



Report ULI 2024 abbey of Maredsous

Manfred NOVAK, Insbrück

Participatio actuosa mit Hilfe von participatory music? Neue Möglichkeiten für den Gemeindegesang.

The Instruction on Music in the Liturgy *Musicam sacram* divides the key concept of the Constitution on the Liturgy *Sacrosanctum concilium*, *participatio actuosa*, into inner and outer participation (MS 15). In this differentiation, singing is to be considered as external participation, listening as internal participation. Two forms of music correspond to this division: a clear separation between performers and listeners, as we know it for example in a classical concert situation. *Participatory music*, on the other hand, aims to involve everyone in the performance.

For the choice of musical forms in the liturgy, this means that for external participation, a form of "participatory singing (*participatory music*) is necessary. Inner participation, or listening, finds its equivalent in *presentational music*. There are, of course, mixed forms of these two principles, for example in the responsorial psalm with alternating verses. In addition to well-known and cultivated forms such as hymns, antiphonal and responsorial songs, *participatory music* has other aspects to offer, which can be found in different cultures on all continents

These aspects are important for liturgical practice, in a context where regular participation in worship, which allows people to learn, rehearse and remember liturgical songs, is declining. Singing is unknown at one-off celebrations such as First Communion, Christmas, Palm Sunday, etc. Occasional participants make up the vast majority of the congregation on such occasions. And it has to be said that there is no longer a common repertoire of songs.

Trained musicians ensure that the music takes and support the singing community. The Taizé songs are an interesting example. They were developed for people who speak different languages, don't know each other and don't have a common song repertoire, but who come together for a common liturgical celebration.

Building on these existing forms of music, we could think of other possibilities for participation at a higher level: spontaneous polyphony or sight-reading for people with musical training; the canons form, which requires a higher musical standard; group vocal or instrumental improvisation, for which participants could also bring instruments.

Questions and comments Manfred's presentation

- Did the hallelujah work? He doesn't really know, but musically it's very simple.
- We're trying to everyone involved, but the same time the projects are very fragmented. The question is how to start and finish well, so that there is a structure.
- There were examples of this type in the 80s, which didn't work out so well.
- The fact that people participate is very interesting. Choirs can play a role, but silence can also play a role in these experiences. This can be experienced at funerals, for example. Alternate silence and singing.
- It's innovative, you haven't necessarily participated in music as it's explained today. Just a memory from my teenage years: in Belgium, a group wanted to experiment with vocal techniques. Everyone started as they liked and continued as they liked. When there was a public performance, the audience started singing too. It takes a while for that to happen.
- We need to ask ourselves: who are our assemblies? Fewer and fewer people are taking part. They're not used to it.

French language group

- We had an example of participatory music during the closing ceremony of the Olympic Games. The organisers put on a giant karaoke show and whole stadium sang along to well-known refrains in French and English, just as the spectators did when cheering on their athletes. It was also functional music (accompanying the effort, supporting it).
- The Secli offered to put on a karaoke show, but this was refused. It was unthinkable. Active participation changes a lot over time, especially in recent years. There are very different cultures within the monastic community, with differences between countries and generations. But when you celebrate 7 times a day, you quickly harmonise practices. Most of the time there are adaptations, for example of Gregorian chant, but a community doesn't completely change its style of music or its repertoire. In general, newcomers sing what the host community sings. In Africa, we like to sing. Here, we sing in the choir with the community, so even people who don't know the music can sing.
- The description of participatory music is a little reminiscent of charismatic prayer or pop praise. Improvisations take place when people are emotionally gripped.
- Liturgy is not an emotion. And the question is how to ensure that the richness of the liturgy is passed on. In emotional situations, the ritual and community aspects are not properly taken into account.
- It's reminiscent of Africa. At the same time, there's a difference with the 70s and 80s: it was more music made for traditional singers and musicians.
- On page 2, it says "What musical form gives what image of the Church? And how can we seek "a more egalitarian society"? Manfred didn't rule out the sociological question. And we also have to take into account the collapse of Sunday attendance. This highlights the issues of memory and repertoire. There are new generations who are looking for the traditional and the emotional.
- The question of a more egalitarian society is an interesting one, but do all the currents of opinion in society have a role to play?
Church want from the synod?
- The issues of hierarchy and equality are very French. Is that where we are today? Have we done away with all hierarchy? What do we need to put back in place? If we take the example of Taizé, there were very programmed basic modules.

