A Proposed Hymnal
for the Byzantine Catholic Metropolitan Church of Pittsburgh

Prepared for the Inter-Eparchial Music Commission

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May 25, 2020

In August 2016, I was asked to undertake the assembly of a comprehensive collection of paraliturgical hymns and spiritual songs for our Church. This work is now complete, and I am forwarding it to you for consideration and improvement before it goes to the Council of Hierarchs for their approval.

Sources

The previous hymnal prepared by the Metropolitan Cantor Institute, at the request of the Inter-Eparchial Liturgical Commission, consisted of just those songs found in the Hymns section of Fr. William Levkulic’s *The Divine Liturgy: A Book of Prayer* (1978). The present collection expands this to include songs from:

- *The Marian Hymnal* (Levkulic and Jumba, 1984)
- *Hymns of Great Lent* (Levkulic, not dated)
- *Sunday Hymns According to the Byzantine Lectionary* (2009)
- Material provided by parishes and cantors

Texts and music were reviewed, and authors/composers determined wherever possible. Slavonic texts were compared with original sources such as the Užhorod *Pisennik* (1913).

A workshop was held in Pittsburgh in October 2016, with 24 cantors present from three eparchies, to assemble a basic contents list, and identify gaps. In some cases, translations of Slavonic hymns were found or commissioned to fill these gaps. All texts and music were examined for theological and linguistic issues. The results were circulated on the Internet through the MCI website from August 2018 through May 2020; all comments received were addressed.

So what is in this hymnal?

The spiritual songs here are intended for singing before and after liturgical services, at pilgrimages and parish or eparchial events, and by the faithful whenever they like. Both old and newer hymns are present.

As noted in the preface, liturgical hymns are NOT included, except for a few which it seemed appropriate to provide in both English and Slavonic, and which were published in our Divine Liturgies book only in English.

I would ask that before proceeding with this report, you look through the hymnal itself.
Three basic principles

- No one has to sing (or like) everything.

Yes, it’s a large collection of hymns. In many cases, one group of cantors would ask me to exclude as unnecessary some hymns that other cantors said were vital. I would much rather have a single book that is comprehensive than a series of special-purpose books.

Recently, several cantors have suggested breaking the hymnal up into “seasonal” or thematic booklets. I think this would be less than helpful, especially in parishes moving away from pews (so that there is no convenient book rack for each person to leave things in).

- It should be easy to use.

Musical notation is kept simple. Where there are several versions with “cantorisms” (flourishes, tenor harmonies replacing the melody, and so on) we have kept to the simpler version, ESPECIALLY if the “fancier” version can be easily derived from the simpler music. The other way around usually doesn’t work; trying to simplify a complicated notation usually falls apart.

- It should be interesting.

In each section, there are a few surprises – rediscovered gems, or hymns chosen for a particular point of view. For example, one or two of our Lenten hymns relates the suffering of the created universe to that of Christ on the cross; and some lesser-known Marian hymns have delightful tunes we could afford to hear more of.

The physical layout of the hymnal

1. One hymnal or several

As noted above, previous hymns were usual special-purpose affairs, or sections or other prayer books or service books. The last time we had a comprehensive hymnal was in 1913, with the Užhorod Pisennik (370 pages, without music).

The general consensus of cantors and pastors was that a multivolume hymnal (e.g. one per season) was simply less usable, especially since it would require duplication of some hymns used throughout the year. In the extreme case, each parish makes up its own hymnal.

Similar considerations apply in considering a call from some parishes to have ONLY traditional hymns (i.e. omit recently composed ones), or put traditional and “new” hymns in separate volumes.

If there is a real felt need for (e.g.) a “slimmed down” hymnal, or one with English only, this might be better accommodated with 2-3 editions of the same basic collection. But it should be possible for a parish to have a single hymnal with all the hymns in regular use for singing before and after the Liturgy.

I also plan to provide a set of SATB harmonizations, one per melody, on larger size paper.
2. Page size

In this draft, the ordinary page size used by Metropolitan Cantor Institute publications has been kept out of convenience: “half-legal”, 7 by 8.5 inches, which allows a booklet version to be printed on legal size, 11 by 14 inch paper.

