The Plainchant of the Byzantine Catholic Church

Week 7: Prostopinije in English, 1979 to the present

Byzantine Catholic Seminary, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
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The state of our chant, \textit{circa} 1979

Several publications with chant for the Divine Liturgy in English, none complete.

Service book for the Divine Liturgy in English and Slavonic, text only.

Cantors chose music from the various collections, or developed their own.

No music for Vespers and Matins, except for Holy Week and a few feasts.
Publications of the Sisters of Saint Basil the Great

1982 – Book of Vespers

1985 – Festal Menaion

1989 – Book of Matins

1986 – Pentecostarion

1995 – Lenten Triodion

Very little music, but texts were divided into phrases for chanting
Some replacement of difficult melodies with easier ones
Diocesan cantor schools

Archeeparchy of Pittsburgh
  • 1976-1984 – series of 2-year introductory cantor programs
  • 1984-1986 – Advanced Cantor School in Pittsburgh
  • 1986-1988 – Advanced Cantor School in Youngstown, PA
  • continued to meet intermittently through 1992

Eparchy of Parma
  • mid-1980s – cantor newsletter, Ad Hoc committee of cantors to develop new musical settings

Eparchy of Van Nuys
  • official chant settings sent to parishes in 1987
Music “strange to the ear”

LITURGICAL CHANT IN OUR CHURCH It is commonly agreed that our Byzantine Slavonic church, and particularly our Church in Europe and here in America of Carpatho-Rusin heritage has the most beautiful and varied chant and choral music of all the Byzantine branches. It has now been 31 years since we began using English language for the entire Divine Liturgy. The English language developed back then in 1955, and with which I have been involved over all these years has served us well, but we only developed a small part of the music that was available to us from our rich heritage. In the past several years, the English versions have been greatly expanded through the efforts of several people, and through our several successful “Cantor Schools”. We have been hearing much of this new music in SS. Peter and Paul Church in recent months. The melodies are strange to the ear, but they are genuine Carpathian Chant. Eventually you will grow familiar with this newly developed music – just be patient! It would truly be a tragedy if we allowed this precious inheritance to Die simply because we failed to make use of it. So please, no more complaints about the new and strange music. We will continue to use it and restore it.
Jerry Jumba

Cantor-teacher, ethnomusicologist

Directed the Advanced Cantor School, 1984-1992

Attempted to correct 1970 chant according to the Slavonic melodies, especially from the oral tradition

From *Byzantine Liturgical Chant*, 1970:

Prokimenon - 1

May Your kindness, O Lord, be upon us who have put our hope in You.

Resurrectional Prokimen Tone 1

May Your kindness, O Lord, be upon us who have put our hope in You.

Verse: Exult you just, in the Lord, praise from thee upright is fitting.

Sing the Prokimen to End.

new pew book:

Exult you righteous in the Lord, AM/JS
The work of Mr. John Vernoski

16 October 1994
TWENTY-FIRST SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
SUNDAY OF THE HOLY FATHERS OF THE
SEVENTH ECUMENICAL COUNCIL

Icons - forbidden? As we gather in our church buildings adorned with icons it is hard to imagine that at various times throughout Christian history the use of icons in worship was questioned. But it happened. Up until the eighth century there was sporadic opposition to the veneration of icons. In the year 726 Emperor Leo the Isaurian of Constantinople, influenced by Islamic and Judaic teachings, forbade the use of icons and ordered them removed from churches and private homes and destroyed. But many, especially the monastic communities, opposed this heresy that taught that Christ’s divinity absorbed His humanity.

One day, a monk from Nicomedia named Stephen was summoned before the emperor, who said to him contemptuously: “Stupid monk, do you not see that anyone can walk on the image of Jesus Christ without being disrespectful to His person?” Quick to retort, the monk threw a coin stamped with the emperor’s portrait onto the palace floor and responded: “In that case, I am permitted to walk on your face without dishonoring you!” The emperor’s assistants stopped him in the act, and the monk was put to death for having insulted the emperor’s image.

In 787 the bishops met in council at Nicea and reaffirmed the true teaching that Christ is both true God and true man. This restored the use of icons in Christian worship stating that the honor which is given to the image passes on to that which the image represents, and he who venerates or reveres the image reveres that which the image represents.

The priest raises the Book of Gospels and says:

Priest: Wisdom! Be attentive!

Moderato

R. Come, let us worship and bow before Christ:

SUNDAY:

O Son of God, risen from the dead,

save us who sing to You: Alleluia,

TROPAIARION OF THE RESURRECTION - TONE 4

The joyful message of the resurrection was heard by the faithful women from the angel. And being freed from the ancestral curse they boasted to the Apostles: “Dead and despised is Death! Christ our God is risen, giving Great Mercy to the world!”