- At Maredsous, lay people have been singing close to the congregation since the 1980s, particularly at Easter and Christmas. There can be many as thirty people present. It's a way of showing that liturgical chant is not the monopoly of monks. At first, it was taken the wrong way: "We're trying to sound like Taizé! But liturgical music can be practised by everyone.
- Are there musical forms that are more conducive to participatory music? The canon is an interesting form, but it needs a professional part. The litany is also interesting: people get into a litanic form very quickly, and it's a popular form. Without that, the musicians mentioned are in a research perspective and cannot be compared to what is sung in Taizé.
- In Africa, each country has its own repertoire, and people come regularly to services. And the songs are all in one voice.
- Gregorian and Latin were abandoned. But the Church's problem today is different: it's the body, the position of women. The liturgy is a beautiful thing, but the problem is something else.
- What is an intermediate form? It is neither totally spontaneous nor totally free. When penitential preparation is litanic, does it correspond to this intermediate form? For example, saying "kyrie eleison" 8 times instead of 3 becomes litanic.
- The penitential preparation is basically a litanic form, which has taken the form of 3 implorations. It is not a piece in itself. In Lent, it is not the same as an ordinary chant.
- The current trend is towards framing. We are falling into functionalism. Spaces of freedom are framed. Time periods are framed. Ritual naturally leads ritualism, but it's good to know that there are different proposals.
- How can these reflections be implemented in a small pastoral unit? Big meetings work. Should small units be abandoned? Bishops don't ask this question very often. There are places where there is almost nothing left. And the most important thing is that people understand why we get up and why we stay seated.
- We need to look at things in the long term, set up training and sharing centres, and mourn the loss of the bishops' initiative.
- The new Archbishop of Belgium wants to preserve everything that works.
- There is a greater demand catechumens and confirmants, people who have come to the Church because of the beauty of the buildings or the music. We need to keep doing what we know how to do.

Joaquim FONSECA, OFM, Brazil

Cantando a uma só voz: o uníssono como "sinal sensível" da sintonia da assembleia no Espírito Santo.

In many liturgical celebrations, we have the impression that people are not aware that they form an ecclesial body, moved by the action of the Holy Spirit: each person imposes his or her own rhythm, time and intensity, without concern for the other members of the assembly. For the Fathers, singing "with one voice", harmonising the different tones, is the symbol of a deeper reality: it is the sign of spiritual brotherhood between the members of the assembly gathered for prayer.

There are various aspects to unison. The unison of human voices is a challenge in itself. But harmonising the voices of the congregation with the sounds of the musical instruments is no easy task.

easy. Instruments can be diverse. Their choice, according to the Second Vatican Council, has a cultural dimension: "In themselves, instruments are neither sacred nor profane, just the human voice is neither sacred nor profane". Finally, the instrumentalists must act in perfect symbiosis with the singers: "It is difficult to imagine that the instrumentalists of the celebration make only a technical contribution, without being personally involved in the group that believes and celebrates".

We have emphasised the ministry of congregation and the service of the singers and instrumentalists. It remains for us to mention the ministries of the presider and of the readers and psalmists, since these ministries contribute decisively to the growth of the "unity in diversity" that is so characteristic of Christian worship. The psalms and biblical songs are, in the Judeo-Christian tradition, the model of prayer par excellence. Although the experience takes place primarily within each person, the action of those who psalm is always communal, because it comes from the same Spirit.