This page size could (should) be adjusted for offset printing. A smaller book, even a large pocket size, might be convenient for pilgrimages, caroling, etc., while older parishioners or those with arthritis often prefer a lighter book. (Of course, paper thickness matters here as well.) A smaller page size may require smaller typefaces, the reduction of margins, and so on.

A large print edition should at least be considered.

3. Page layout

In the table of contents at the front, for traditional hymns, the English titles run down the center in order to put them closer to the page numbers, and the page number refers to the English or right-hand page of a spread. This is not perfect but seems workable.

In the main body of the hymnal, each hymn is titled at the top center, in a convenient font and weight. For “traditional” hymns, this is generally the first few words of the first verse, chosen for identifiability. New hymns for the liturgical year are titled with the liturgical occasion. Only initial words and proper nouns are capitalized in titles.

Beneath the title, to the right, the traditional hymns are assigned a subject or occasion. These are designed to effectively divide the hymnal into sections, with the eye running across the same place on each page to find the desired group of hymns if the index is not used. For this reason, the title and subject should be consistently placed on each page.

(Depending on the final page size, a running header or footer may be appropriate, but should not be absolutely necessary.)

Music generally runs across the full width, from margin to margin. Some hymns have exceptionally short lines, in which case it might be practical to move the margins in equally on both sides, to present a balanced look. But this should be done consistently for such hymns across the entire hymnal. This will also help avoid music which is too stretched out horizontally; this is not only hard to read and sing from, but can result in artificially slow singing.

Attributions and credits are given below each hymn. Occasionally this took some digging, or turned up surprises.

In some cases our English setting is quite different from the sense of the original language, a literal translation is also provided (e.g. Nebo i zeml’ja on page 102).

A page number is given at the bottom, centered, running continuously through the whole collection.
4. Ordering of pages

Traditional hymns are ordered by category, then alphabetically by title within the category. Hymns for a particular feast are considered to make up a category of their own, and the feasts are given in order from September to August.

In the first part of the hymnal, original-language and English hymns are laid out side-by-side, with the English on the right. The fact that non-English hymns come first is not intended to mark their importance or desirability, but is a nod to the fact that most readers look to the right hand side of a two-page spread when flipping through a book (which is why books often start a new chapter on the right, even if it means adding a blank page.)

In a few cases, the original language and English versions are both quite brief. If the two versions could be placed together on one page, this was done.

Some hymns have no original-language version, while a few have three languages. This leaves an occasional blank page. This page could be used for graphics, explanatory text, etc. (For example, the guide to Hungarian punctuation is placed opposite one of the first Hungarian hymns.) It is better not to leave a completely blank page, since some users may consider it to be a printing mistake.

Several cantors requested an index of first lines at the back, which sounds like a workable idea once the rest of the hymnal is complete. A thematic or feast-day index may also be desirable.

Musical notation

1. Key signature and range

Key signatures have been adjusted in more cases to keep the range between middle C and the C an octave above, sometimes going up to D or E. Key signatures NOT generally used by cantors have been avoided.

2. Note values

There is a perpetual argument over whether to use:

- Primarily half notes and quarter notes, with the half note generally getting the beat (“cut time”).
- Primarily quarter and eighth notes.

My experience has been that cantors are simply better at reading quarter notes than eighth notes unless the latter are barred. In this hymnal, I have tried to select what I thought was best in each case, but some hymns could easily be flipped to the other option. Eighth notes are barred, even if not slurred, when that seemed to be the better presentation.

There is some small inconsistency in the used of dotted versus tied notes; in each case, my goal was to show most clearly how the music was to be sung. The same applies to barring eighth notes.

Triplets and grace notes have been avoided, along with descants or alternate readings.
3. Slurs and subdivided notes

Ideally, hymns should be metrically regular, with each verse having the same number of syllables per line, and with accents falling in the same place in each line. Solid slurs are used if notes are slurred in all verses, or in the first verse and the majority of the remaining verses.

