

Instituta patrum de modo psallendi sive cantandi.

Sancti Patres nostri antiqui docuerunt et instituerunt subditos suos, praecipientes eis hunc ritum modulandi servare, talemque formam cantandi sive psallendi in Choris suis tenere, per hanc asserentes et affirmantes Deo gratum esse, et placere sacrificium laudis nostrae; Angelis vero acceptabile et iocundum, omnibus hominibus intuentibus et audientibus delectabile et aedificatorium, generans devotionem et compunctionem, et suscitans animum ad indagandum Scripturarum intellectum, et erigens mentem ad contemplandum ea, quae super se sunt, coelestia ac divina. Nam in Choris ubi plures magistri volunt esse, aliquis forsitan propter religiositatem suam, alius propter praelationem, alius propter vocis sonoritatem, alius putans se aliquem esse, ut videatur et audiatur, et nullus istorum nec modum potest habere, aut nescit, et forte nec scientiam habet. Unde ⁶⁹ necesse est ut error oriatur, fomes discordiae morum et vocum; et non solum ipsi inter se intus non bene aemulantes turbantur, verum etiam hi, qui foris sunt, audientes scandalizantur; et ubi Deum deberent laudare, potius ibi diiudicentur ad invicem mordere et certare. Quicumque ergo in Choro discordiam et errorem subministrat et nutrit, sive Praelatus sit an subditus, sciat se graviter delinquere in Deum et Angelos et homines, seu vera an vana modulatione hoc faciat. Huic nequitiae obviantes, statuimus, quae subiungimus, et ea sollicitè observanda mandamus.

Tres ordines melodiae in tribus distinctionibus temporum habeamus, verbi gratia, in praecipuis Solempnitatibus, toto corde et ore omnique affectu devotionis; in Dominicis diebus et maioribus Festivitatibus sive Natalitiis Sanctorum (in quibus plebes laborant partim vel totaliter) multo remissius; privatis autem diebus ita psalmodia moduletur nocturnis horis, et cantus de die, ut omnes possint devote psallere et intente cantare sine strepitu vocis, cum affectu absque defectu.

Omni tempore aestate vel hyeme, nocte ac die sollempni sive privato, Psalmodia semper pari voce, aequa lance, non nimis protrahatur; sed mediocri voce, non nimis velociter, sed rotunda, virili, viva et succincta voce psallatur: syllabas, verba, metrum in medio et in finem versus, id est initium, medium et finem, simul incipiamus, et pariter dimittamus. Punctum aequaliter teneant omnes. In omni textu Lectionis, Psalmodiae vel cantus, accentus sive concentus verborum (in quantum suppetit facultas) non negligatur, quia exinde permaxime redolet intellectus. Scire debet omnis Cantor, quod literae quae liquescunt in metrica arte, etiam in Neumis Musicae artis liquescunt.

Ammonemus itaque, ut una aspiratione sive uno anhelitu usque ad punctum rithmice vel metricè psallamus: post medium metrum modica modulatione peracta, pausam bonam et competentem faciamus: facta pausa, quod de Versu restat, morosiori modulatione deponatur salvo Tono; sicque omnis modulatio Psalmodiae sive Cantus rotundetur et terminetur, ut finis inveniatur suum exordium secundum illud: Rota volvitur ducendo, in suum pristinum reducitur volvendo. Nullus ante alios aut post, incipere in Versu vel cantu, verba cantata reiterare, vel nimis discorditer festinare, praesumptiori vel altiori, remissiori an graviori, id est, sursum vel iusum, tardiori vel velociori voce, aut post alios diutius protrahere, vel punctum tenere praesumat. Una qualitate cantemus, simul pausemus, semper auscultando. Si morose cantamus, longior pausa fiat; si propere, brevior: semper in Psalmodia punctus et pausa teneantur.