The unison we seek in liturgical action requires constant attention and vigilance on the part of our bodies. So it is the whole individual who participates in the unison, if he does so with the right intention, in agreement with the words he utters, cooperating with the grace from above. And the singing of the congregation, experienced in its totality in this way, has an eschatological dimension.

Questions on Joaquim Fonseca's presentation

- How can we balance the individual aspects of sung prayer with unison as an expression of the body of Christ? One does not exclude the other. Sometimes there is an individual dimension and sometimes a common one, as in the psalm.
- There is the question of the abuse of the microphone by a soloist. These abuses occurred especially after the beginning of the liturgical reform.
- What does the word 'holistic' mean in this context? It corresponds to the Brazilian reality. There are different cultures in Brazil. Some communities lack instruments. Sometimes this poverty is a call to the imagination. The congregation sings because there are no instruments. Brazil has no organ specialists, but Amazonian instruments do.
- It's very interesting to know that rhythm laboratories exist. In Belgium, it's used with marginal populations such as prisoners, or with children. They are the ones who teach us that simplicity is important.

French language group

- For him, the Holy Spirit is associated with ecumenism, whereas we more often associate him with the charismatic movement. It's an incentive to dare new forms of prayer. But also in Brussels, the Brazilian community punctuates the Eucharistic prayer differently.
- It's important to stress dignity of unison. Many communities rely on a singer. However, in the Eucharistic prayer, everything is said in the plural, even though it is essentially a monologue by the priest.
- I liked the fact that responsibility for the unity of the community is shared. That's part of the art of celebrating.
- To be in unison, you have to be good listener. You see this when you rehearse with disabled people, who are people with open hearts.
- In the Congo, Eucharistic prayer is a dialogue. The celebrations last. And the people know the songs by heart, because the repertoire is fixed. At the same time there is no

a lot of improvisation. Around the world, the liturgy follows the people's usual way of life. It's the same for the instruments: the electric guitar is very often learnt.

- Have you looked at the new missal? The current situation has become hyper-ritualistic. Acclamations have been suppressed in certain circumstances. We are nostalgic for the pre-conciliar era. But doors are closing fast, even in the days of Gelineau and Berthier.

- Unison does not have all the value it should have. Singing in 3 or 4 voices is considered as better.

- There's also the unison of body positions. Kneeling together is a way of becoming one body. But today, kneeling takes on a different meaning. The emphasis is on standing, which is the position of resurrection.

English language group

Unison encourages participation. But young people don't have a single repertoire; they prefer the music they like. And some people are shocked when they change parishes. It's not that easy to achieve unity.

There's always a tension between being appreciated in a community and fitting in with the group.

Brazil language group

It's a continental country. The ways of doing things are different, but you have to resist a fundamentalist context. Some people start with that before moving on to a simpler, more profound celebration. A less sensationalist celebration.

A school of singers was created under the influence of a thinker who worked on awakening in the liturgy and the fact that the assembly is an ensemble. Note 43 in the text explains this liturgical laboratory.

V. DECLEIRE and François-Xavier Ledoux, op (France)

Towards a Universa Laus document 3 "The voice of the assembly in today's world", including the individual voices of the celebrant, organist, the soloists and the polyphonic choir, their interaction and the question of musical emotion.

François-Xavier Ledoux worked on the question of the choice of songs with liturgical teams from parishes and the arguments put forward to justify a choice. And the discussion of these arguments in relation to the type of assembly, the characteristics of the place, the ritual moment and the corresponding spiritual attitudes, the type of celebration, the means in terms of instruments and singers, with which leaders, and for which expression (song with refrains, hymn, psalm, litany...). The question posed implied being as close as possible to the assemblies as they are, in all their diversity.