Ties (horizontal slurs between notes on the same pitch which are sometimes sung together and sometimes not) are used sparingly – again, not necessary if hymns are metrically regular. Where they are used, especially with compound meters like 6/4, it is done to show best how the music is to be sung.

In general I have avoided dashed slurs (which mean “notes are assigned to syllables differently depending on the verse”). In practice, it is a LOT of work to either memorize how each verse is matched to the notes, or to figure it out on the fly. In general, cantors expressed a distinct preference for text extensions (underscores) instead of dashed slurs.

4. Time signatures

Many of our spiritual songs have a regular meter (3/4, 4/4, etc.) even if some go to a different meter at the refrain, or for individual verses.

For irregular hymns, I prefer to avoid time signatures and bar the music like chant, where a bar line represents a pause of a suitable length. Our cantors are more used to this format, especially if they are not musically trained.

For metrically regular hymns, we COULD provide a time signature, in which case a bar line does not imply a pause. This is a more standard notation outside our church, but cantors will need to be taught to deal with it. I have scored some hymns in each style, so you can decide which works better.

5. Lyrics

In an earlier version of this hymnal, multiple languages were stacked: English verses, then a dividing line, and Slavonic verses, all under the same notes. Overall this did not work well, because the melody was sometimes applied differently depending on language, especially in the settings of Fr. Levkulic.

With this hymnal, as noted above, English and original languages are on separate, usually on facing pages. Because they were originally merged, some Slavonic verses are internally misnumbered (e.g. vv. 1-3 are in Finale as vv. 4-6, with the baselines adjusted vertically) and in a different font (Book Antiqua) to enable them to be distinguished from the English. The vast majority of the lyrics are in Times New Roman; whichever font is used should be used everywhere.

Slavonic texts were extensively reviewed by Mr. Rich Custer, and where he provided changes I checked them against earlier sources such as the 1913 Pisennik.

Hymns with a large number of verses employ verse numbering at the start of the hymn, or the start of each line. I have some examples of each, to help you decide which is preferable.

The baseline spacing (space between verses) is not consistent throughout the book, and should be standardized, though a few hymns with many verses will need either tighter spacing or a smaller font.
Hyphenation is generally done to match pronunciation rather than normal printed orthography; it is not entirely consistent, and does give a few odd readings (“bap-tis-m”), but cantors seemed to prefer it.

One place where lyrics and time signatures come together is hymns in 2/4 time. Very often these hymns have MANY bar lines in a line of music; combined with long text verses (e.g. anything based on Pod tvoy pokrov), this means that lyrics are packed VERY tightly, or else logical lines of the hymn have to be split across several staves of music – in some cases, a hymn may even span pages. Leaving out the bar lines and using chant style may be preferable. For an example, see page 72.

6. Tempi and other markings

Tempo markings have been omitted, partly because that style was set in the people’s book, but even more because the appropriate tempo for a hymn can change quite a bit, especially when the acoustics of the space are taken into account. Any given metronome marking will have places where it does not work, Similarly, stylistic tags such as “Moderately”, “Prayerfully”, “Joyfully” have been omitted, since sometimes they are simply filling space. (What is “Not too fast”?) I have no real problem with them but it is not clear what they should be.

BUT (especially since we sometimes use half notes as the beat and sometimes quarter notes) it may be appropriate to provide “<note head> = <range of metronome values>” as a guide for cantors new to our tradition, or to a particular hymn, or to mark certain hymns as Broadly, Quickly etc

In many cases, a refrain is repeated in our tradition. When you look over the hymns, please identify any places where a repeat is marked and you think it should not be, or vice versa. Also, the music is presently inconsistent in labeling refrains explicitly. We should either be consistent or omit the labels.

**Hymns chosen for the collection**

(See also discussion of particular hymns below)

(Hymns to God and hymns for the Liturgy)

We have one hymn to the Trinity, and only a few to God the Father. (Interestingly enough, several European Greek Catholic hymnals have a section of hymns to “God the Creator” which are attractive, especially in a world which tends to underestimate the presence of God in the created order.)

