mass settings does your parish currently sing well (and should therefore be listed as “keepers”)? Are there other settings that are just okay? Are there some that need to be retired? This can be a helpful pruning process before the new sung settings are made available. Before making specific decisions about Mass settings—new or revised—discuss the options with the prayer and worship committee and other pastoral musicians, liturgists, and priests in your area. Listen to how others will be implementing the changes. Why reinvent the wheel? Set a firm foundation for your decisions by reviewing the guidelines in *Sing to the Lord* (www.ocp.org/20995TL).

When I review the new and revised settings that are published, I will be looking for a revised setting that we have used and know well. I will also be looking for one new setting that is accessible musically and in a similar style to what we use now. As the settings are made available, my homework will be to determine which ones could be keepers for my community. This will take time, but I look forward to the variety of musical possibilities that have been written by the composers.

Musicians are familiar with long-range planning. What will be a good implementation timeline for my parish? How will I introduce the text changes to the various groups with which I am involved? Ideally, there will continue to be guidance from the bishops and diocesan offices in how to proceed. There is also a financial implication to the revisions. Remember to plan for the additional costs of new ritual books, assembly missals, hymnals, and worship aids in your budget.

These changes also provide an opportunity for catechesis about liturgy and our Sunday gathering for prayer. This catechetical process should involve the parish school (teachers and students), religious education programs, and sacramental formation sessions with both students and parents. The focus should not be limited to the text changes themselves. With some imaginative thinking and planning, your parish can build on the challenges of the new Mass texts and make this a formative time for the parishioners. Most likely, the musician/liturgist will need to take the lead on this.

Although we do not know the implementation date for the revised missal, there are a variety of ways to begin preparing ourselves and our assemblies. Our goal will still be the same—to give praise to God, listen to his word, be fed by him, and bring God's love out to the world.

© 2010 OCP. All rights reserved.



Debra Honoré

Debra Honoré is currently the associate director of music at St. Mary Catholic Faith Community in Hales Corners, Wisconsin. She is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Parkside (BA in music) and St. Francis Seminary in Milwaukee (MA in pastoral studies). Debra and her husband, Jeffrey, are enjoying an empty nest together and have three adult sons.

A *Publisher's* Perspective



**Barbara
Bridge**

Barbara Bridge has been involved in music ministry for many years as a cantor, soloist, choir director, composer, and event presenter.

Since 2007 she has been associate director of artist relations and product development for the English liturgical initiative at OCP.

She is leading the company's process of receiving, reviewing, editing, and publishing new and revised musical settings of the Mass.

Preparing for the implementation of the newly translated *Roman Missal* has definitely had its challenges. In early 2007 we were still waiting for approval of the English text of the Order of Mass by the American bishops. Nevertheless, composers began submitting new Mass settings using the texts in the provisional “grey book” translation. Over the past two years, we have reviewed dozens of new Masses in a variety of musical styles. Although the number of submissions received far exceeded our publishing capacity, we carefully reviewed each Mass with the following criteria in mind: Does the music reflect the meaning of the liturgical text? Is the music well crafted, engaging, and memorable? Does this setting invite assembly participation? Will this music endure over many years? Much time and effort on the part of composers and reviewers have yielded several new Mass settings, in styles ranging from traditional to contemporary, that will eventually be published in our missals and hymnals, when the Holy See’s *recognitio* (approval) for the new translation has been received.

Before I go on about the great number of new Masses we received, there is another aspect of the text changes we had to consider seriously. No one can predict exactly how the people of God will respond to these text changes. The transition will be challenging for pastors, music directors, and the people they serve. At OCP we are working to provide various options in the hope of making the transition as smooth as possible. Along with our plan to publish new Mass settings, we also had to consider this question: Would customers prefer singing a familiar Mass using the revised text or a completely new setting? This is an especially important question

for parishes with limited music resources. A customer survey revealed that a large percentage of pastoral musicians would likely use a combination of revised and new Masses during the first few years of transition. As a result, we have chosen to revise a number of currently published Masses, adapting the music to the new text. It was a challenge for composers to re-set the new text while attempting to maintain the original character of their music. The new *Glory to God*, in particular, presents many challenges for “retrofitting,” with the length and rhythm of the phrases significantly different from the former text. Only time will tell if the composers’ adaptations will be fully adopted by the worshipping community.

Many of the new settings submitted to OCP are worthy of future publication, but it may take several years to get them into print due to limited publishing capacity. Many settings that were not initially included in our missals and hymnals will be available for downloading on the OCP Web site at www.ocp.org/newmasssettings.

Our work with composers is ongoing as they make final revisions to their manuscripts. We plan to offer many choices of new Mass settings through print publishing and online digital downloads. The challenge will be to provide all these choices for parish musicians with ample time to learn the music and to teach their assemblies the new texts and music by the to-be-determined implementation date.

© 2010 OCP. All rights reserved.