What would be the main lines of a document III on the theme of "the voice of the assembly in today's world"? The contexts in which documents I and II were written have changed. For example, in France there is a desire to make polyphony the ideal of liturgical chant. Or a link to the Word so close that the words of a song correspond almost exclusively to quotations from Scripture. Or a tendency to sing a lot, to get everyone to sing constantly, with a minimum amount of silence. What's more, some

personalities have an irrepressible urge to sing louder and drive the rhythm of the songs. The emotional dimension is a sensitive subject that could also be addressed. It is linked to the different sensibilities of our linguistic areas. Finally, there are fewer and fewer places to sing, even though people want to sing more and more.

Discussion on the proposal a document III

- Every congregation is different, so how can we make proposals that take this into account? General training courses for leaders only work in part, because they cannot apply what they have learned when they return to their parish. So we need to start from the real assembly, what it does and what it experiences.

- Document II was distributed confidentially. The first was the subject of a book. Document II appeared in La Maison-Dieu and was not widely read. There is not only the question of the document, but also that of its distribution. Even if that doesn't prevent us from reflecting.

We ask ourselves how we choose songs, how we sing them. But what has the congregation experienced, thought about and sung? What is the intelligence of this particular assembly?

How can we achieve a result, even if it means bypassing what the missal proposes?

We need a session on people's expectations.

Marcio PIMENTEL, instituto Santa Giustina, Belo Horizonte, Brazil

Questões atuais relativas ao poder pastoral, autoridade, responsabilidades, ministérios e funções na Igreja e suas consequências para o canto da assembleia, abrangendo as necessidades, desejos e expectativas espirituais das diferentes comunidades culturais e a produção de música litúrgica em diferentes estilos, incluindo música folclórica e contemporânea

The Council emphasised the importance of the celebrating assembly and of respecting its ministerial dynamism. Since ancient times, the effective subject of the liturgical celebration has always been the Church and not one or other of its ministers taken in isolation. Singing in particular can nourish the spiritual life of the faithful.

The first concern when it comes to liturgical music is undoubtedly to know "what to sing". Distinguishing whether or not a piece of music is liturgical enough to be included in a community's repertoire, however, hides a deeper issue. Ultimately, it is the "power" to decide what people will say to God in their prayers and praises.

The question becomes more complicated if we look beyond the purely "textual" perspective of the songs. Little or nothing is said about the more strictly "musical" aspect and its psychosomatic and emotional impact on the congregation. In the choice of timbres, tonalities, rhythms and harmonies, there is the effect on the feelings, memories and dispositions (or lack of them!) of the faithful. This dynamism often goes unnoticed.

In the vast majority of cases, "music ministries" are linked to or strongly influenced by a neo-Pentecostal ecclesial movement. must avoid ending up with a

passive assistance (listening, an assembly becomes an "audience/platform"). Either the group sings, or the soloist sings (with his choir), or everyone sings everything. The wealth of possibilities for interpreting a liturgical piece is generally neglected.

The scenario has become more complex with the advent of neo-traditionalism, which no longer advocates a return to Gregorian chant but, with the emergence of countless virtual spaces, claims to be about liturgy and music. In general, these initiatives are disconnected from the local churches and respond to the agenda of their creators.

So how can we, as parish priests, position ourselves in the pastoral accompaniment of liturgical music? Firstly, by working on the liturgical calendar with those involved. Respect the congregation, and feel that they are breathing together in the singing. Helping them to discover musicality and to feel at ease with the ritual form. Rely on the psalms, which are a wonderful school for prayer, both in terms of their content and the variety of ways in which they can be performed. In Brazil, there is the Divine Office of the Communities (the liturgy of the hours inculturated into popular reality), which has enabled parishes to reappropriate the prayer of the psalms.

As a priest, it is necessary not to reduce the exercise of liturgical presidency to moments when the priest acts as a "substitute" for others. In the Eucharistic prayer, this is particularly complex, given the length of the discourse, which easily leads the congregation to become mere attendants. In Brazil, this phenomenon is mitigated by the acclamations of the people during the anaphora and, once again, the interpretation of the hymns is fundamental. He puts a team in place and leads it, helping with the diversity of ministries, in a process that teaches people to live together.