Quomodo ergo Toni deponantur in finalibus propter diversos accentus, nunc dicendum est. Omnis enim Tonorum depositio in finalibus, mediis vel ultimis, non est secundum accentum verbi, sed secundum musicalem melodiam Toni facienda, sicut dicit Priscianus: Musica non ⁷¹ subiacet regulis Donati, sicut nec divina Scriptura. Si vero convenerit in unum accentus et melodia, communiter deponantur; sin autem, iuxta melodiam Toni, cantus sive Psalmi terminentur. Nam in depositione fere omnium Tonorum, Musica in finalibus Versuum per melodiam subprimit syllabas, et accentus sophisticat, et hoc maxime in Psalmodia. Ideoque si Tonaliter finis Versuum deponitur, oportet ut saepius accentus infringatur eo modo, verbi gratia, ut sunt sex syllabae, Saeculorum Amen; ita sex conformentur notis Toni in depositione verborum et syllabarum. Ergo cum quidquid agitur pro Defunctis, totum flebili et remissiori debet fieri voce, ut nihil ibi resonent verba nisi devotum moerorem et humilitatem. In hymnis Te Deum laudamus, Gloria in excelsis, et Credo in unum, sic punctus et pausa fiant, ut intellectus discernatur, et mediocri voce decantentur. Dum Hymnos vel Responsoria sive Antiphonas seu Alleluia, Kyrie eleison, Sanctus an Agnus Dei, quaecunque pulchra, suavia ac dulcia et iocunde sonant, in his punctum bene discernendo, notulas decantemus, et in clausulis pausam faciendo, aliquantulum expectemus, et hoc maxime Festivis diebus. Caveamus etiam ne Neumas coniunctas nimia morositate vel disiunctas inepta velocitate coniungamus; sed concorditer pausam ad punctum habeamus; vel sequentias si cantamus sive alternatim sive una simul, concentu parili, voce consona finiatur. Jubilus vero dulci modulamine bene discretis neumis deponatur.

Omnem igitur cantum sive Psalmodiam, si morose ac propere psallimus, semper cum facultate vocum et rotunde, suavi melodia peragamus. Responsoria vero et Antiphonas, Gradualia, Tractus, Alleluia, Offertoria et Communiones, omnemque gravem cantum, remissiori ac velociori processu persolvamus. Festivis namque diebus in omni cantu punctum et pausam non omittamus: privatis autem diebus sic psallamus ac cantemus, ut nullus tepidus aut desidiosus aliquam, astute cavillando, possit habere excusationem. Si duo simul cantent, syllabas et pausam ad punctum aequaliter incipiant et finiant, et descendat vox infirmiori fortior: si autem impares sint voces et dissonae, vilior mutetur, et sic parificentur. Solus quidquid cantet vel legat, mediocriter inchoet, et tali voce ut sine strepitu perficiat, et intellectui verba distribuat, ac Neumata dulci diaphonia symphoniacae terminet, ut aedificentur audientes.

Quicumque imponit Antiphonam vel Responsorium, Psalmum aut Hymnum, Introitum aut Graduale, Tractum sive Alleluia; seu quidquid incipit, duas vel tres syllabas an unam syllabam, et duas aut tres notulas imponat solus tractim, aliis tacentibus; et ab eo loco quo intonans dimisit, caeteri inchoent, subsequentes, non repetendo quod ille praecinuit. Similiter observetur, cum Cantor imponit aliquid vel reincipit, seu quemcumque cantum pronuntiat, Chorus concordi melo subsequatur voce unanimi. Caveat autem Cantor, ne unquam cantum ⁷⁸ mutet de voce in vocem, scilicet ut aliam incipiat, quam eam in qua incoepit est cantus; quia valde indecens est in Musica, nisi tantum per Diapason, sive susum sive iusum.