We decided NOT to pick out certain hymns to Christ as suitable for singing at Holy Communion after the Communion Hymn and psalm, even though some of them fit the criteria established by our bishops. The primary problem here is that “Holy Communion” hymns and “Eucharistic” (= Benediction) hymns have become hopelessly confused as our church moved away from actually celebrating Benediction, and fostering frequent Communion instead. We could asterisk a few hymns for singing at Communion, but I have not done so.
“Heavenly King, comforter” is here so that (a) it can easily be sung on days other than Pentecost, and (b) a Slavonic version can be provided as well.

This section also includes a few hymns closely associated with the Divine Liturgy. “We thank you, God Most High” is thematically almost perfect for singing during the initial censing on an ordinary day; some parishes maintain the custom of singing “The Holy Spirit shall come upon you” before the sermon (just as the deacon says it for the priest before the Anaphora), and while this may not be ideal, I think it is better to have a standard version than to omit it.

The same can be said, perhaps, for “Vošel Jesi” / “You have entered, O (high) priest”; contra Michael Thompson, this is not a direct borrowing from the Roman Catholic tradition, but was reworked by the Orthodox in the time of Peter Mohyla. It should not be used as the entrance hymn proper at a hierarchical Liturgy, but since it IS being sung (even in our cathedrals) during censing, we should perhaps have a version here in the hymnal. I would be willing to prepare one.

**Hymns to the Mother of God**

There aren’t a lot of surprises here, though we’ve dusted off a few gems, and added some new ones.

**Traditional hymns for the liturgical year**

This section includes hymns which are primarily to be sung in connection with a particular feast or season. Some hymns in other sections might also be usable on feasts – e.g. *Hosts of angels on high* at Pentecost. Is there a good way to indicate this, either with a pointed in the liturgical hymns section (as Papp did in the *Duchovni pisni*) or with a thematic index at the back?

**Christmas**

The Christmas hymns are largely what you would expect, but with some additions:

- New, singable English translations of:
  - “Nyni Adame”
  - “V Viflejemi dnes’ Marija”
  - “Vselemnaja veselisja.”
- The most frequently sung Christmas hymns from our Hungarian parishes, sometimes with new English translations
- The “English” Christmas carols from the Levkulic compline book, but with music; “Silent Night” is paired with “Jasna zorja.”

Some have complained about including the “English” Christmas carols with music, but to be honest, they get sung too, especially when caroling, and NOT everyone knows them by heart. So including them here makes sense – AND we can include the oft-requested Slavonic versions of “Silent Night” and “O Come, All Ye Faithful.”
Great Fast and Holy Week

Much of the selections in the old Hymns for Great Lent book are liturgical (Basil anaphora, Typika, etc) and so there is no need to include them in this hymnal.

But for those selections that are hymns, I tried hard to distinguish those which are properly penitential or compunctionate “Give me strength to repent”) from those which focus more narrowly on the Passion of the Lord (“O Christ, as blood pours from your wounds…”).

The former are labeled “Great Fast”, and to them has been added a versification of Psalm 50, and also “Having suffered” (which ends with “have mercy on us.”) “Ne opuskaj nas”, a hymn originally intended as a Sacred Heart devotion, actually fits well here also.

After two hymns for Palm Sunday, we have the hymns for Holy Week itself. A number of these have many more verses in Slavonic, telling the whole story of the Passion, while in English we sing only the first one or two (which is one reason we sing about Judas so much in Holy Week).

Pascha

A persistent complaint from cantors in the hymnal workshops was that we don’t have enough music for Pascha. We do have a number of melodies for the Paschal troparion, but only a small number of our Slavonic paraliturgical hymns have passed into English. We’ve managed to add a few new ones here.