Discussions on Marcio Pimentel's presentation

- It's a powerful presentation, which raises the question authority.
- The author talks about Brazil, about these small communities in dialogue with the priest. He highlights the issues involved in setting up teams and thinking together about a project.
- The problem may be different in churches where a directory has been created (in Germany, for example).
- In France and Italy, the composition/edition/labelling process is such that it is the who decides.
- We have a number of issues in common: authority, the synodal church, the influence of neo-traditionalism, gospel music and repertoires.
- Parish priests are trained to see themselves as leaders. Conversely, when this is not their position, you can feel it in the liturgy.

Annual General Meeting

The following issues were discussed.

- How can we improve our presence on social networks? In the UK, for example traditionalists are virtually the only audible voice. Creation of a Facebook site.
- The question a possible document III.
- The question of amending the Articles of Association.

Decisions

Choosing the theme: Listening to the voice of the assembly.

Date: discussion on whether to change the date to July. Venue: several solutions were proposed, to be studied.

Treasurer: Nuria agreed to take over the post, accompanied by Jean-Pierre Cap as auditor.

Agnès PINARDELI-MINIER and Marie-Dominique MINASSIAN (University of Fribourg) *Music at the heart of Brother Célestin de Tibhirine: when the needs of a community in a constrained multid denominational land meet an inner need for liberated creativity.*

Among the Tibhirine archives, a few boxes contained scores. They are by Celestin Ringear, who began writing them after his arrival in Algeria in 1986. He is the community's cantor, but his scores do not seem to have been used. They are often his personal way of praying. The team in charge of these archives is working on 1,700 traces musical staves in correspondence, on the backs of envelopes, scraps of paper, etc. It will be possible to find them in the archives.

composed melodies for the daily liturgy when he was in hospital. He composes on the basis of texts written by friends, in the course of correspondence, about events in their lives.

Célestin didn't take any composition courses, but he did learn music theory and harmony (having the harmonium and organ at the minor seminary), and above all he sang a lot of Gregorian, sacred classical repertoire and more popular songs in the various 'social' ministries he carried out. All these musical influences can be heard in his compositions.

Discussion of Agnès and Dominique's presentation

- Brother Célestin, a monk at Tibhirine, produced a great deal of music. It was his own way of praying. His creations must have amazed his community. We don't know to what extent he shared his work. Very little, it seems. He was a tenor with a supple voice. His compositions are sometimes difficult and confusing.
- The monks of Tibhirine sang the Tamié repertoire. The monastery of Notre-Dame de l'Atlas in Morocco has taken scores from Tibhirine.
- The presentation shows how Brother Célestin was musically influenced. It's embarrassing to focus on influences. We are all influenced.
- It's surprising that someone who worked as a singer was never spotted or came forward. Perhaps for relational reasons? The cantor at Tamié didn't like Célestin, perhaps for generational reasons.
- Did he simply want his compositions to be shared with his community? In reality, it was personal meditation. Or maybe his music wasn't received. Perhaps he got bored. In Morocco, he seems to have been better accepted.
- His music is not very polished. They are sometimes difficult to memorise. In monastic life, on the other hand, repetition is important because it means memorisation. And getting works accepted into a community is always difficult, not least because you can't easily give up a composition that has been used. Sometimes you accept it gradually, but not easily. Besides, is it right to sing the community's productions?

Country news

Stéphane d'Oultremont, *How can the liturgy of the hours be adapted for ageing communities?*

There is a vocational crisis: 50% of the monks at Maredsous are over 65. There are several ways to adapt:

- adapting timetables ;
- adapt the content ;
- adapt the way we celebrate.

The principle is to sanctify the time with the truth of the hours and to prepare for the Eucharist by expressing faith, hope and charity. And the liturgy of the hours must increase the Lord's people.