TROPAIARION OF THE COUNCIL FATHERS - TONE 6

O Christ our God, You are above all praise, for You established our Fathers as lights to all the earth. You led us to the true faith through them. O Most Bountiful Lord, glory be to You.

KONTAKION OF THE COUNCIL FATHERS - TONE 6

Glory be to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit:

How the Son proceeded from the Father, our words cannot express, but, having two natures, He was born of a woman.

We do not reject His image when we behold it, but in faith,
The Carpatho-Russian experience


Vespers books (1980’s)

Used different techniques for English chant settings

The Order of Vespers on Saturday

with the Saturday Propers
from the Ochtoechos

and the propers for the Saints
from the General Menaion

adapted to the plain chant of the Carpatho-Russian people

VOLUME ONE:
THE SUNDAYS AFTER PENTECOST
The 1990’s: De-Latinization, Resourcement

Examples of Latinizations:
- Removal of iconostases, or building of new churches without them
- Reciting texts in place of chanted texts
- The introduction of the *filioque* (“and the Son”) into the Creed
- First Communions in place of communing infants and small children
- Roman Catholic rather than Eastern Catholic devotional services

All of these were addressed by Byzantine Catholic hierarchy in the 1990’s

1995 – *Orientale Lumen* – Pope John Paul II

“Return to the sources” in Eastern theology, spirituality, liturgy – and chant
- use of the Internet: [CANTOR-L mailing list archives](http://example.com/cantor-l)
The 1996 Liturgical Instruction


“Everyone should realize that it is of supreme importance to understand, venerate, preserve and foster the rich liturgical and spiritual heritage of the Eastern Churches in order faithfully to preserve the fullness of Christian tradition, and to bring about reconciliation between Eastern and Western Christians.”

“The Eastern Catholic Churches have often run the risk of omitting the communal and solemn celebration of the Divine Praises, substituting it with individual recitation of the Divine Office, on the part of the clergy, while the daily celebration of the Eucharist has remained often almost the only form of communal liturgy. Where such practice of celebrating the Divine Praises with the people has diminished, if not completely disappeared, the ancient tradition should be restored without delay, so as not to deprive the faithful of a privileged source of prayer, nourished by treasures of authentic doctrine.”

Complete text
Passaic edition of the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts

1997 – Andrew Pataki, the bishop of Parma, promulgates a new text of the Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts, restored in accordance with the official edition of the service in Slavonic.

1999 – corresponding service book with music by Professor Daniel Kavka.
- consistent settings of stichera to the samohlasen tones
- book with complete text and music, formatted for congregational singing

The Eparchy of Passaic also restored the singing of the third antiphon of the Divine Liturgy, along with certain litanies which had customarily been omitted.
A new round of chant schools

1997 – Inauguration of a new chant program in the Archeparchy of Pittsburgh, taught from the Byzantine Catholic Seminary by priests of the archeparchy

Intimations that new / restored texts and music were in preparation
The 1998 Stamford Conference

International Symposium on English Translations of Byzantine Liturgical Texts, hosted by the Ukrainian Catholic Eparchy of Stamford, CT – June 17-20, 1998

A variety of issues were discussed:

• Styles of translation
• Particular issues, such as “Theotokos”, “a mercy of peace”
• Progress on various translations
• Music issues and their relationship to translation

A review of the conference
A new text for the Divine Liturgy

1999 – New particular law for the Byzantine Catholic Church in the US

**Canon 707**
§6. The metropolitan Liturgical Commission is to prepare a standard text of usage for the Divine Liturgy. This is to be adapted to modern times, [and] legitimate organic development of the Liturgy.

The initial work was done by an Inter-Eparchial Liturgy *and Music* Commission, and approved by Rome in 2001.

In 2003, the Commission was divided into separate Inter-Eparchial Commissions for Liturgy and Music.
The Inter-Eparchial Music Commission

Representatives from each Eparchy, chaired by Bishop Andrew Pataki

In their settings, the IEMC members set out to:

• create a new common standard from the disparate written and oral chant traditions
• establish common versions of chant melodies and apply them consistently
• respect the liturgical text, its English accents and phrasing
• restore the older melodies which had been truncated or altered

They also adopted a standard, somewhat simpler musical notation.
The Inter-Eparchial Music Commission

Examples:

- The “usual psalm tone” was to have an accent on the final pitch.
- The antiphon melody always ends with three half notes, which could be divided into quarter notes to match the accentuation of the text.
- The melodies for troparia, kontakia, and stichera were established by concensus, with variant forms from the chant tradition used for very short or long phrases.
- The melodies for prokeimena and alleluia in each tone were restored.

