

# *Gregorian Chants*

*Transcribed and Edited by  
Anthony Doherty*

*Series I: Communion Verses  
Volume 1: Advent and Christmas*

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The communion verse is a good accessible entry into Gregorian chant. These pieces are relatively short, but still provide the essentials of the musical principles and styles of the eight chant modes. They can be learned quickly and have a variety of uses. They may be sung as an introduction to the Communion rite, to be followed by other hymns, or, as in the ancient tradition, having chanted psalm verses between repetitions of the chant.

The transcriptions are based in general on the accentualist principles of Dom Joseph Pothier O.S.B., that the natural word accents of the texts and the grouping of the notes in the neumes of the original chant notation reveal the rhythmic structures of the melody. The neum groupings are shown by eighth-note beaming. Barlines are used not to imply a stronger accent on the first note of the measure, but to add the element of visual organization that present-day musicians are used to as an aid to sight-reading and efficient rehearsals. A moderate and flexible tempo in the range of M.M. 72 to 80 quarter-notes will allow the melody to flow without bogging down in a one-note-at-a-time dirge. Key signatures are meant to keep each piece in a easily singable range. The chants may be transposed to fit each soloist's or group's needs.

The transcriptions are of the chants as printed in the *Graduale Romanum*. Two note-forms in the chant notation required special treatment. The *quilisma* is a square note with jagged top and bottom edges whose historical meaning is uncertain. It occurs as the second note in a neum ascending stepwise for three or more notes. One common interpretation has been to lengthen the first note of the group but do nothing special to the *quilisma* itself, but it seems odd to have a special sign that tells what to do to the previous note. In this edition the first two notes of a *quilisma* neum are transcribed as a dotted eighth and sixteenth, which needn't be interpreted rigidly.

Many chants include a series of two or three successive notes on the same pitch. They have generally been performed as a single note doubled or tripled in length. In the old manuscripts, however, these two or three notes were a special shape with a downward-curling tail, rather like a large apostrophe. That shape was not used in the *Graduale Romanum* or the *Liber Usualis*, but was used in the *Antiphonale Monasticum* and the Ambrosian Chant books. In the groups of two or three notes they indicate a vocal ornament called the tremolo or shake, a vocal push or stress for each of the notes but with no break in the sustained pitch. The transcription is staccato dots over each note-head plus a slur over the whole group.

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## 1st Sunday of Advent

Mode 1

Dó - mi - nus  
da - bit be - ni - gni - tá - tem: et  
ter - ra no - stra da -  
bit fru - ctum su - um.

The Lord will give his kindness: and our land will give its fruit.

## 2nd Sunday of Advent

Mode 2

Je - rú - sa - lem, sur - ge,  
et sta in ex - cel - so: et vi - de ju -  
cun - di - tá - tem, quae vé - ni - et  
tí - bi a De - o tu - o.

Jerusalem, rise up, and stand on high: and see the delight which will come to you from your God.

### 3rd Sunday of Advent

Mode 7

Dí - ci - te: Pu - sil - lá - ni -  
 mes, con - for - tá - mi - ni et no -  
 lí - te tí - mé - re: ec - ce  
 De - us no - ster vé - ni - et,  
 et sal - vá - bit nos.

Say this: "Be comforted, all you faint of heart, and have no fear. See our God will come and save us."

### 4th Sunday of Advent

Ec - ce vir - go con - cí - pi -  
 et, et pá - ri - et  
 hí - li - um. Et vo - cá - bi -  
 tur no - men e - jus  
 Em - má - nu - el.

Behold: a virgin shall conceive and give birth to a son.  
 And his name will be called Emmanuel.

## The Vigil of Christmas

Mode 1

Re - ve - lá - bi - tur gló - ri - a

5  
Dó - mi - ni, et vi - dé - bit om - nis

9  
ca - ro sa - lu - tá - re

13  
Dé - i no - stri.

The glory of the Lord will be revealed, and all flesh will see our God's healing power.

## Christmas I: During the Night

Mode 6

16  
In splen - dó - ri - bus san - ctó - rum, ex

19  
ú - te - ro an - te te lu -

22  
cí - fe - rum gé - nu - i te.

In the splendor of the holy ones, from the womb before the morning star have I begotten you.

## Christmas II: at Dawn

### Jan.1: Solemnity of the Mother of God

Mode 4

Ex - súl - ta fí - li - a

Si - on, lau - da fí - li - a

Je - rú - sa - lem:

ec - ce rex tu - us vé - nit,

san - ctus, et sal - vá - tor mun - di.

Rejoice, daughter of Zion; speak praise, daughter of Jerusalem:  
behold your king comes, the holy one, and the savior of the world.

## Christmas III: during the Day

Mode 1

Vi - dé - runt o - mnes

fi - nes ter - rae

sa - lu - tá - re

De - i no - stri.

All the ends of the earth have seen the healing power of our God.

# Holy Family

7

Mode 1

De - scén - dit Je - sus cum  
e - is, et ve - nit  
Ná - za - reth, et  
e - rat súb -  
di - tus il - lis.

Jesus went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them.

# Epiphany

Mode 4

Ví - dí - mus  
stel - lam e - jus in o - ri - én - te,  
et vé - ni - mus cum mu -  
né - ri - bus a - do -  
rá - re Dó - mi - num.

We have seen his star in the east, and have come with gifts to adore the Lord.

# Holy Family

7

Mode 1

De - scén - dit Je - sus cum  
e - is, et ve - nit  
Ná - za - reth, et  
e - rat súb -  
di - tus il - lis.

Jesus went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them.

# Epiphany

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We have seen his star in the east, and have come with gifts to adore the Lord.