As far as timetables are concerned, celebrations can be grouped together.

As far as content is concerned, we know that an office requires at least a hymn, psalms, a reading and an oration. At Maredsous, the Magnificat is not sung every evening, and the Benedictus only on Monday mornings. The readings are also adapted, and the Fathers' readings are not given priority during vigils.

As far as the manner of celebration is concerned, the question of hymns has not been completely resolved. Musucam Sacram insists on progressive solemnisation.

Discussion

In Lithuania, half the community is under 40, but there is also the problem of adaptations. Some sisters work outside the community, so the question is how to create a singing community. Some don't sing well and don't rehearse much.

The vigil is shorter.

For the contents, we sing what we can. For example, there are few antiphons in Lithuanian. The psalms can be recited, in which case we must try to respect the musicality of their prosody.

In France, for sisters with health problems, the reading service is shorter. The times have been regrouped or reorganised. The sung part has been increased. The antiphons have been learnt so that there is a sung part every morning, even if the nun in charge of the singing is not there. The liturgies take longer on Sundays and feast days.

In Brazil, some parishes offer the Liturgy of the Hours, particularly during Palm Sunday and Holy Week. Some communities have continued this tradition during Advent. The psalms are sung to popular music. The celebrations are very close to the usual liturgy, but incorporate the life of the communities. People have learned to cantillate. The songs work well.

In the UK, there may be vespers for Advent or Lent, and prayers for peace. During Holy Week, there is also Morning Prayer and the Office of Readings. A choir can help. Several songs are used, which is much appreciated. These are different opportunities to contact people and involve them in a moment of prayer. Everything works.

In Austria, some parishes offer to combine Lauds with Mass or Vespers with Mass. Several monasteries offer recto tono recitation of the psalms.

In Italy, the switch to the vernacular led to the disappearance of vespers, except sometimes during Holy Week.

In Switzerland, Vespers no longer exists in parishes since Vatican II, but in some parishes, priests offer Lauds.

In Lithuania, for the last 10 years, there has been a demand from the population for prayer in common. It's an online proposition. Or Radio Maria. It works.

Béatrice SEPULCHRE, Elisabeth HEYNDERICKX, Philippe GOESEELS and Pierre LALOUX, Service de Musique liturgique du Diocèse Malines-Bruxelles, *La participation active vécue au niveau multiculturel : une expérience de création de répertoires "bilingues" à partir de langues variées.*
How can we work with texts to make them "singable" in another language? And how do you create lyrics from existing melodies?

Session review

Shared concerns

The concerns expressed are similar to those of Brazil in terms of the participation of assemblies. Our questions are both theoretical and practical. It's interesting, as the person in charge of music for the Brazilian Bishops' Conference.

The speakers

The study time is very rich.

We hear things that we could read in the best magazines.

Practical and concrete

There were moments of sharing in the evening. It's good to share our concrete wealth too. There should also be time for listening. We had them in the past, and it would be good to reinstate them. And we should also offer remote access for our informal evening meetings.

What's in it for people

We need to evangelise the world, not just those who have already been evangelised. We

Addressing those who believe they are outside Church, offering living testimonies.

We need to reach out to the 80% of Catholics who don't practise. Music can be a means of communication.

The international dimension

The international dimension is an essential part of our meetings.

How are the national groups organised? Should we keep the current structure?

Participation and presentation

Presentational music is another form listening and participation.

Practical organisation

There's an extra half-hour at lunchtime after the meal. We could save it in other ways. It would be nice if we could have a Eucharist together.

Atmosphere

The important thing is that we're listening to people who are great in their field, people who have human, social and musical qualities, with no desire to surpass or show off what they're capable of. No doubt prayer time and evening leisure time have something to do with it.

I'm here for the first time and it took me a while to understand where I was. There was a way of getting into the content (through the PGMR, for example) that I wasn't used to.