Other traditional hymns

Finally, a single patriotic hymn (“America the Beautiful”) was added at the express request of Metropolitan William. As in other cases, I have received both requests for such hymns, and requests that they NOT be included. So in this case I’m splitting the difference. Note: contemporary unfamiliarity with older English sometimes means that people interpret “God shed his grace on thee…” as a triumphalist statement that God HAD graced America, rather than a wish or request that he do so. Still, it seemed like the best patriotic hymn to include. We could use one more on the opposite page, if we can come up with a good choice. Otherwise I would give the liturgical propers for Independence Day, since they are not in the Divine Liturgies book.

(This might also quell the “why is this here” comments.)

N.B. Some cultural education, both in American civic culture and our Church’s ancestral culture, are reasonable side-goals of a project like this hymnal.

New hymns

The “new hymns for the liturgical year” have been in use for almost 15 years. These have been very popular in some places, precisely because they anticipated and glossed the Gospel of the Sunday or feast. Again, some fine-tuning was done. One question involved final verses which used the epistle text for the day; after the Exaltation of the Cross, the Lucan jump means that
these will sometimes be out of sync with the day’s epistle. Overall, it seemed better to keep them than to drop them, especially since a clear connection is sometimes made with the Gospel as well.

The Sunday hymns through All Saints have no “theme” or date” in the top right; we might put “Seventh Sunday before Pascha”, “Third Sunday after Pascha” etc. It is surprising how many people don’t realize that the Great Fast Sundays are predictable from Pascha!

**Comments on particular hymns**

**So great is God** – despite the fact that in Russian Orthodoxy this hymn is sometimes considered too “political” to be sung in church, our people sing it gladly. I have taken the second verse of “O Jesus, Lord, we ask you to bless us” and appended it here, since the “O Jesus Lord” is best omitted (the Sacred Heart reference would be perceived as a major Latinization these days).

**We thank you, God Most High** – this well-loved hymn is particularly suited to the beginning of the Divine Liturgy. It has many more verses in Slavonic than were provided in the Levkulic pew book, and I am working with Fr GFregory Lozinsky to craft matching verses in English; these will be sent to the Commission when ready for review. (I did not want this effort to hold up the consideration of the hymnal as a whole.)

**Accept me to today** – this is one of a small number of hymns repeated from the green book, primarily to provide a matching Slavonic version. There are several ways to sing the Slavonic, and I chose the one I think best matches text to melody (several authorities have pointed out that this is one of the bad text breaks in Bokšai).

**Holy this moment** – several cantors have pointed out that “Ever reposing on the holy altar” is a bit anachronistic, at least in its turn of phrase. But as a rule, it is good to have several verses to a hymn (once the cantor and people have sung the first verse, it’s easiest to continue) and well-known, so I left it as is.

**I do believe / Viruju Hospodi** – this is an example of a hymn that would probably benefit from having wider margins than usual, and shorter, more compact lines of music.

**A new commandment** – the current setting has garnered more complaints than all the rest of the hymns in the back of the green book, primarily due to the opening “A” (when sung, this is one of the uglier sounds in English). I realize it’s a scriptural quote, but the Slavonic here is demonstrative: *siju zapovid’ / this command*. I would suggest we either restore the earlier text, or else adopt OCA Bishop Job’s solution of putting the initial “A” on a pick-up note, so that the access is one “new” rather than “a”.

**Beneath your compassion** is provided here to allow for the inclusion of Slavonic. At least one Music Commission member has asked me to consider rhythmic simplifications. I leave that up to
you. Is it worth putting a note at the bottom explaining that it is sung at Vespers on days of fasting, or is that sort of education better provided elsewhere?

**Christians, join in our procession** – in several hymns such as this one, I have found or restored additional English verses, and included the corresponding Slavonic ones.

**Immaculate Mary** is included by popular demand (it is VERY often still sung in Slavonic); the verses in the English translation were careful chosen to be as close to our tradition as possible.

**O Mary, Mother of our God** – this is a case where the “received” English version puts the accents in a different place than the Slavonic; unlike the other cases, this one has “stuck”, and I am leaving it as is rather than trying to somehow “fix” the English setting. Slavonic and English will just sound a little different.