Haec de gremio sanctorum Patrum collegimus; quorum quidam hunc modum cantandi ab Angelis didicerunt, alii, Spiritu Sancto rimante in cordibus eorum, per contemplationem perceperunt. Quam formam si diligenti studio imitari conamur, erimus

et nos psallentes Hymnis et Canticis spiritualibus, canentes Deo in cordibus nostris spiritu et mente. Qui ergo hanc regulam institutionis nostrae transgredi temere praesumpserit et violare, tam graviter puniatur, ut caeteri metum habeant, et emendentur. Histrionicas voces, garrulas, alpinas, sive montanas, tonitruantes, vel sibilantes, hinnientes velut vocalis asina, mugientes, seu balantes quasi pecora; sive foemineas, omnemque vocum falsitatem, iactantiam seu novitatem detestemur, et prohibeamus in Choris nostris; quia plus redolent vanitatem et stultitiam quam religionem; et non decent inter spirituales homines huiusmodi voces in praesentia Dei et Angelorum eius in terra sancta Sanctorum. Tales enim qui eiusmodi voces habent, et carent modo naturali, quia nec aliquando exercitati alicuius instrumenti musicalis artificio; et ideo aptam flexibilitatem vocis non valent habere ad Neumas. Ergo isti, cum sint incompositi moribus et voce, tamen sub obtentu Religionis praesumunt esse et videri Cantores et Rectores in Choris, cum non sciant, nec scire velint; propterea interdum subministrant discordiam et dissolutionem in Choris, et sustollunt ceteros: cum autem levitate nimia praecipitant cantum, aut gravitate inepta syllabas fantur, quasi qui trahat molarem lapidem ad montem sursum, et tamen in praeceptis ruat semper deorsum; ideoque nullo moderamine contenti, non percipiunt subtilem dulcedinem intellectus, et raro perveniunt ad delectationem virtutum; multo magis nunquam aspirant ad speculandum divina mysteria, et ad rimandum secreta coelestia. Talium utique hominum vocibus, cum non sint bonae, Musica tamen scit eis bene uti in locis opportunis, quod illi ignorant, qui eas habent in arca sui pectoris.

Nos igitur sic stemus in disciplina psallendi, ut secundum Regulam B. Benedicti Patris nostri mens nostra concordet voci, cantantes et psallentes in conspectu sanctae Trinitatis et sanctorum Angelorum, compuncti corde cum tremore, et in timore divino, devota mente, amore supernorum, spiritus ardore, intimo desiderio accensi, ut per verba quae pangimus, ad coelestia elevati, coelites effecti, arcana contemplantes, suavi animo, pura anima, iocunda spiritus gravitate, concordanti levitate, dulci melodia, nectareo iubilo, organica voce, et ineffabili laetitia iubilemus Deo Creatori nostro; ut tandem inter Sanctos resuscitati, mereamur eum qui nos vocavit, in aeterno gaudio tripudiantes, laudare, ubi vivit et regnat per omnia saecula saeculorum. Amen.

English Translation

The Fathers' Institutes on the Method of Psalm-singing or Singing.

Our ancient holy Fathers taught and instructed their subjects, commanding them to observe this rite of tuning, and to maintain such a form of singing or psalm in their Choirs, thereby asserting and affirming that the sacrifice of our praise is pleasing to God and pleasing; acceptable and delightful to the Angels, delightful and edifying to all men who behold and hear, generating devotion and compunction, and awakening the soul to investigate the understanding of the Scriptures, and raising the mind to contemplate those things which are above itself, heavenly and divine. For in Choirs where several teachers

wish to be, one perhaps because of his religiosity, another because of his preeminence, another because of the sonority of his voice, another thinking that he is someone, so that he may be seen and heard, and none of these can have any manners, or does not know, and perhaps does not have any knowledge. Whence ¹⁶¹ it is necessary that error should arise, foments of discord in manners and voices; and not only are they troubled within themselves, not competing well with one another, but also those who are without, hearing, are scandalized; and where they should praise God, there they are judged to bite and quarrel with one another. Whoever, therefore, supplies and nourishes discord and error in the Choir, whether he be a Prelate or a subject, let him know that he is grievously offending God and Angels and men, whether he does this with true or vain imitation. In order to counteract this wickedness, we establish the following, which we add, and we command that they be carefully observed.