Many of these changes were based on the work of Jerry Jumba and the Advanced Cantor’s School (1984-1992).
The Metropolitan Cantor Institute

2001 – Professor of chant (J. Michael Thompson) appointed by Metropolitan Judson to the Byzantine Catholic Seminary in Pittsburgh

New “Metropolitan Cantor Institute”
• Five year program of five Saturday sessions
• Covers Divine Liturgy, Vespers, Matins, and special services
• Instruction in voice and music theory
• Taught music from the IEMC settings

Music prepared for the Seminary was made available through the MCI website:
  2005 – Office of Sunday Vespers
  2006 – Office of Sunday Matins
  2007 – Office of Daily Vespers
Proper hymns for Vespers and Divine Liturgy on Sundays and feast-days
March 25, 2005

In 2005, the feast of the Annunciation fell on Great and Holy Friday, and the bishops of the Byzantine Catholic Church ordered that the IEMC quickly prepare music to be used in each parish for the feast:

- **Vespers on the evening of Great and Holy Thursday** (11 pages)
- **Matins for Great and Holy Friday** (20 pages)
- **Divine Liturgy on the evening of Great and Holy Friday** (39 pages)

Parishes were exposed to new texts (including new translations of the psalms and priestly prayers) and new IEMC musical settings, with little or no preparation.
The 2006 Conference in Užhorod

International Academic Conference
On the occasion of the
100th Anniversary of the First Printing of the
PROSTOPINIJE
By Rev. Fr. John Bokshay

Blessed Theodore Romzha
Greek Catholic Theological Academy
Of Uzhorod

June 25-26-27, 2006
Changes to the IEMC settings

The new Divine Liturgy text and music were in regular use at the cathedral in Munhall, and taught at the Metropolitan Cantor Institute; music was also provided for review and comment on the MCI website.

Based on these reviews:

• The Tone 4 samohlasen melody chosen by the IEMC was modified in accordance to the tradition sung at the seminary in Užhorod

• The accentuation of the final phrase of the Tone 7 troparia was adjusted to match the flow of the Slavonic original.
The 2007 promulgation

January 2007 – The Council of Hierarchs of the Byzantine Catholic Church release the new text and music for the Divine Liturgy:

- Liturgikon (clergy service book) for the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom
- Liturgikon for the Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great
- People’s book for the two Divine Liturgies
- Cantor’s Companion, with instructional material
- A recording (on seven compact discs) of the music in the people’s book
- A book and DVD introducing the new translation

They direct that all parishes are to use the new Divine Liturgy text and music for celebrations in English as of June 29, 2007.
The 2007 Divine Liturgies book

From the Foreword:

The musical settings are based on the Ruthenian tradition that has been handed down from one generation to another. After extensive research, discussion, and detailed comparisons of various written and oral sources, the Intereparchial Music Commission has compiled the plainchant settings of the Byzantine Liturgy found in this book. The musical renderings of historic scholars have been carefully adapted to accommodate the new English translation provided by the Intereparchial Liturgical Commission.
The 2007 Divine Liturgies book

Text and music for the Divine Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom, with several melodies provided for most hymns.

Music for the Divine Liturgy of Saint Basil the Great

Music for the Vigil Divine Liturgy

Music for the Sunday Eight Tones (Vespers stichera, troparion, kontakion, prokeimenon, and Alleluia)

Hymns of the Divine Liturgy for feasts of the moveable and fixed cycles

Hymns of the Divine Liturgy for each day of the week

Hymns of the Divine Liturgy for classes of saints, and for special intentions

The Panachida (memorial service for the departed)

The Moleben (prayer service for any intention)

Scriptural and Liturgical Hymns
The 2007 Divine Liturgies book

Some particular additions:

Settings for the Our Father, in all eight samohlasen tones

Eight settings for the Cherubic Hymn, with corresponding music for “We praise you, we bless you” and the liturgical Communion Hymns

The sections for the Vigil Divine Liturgy was added to accustom the faithful to the order of Vespers when an “anticipated” Divine Liturgy is held on Saturday evening of the eves of feasts. Together with the liturgical hymns at the end of the book, almost all the fixed music for Vespers is present.

A glossary of liturgical and musical terms

Missing from the new book:

Paraliturgical hymns

Sources for melodies
Additional official books

2010: Liturgy of the Presanctified Gifts
  • notated stichera set to the samohlasen and Bolhar tones
  • both the verse and sticheron melodies provided with music
  • some older Presanctified melodies restored from the Slavonic

Hierarchical Divine Liturgy – Liturgy with bishop presiding

Divine Liturgy booklet – one melody per hymn, but “additional music may be used.”
Where we are today

Today, a Byzantine Catholic parish can assemble materials to celebrate the full cycle of services – Vespers, Matins, and Divine Liturgy – for Sundays and feast days throughout the year, using prostopinije in English. This would have been virtually impossible ten years ago.

Some parishes – especially in mission areas – are making thorough use of the new materials, while others maintain their own chant and text traditions.

The success of congregational singing of divine services depends on the relationship between pastor, cantor, and faithful, and a common commitment to sung prayer. This is our topic for the final week of the course.