**Purest mother, people of the homeland** got some pushback from cantors who wanted an explicit mention of the RUSYN homeland. It is worth noting that the Papp *Duchovní Pipeň* had already changed this to “our homeland”, and in any case, the hymn would concern the people singing here in America, not those back in Europe. We COULD do as the Marian Hymnal did and have two stacked versions, but I would rather avoid that.

**Rejoice, O purest Queen** – this went through several rounds of adjustment, since it is sung differently in different places. The primary problem was the fairly un-traditional use of triplets in the *Marian Hymnal*, which in working with George Nagrant and others I finally decided to change to quarter note; it’s easier for a parish cantor to change quarters to a triplet than the other way around, and cantors sometimes become spooked by more sophisticated musical notation.

**Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos** is provided here to allow for the inclusion of Slavonic, and also to provide an attribution which were missing in the Divine Liturgies book.

**We hasten to your patronage** – as mentioned above, this is an example where we might want to remove the bar lines with each line of the hymn, so that each stave is a line of text.

**We come to you in prayer** – this is one place where I had two very lovely and quite different melodies for the same text, so I provided both. (In general, if variants are very close, I would not do this, since it leads to confusion at the point where the two versions diverge.)

**When the angel came** actually has 15 verses in Slavonic; in English we sing the first two (the Annunciation and Nativity) and the last two (Dormition and Coronation). I provided all the verses in Slavonic, since they frequently sung in some places from other books, but it might be good to work up an English translation of middle verses; I will work on it as time permits.

**You, O Mary, our dear Lady** – there is somewhat widespread disagreement over the “correct” rhythm for this, whether even quarters or a Scotch snap (short-long, short-long). I went with the
simpler quarters, attested in Slavonic also, since it’s easy for a cantor or choir to jazz it up, but hard to go in the other direction.

**Come, O Jesus** – this is a little awkwardly placed here, on a spread by itself. There are also hymns for this fast in the “new hymns” section, so something might be moved around – OR perhaps better, use the left hand page to say something instructive about the minor fasts!

**Sound the trumpet** – in this section, when the hymn is for a feast, both the name of the feast and the date are provided at the top right.

**O Father Nicholas** – whatever we settle on for **Rejoice, O purest Queen** should be used here as well.

**O who loves Nicholas the saintly** – added one verse from Michael Hilko, correct attribution, Nikolaj Nagrant has additional verses we might add

**So nebel angel / Angels from heaven** – shows the difference between standard and wider margins.

**In the town of Bethlehem** – the English we have is quite short, and misses the whole point of the Slavonic: every verse ends with a mention of the Theotokos (“of Mary”, “for Mary”, “with Mary”, etc.) I would LOVE to have a new translation that better fitted the original (and as I mentioned in the Hymnal Project, there are other issues: the first verse talks *about* the Lord, and is suddenly addressing him (“O Savior”) with no transition.

**Jesus came from heaven** – as mentioned in the Hymnal Project discussion, not only is the first verse not translation of the Rusyn, but it’s not even true (Jesus Christ is the incarnate God-Man – so he did NOT come from heaven; the Word did). The second verse, “Shepherds in their pastures” had already migrated to “God the Lord Eternal”, so I combined them: See **God the Lord eternal**.

**Wondrous news** – this is another English hymn for which I would love to have a bigger selection of verses; it is short enough that it seems to end before you’ve hardly started it, and so it gets repeated endlessly. We could do better.

**The choirs of angels sing** – whatever we settle on for **Rejoice, O purest Queen** should be used here as well.

**Rejoice today** – the Slavonic sources have 5-7 verses for this Palm Sunday hymn. Some parishes could use a processional for this day, so we should see if they can be set to English.