Let us have three orders of melody in three distinctions of time, for example, on the principal Solemnities, with all our heart and mouth and with every affection of devotion; on Sundays and the greater Festivals or Birthdays of Saints (on which the common people labor partly or wholly) much more relaxedly; but on private days let the psalmody be so modulated during the night hours, and the canticles by day, that all may devoutly psalm and sing intently without noise of voice, with affection without defect.

At all times, summer or winter, at night and on solemn or private days, the Psalmody should always be sung in an even voice, with an even pitch, not too long; but in a moderate voice, not too fast, but in a round, manly, lively and succinct voice: let us begin syllables, words, meter in the middle and towards the end, that is, the beginning, middle and end, together, and let us let go at the same time. Let all hold the point equally. In every text of the Lction, Psalmody or song, the accent or consonance of the words (as far as the ability allows) should not be neglected, because from this the understanding is most fragrant. Every Singer should know that the letters that melt in the metrical art also melt in the Neumes of the musical art.

Let us therefore admonish, that with one aspiration or one breath we sing rhythmically or metrically up to the point: after half a meter, having completed a moderate modulation, let us make a good and competent pause: after the pause, what remains of the Verse is replaced by a slower modulation, preserving the Tone; and thus let all the modulation of the Psalmody or Song be rounded and terminated, so that the end finds its beginning according to that: The wheel is turned by leading, it is brought back to its original state by rolling. No one should presume to begin in a Verse or song before others or after others, to repeat the words sung, or to hurry too discordantly, to be more presumptuous or higher, more relaxed or more serious, that is, in a higher or lower voice, slower or faster, or to prolong it longer after others, or to hold the point. Let us sing with one quality, let us pause together, always listening. If we sing slowly, let a longer pause be made; if quickly, a shorter one: let the full stop and pause always be kept in the Psalmody.

How then are Tones placed in finals because of the different accents, must now be said. For every placement of Tones in finals, middles or last, is not to be done according to the accent of the word, but according to the musical melody of the Tone, as Priscian says: Music is not subject to the rules of Donatus, just as neither is divine Scripture. But if the

accent and melody agree in ^{one}, they are placed together; but if, according to the melody of the Tone, the songs or Psalms are ended. For in the placement of almost all Tones, Music suppresses the syllables by melody in the final verses of the verses, and makes the accent sophisticated, and this especially in Psalmody. And therefore if the end of the verses is placed tonally, it is necessary that the accent be often broken in such a way, for example, as there are six syllables, Saeculorum Amen; thus the six are conformed to the notes of the Tone in the placement of the words and syllables. Therefore, when whatever is done for the Dead, it should be done entirely in a tearful and remiss voice, so that nothing resounds there in the words except devout sorrow and humility. In the hymns Te Deum laudamus, Gloria in excelsis, and Credo in unum, the full stop and pause should be made so that the intellect can be discerned, and they should be chanted with a moderate voice. While singing Hymns or Responsories or Antiphons or Alleluia, Kyrie eleison, Sanctus or Agnus Dei, whatever sounds beautiful, sweet and pleasant, in these we should chant the notes, discerning the full stop well, and in the clauses making a pause, we should wait a little, and this especially on Feast days. Let us also be careful not to join Neumas that are connected with excessive slowness or separate ones that are connected with inappropriate speed; but let us have a harmonious pause at the full stop; or if we sing the sequences, whether alternately or together, let them end in a similar harmony, in a consonant voice. But the jubilation should be placed in a sweet melody with well-discrete neumes.

Therefore, every song or Psalmody, if we sing slowly and quickly, should always be performed with the ability of the voices and in a round, sweet melody. But let us perform Responsories and Antiphons, Graduals, Tracts, Alleluia, Offertory and Communion, and all serious singing, with a more relaxed and rapid process. For on festive days, let us not omit the full stop and pause in every song: but on private days, let us sing and sing in such a way that no lukewarm or lazy person can have any excuse, by cunningly cavil. If two sing together, let them begin and end the syllables and the pause at the full stop equally, and let the stronger voice descend to the weaker: but if the voices are odd and discordant, let the weaker one be changed, and thus they are made equal. Whatever he sings or reads, let him begin moderately, and in such a voice that he may finish without noise, and distribute the words to the understanding, and end symphonically with a sweet, unruffled diaphony, so that the listeners may be edified.

Whoever imposes an Antiphon or Responsorial, a Psalm or Hymn, an Introit or Gradual, a Tract or Alleluia; or whatever he begins, let him impose two or three syllables or one syllable, and two or three notes, alone, while the others remain silent; and from the place where the tonator left off, the others begin, following, not repeating what he has begun. It is to be observed in the same way, when the Cantor imposes something or begins again, or pronounces any song, the Choir should follow in unison with a harmonious melody. But let the Cantor beware never to change a song ^{is} from one voice to another, namely, to begin another than that in which the song was begun; because it is very indecent in Music, except only by means of the Diapason, whether above or below.

We have gathered these things from the bosom of the holy Fathers; some of whom learned this manner of singing from the Angels, others, with the Holy Spirit murmuring in their hearts, perceived it through contemplation. Which form, if we strive to imitate

with diligent study, we too will be psalmists in spiritual Hymns and Canticles, singing to God in our hearts with spirit and mind. Whoever, therefore, rashly presumes to transgress and violate this rule of our institution, let him be punished so severely that others may fear and be reformed. Let us detest and prohibit in our Choirs the voices of actors, chatterers, alpine or mountain, thundering or hissing, neighing like a vocal ass, mooing or bleating like cattle; or feminine, and all falsehood, boasting or novelty of voices; because they reek more of vanity and foolishness than of religion; and such voices are not becoming among spiritual men in the presence of God and his Angels in the holy land of the Saints. For such as have voices of this kind, and lack a natural manner, because they have never been trained in the art of any musical instrument; and therefore they are unable to have a suitable flexibility of voice for Neumas. Therefore, although they are disorganized in character and voice, yet under the pretext of Religion they presume to be and appear to be Singers and Directors in Choirs, when they do not know, nor do they wish to know; for this reason they sometimes cause discord and disintegration in Choirs, and lift up the rest: but when they precipitate the song with excessive levity, or utter syllables with inept gravity, as if one were dragging a millstone up a mountain, and yet it always falls down a precipice; and therefore, content with no moderation, they do not perceive the subtle sweetness of the intellect, and rarely attain to the delight of the virtues; much more do they never aspire to contemplate divine mysteries, and to fathom heavenly secrets. Of course, the voices of such men, although they are not good, Music nevertheless knows how to use them well in appropriate places, which those who have them in the chest of their chests are unaware of.

Let us therefore stand in the discipline of psalm singing, so that according to the Rule of our Blessed Father Benedict, our mind may be in harmony with the voice, singing and psalm singing in the sight of the Holy Trinity and the holy Angels, with a heart pierced with trembling, and in divine fear, with a devout mind, with love of the heavenly, with ardor of spirit, and with an inmost desire, that by the words we sing, we may be lifted up to heavenly places, made celestial, contemplating the mysteries, with a sweet mind, a pure soul, a joyful gravity of spirit, a harmonious lightness, a sweet melody, a nectarean jubilation, an organic voice, and ineffable joy, we may rejoice in God our Creator; that at last, resurrected among the Saints, we may deserve to praise Him who called us, leaping in eternal joy, where He lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.

Written in 12th century for the Abbey of St Gallen, Switzerland