**Christ our King who reigns with justice** – at one time this was THE Holy Week hymn of Greek Catholics in the US; some research into the melody (there are several versions) might be appropriate.
As noted above, several of our Holy Week hymns have lots of verses, and we only sing the first couple, which is why many of these hymns seem to only discuss Judas. Not necessarily all, but at least some of them deserve a fuller treatment:

- Christ our King who reigns with justice
- In Gethsemene’s darkness
- O my God, you are so merciful
- The sentence is passed

**Let us join and sing together** – just as our traditional Holy Week hymns have additional verses recounting the entire Passion, our Paschal hymns often have many verses telling the story of the Resurrection. We should consider providing more English verses here.

**Christ is risen! Let us rejoice now** – I received several requests for an English version of this, and I am not entirely satisfied with this one; the matching of text accent to musical accent is not up to the standard of the other hymns we have. BUT the permission I received to use it required that it be used unmodified. The Commission might consider approaching the authors to see if any necessary improvements might be made; or we could keep it as is.

**-- Newly composed hymns**

The five hymns for the **Sundays of the Great Fast** form as set, with only the third verse changing week by week. It made sense to have them separately when they were printed as part of leaflets for the Divine Liturgy, but the possibility of combining them in one two-page spread should at least be considered. (It may mean putting the text below the music separately, which is less than optimal, so it might be simplest to leave it as it stands.)

The hymns of the Sundays of the year provide summaries of the Gospel (and often the epistle of the day; some parishes sing them enthusiastically, and some ignore them. I think they do have some catechetical value, BUT (since they were done one a week, on schedule, some have places which work less while, and might be improved. By suggestion would be to leave them as is, even the “poetic” diction, unless a real improvement can be found. (Remember that hymns we are used to do the same thing: “Him will Nicholas receive”, etc.)

**Seventh Sunday after Pentecost** – this is a good example of a hymn which should perhaps be engraved in chant style, without bar lines except between phrases.

The hymns for saints’ days provide hymn for feasts of vigil and polyeleos rank or above, except for:

- Eustratius and companions (Decembre 13)
- The Synaxis of the Theotokos (December 26; still singing Christmas hymns)
- Theodosius, founder of the Common Life (January 11)
- Three Holy Hierarchs (January 30; there is a Rusyn hymn focused on priesthood)
• First and Second Findings of the Head of John the Forerunner (February 24)
• Forty Martyrs of Sebaste (March 9)
• Great Martyr George (April 23)
• Constantine and Helen (May 21)
• Bartholomew and Barnabas (June 13)
• Synaxis of the Twelve Apostles (June 30)
• Athanasius of Mount Athos (July 5)
• Anthony of the Monastery of the Caves (July 10)
• Great Prince Vladimir (July 15)
• Boris and Gleb (July 24)
• Dormition of Holy Anna (July 25)
• Pantaleimon (July 27)
• Matthias (August 9)

as well as additional feasts for John Chrysostom, Theodosius of the Caves, and Cyril and Methodius, each of whom has a hymn which might be used on those days as well.

Of the saints on this list, most not objects of popular veneration EXCEPT for Saint George and Saint Anna / Anne. Hymns for them, and possibly for the Forty Martyrs, would be worth some effort.

**Potential additions and work to be done**

Whether in the new hymns, or the ones translated from Slavonic sources, we could really use:

• A hymn for the holy great-martyr George
• A hymn for St. Anna / Anne
• A hymn for the Forty Holy Martyrs

The following hymns in Slavonic have more verses in Slavonic, which might be included and also translated into English:

• Blahodarim Boha (thanksgiving, Divine Liturgy)
• Marije, Mati Boža, prečista (Marian, pilgrimage)
• Anhel Božij (Marian, pilgrimage)
• Radujsja zilo (Palm Sunday)
• Christe Carju spravedlivyj (Holy Week, pick 1-2 of these)
• Jehda na smert' hotovilsja
• Bože moj milostivj
• Uže dekret podpisujet
• Sohlasno zaspivajme (Pascha)
The following hymn deserves a new translation into English:

- V Viflejemi novena

**My plans for the hymnal**

The hymnal is substantially in your hands at this point. I can make requested changes, but I hope that I will at least be allowed to defend my editing choices if necessary before a final decision is made. I am also more than happy to answer questions about the hymnal in its present form.

Yours in Christ,

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