



Ambrosian hymns are one of the most beautiful examples of how doctrine, music and poetry can live in harmony together. "In-cantationes", said the followers of Arius. Music and verses which may be comparable to magic.

The praying congregation sang and resisted, supported by the notes of the hymns, to the Roman siege of the Portian Basilica, preserving high spirits based on the "cantus" - simple and profound - that Ambrose had offered them.

This was in 386 A.D.

Those notes and those verses are to this day the pillars of Ambrosian liturgy and on those melodies musicians of later times worked and meditated by their musical variations, by adorned singing, and elaborations on the low keys taking up the theme of the ancient Ambrosian notation, designed for deep notes supporting the musical building.

Choir and organ, to this day, engage in exploring and adorning that slight but cultivated musical corpus of rare communicational power.

Carmina and music, sermons and melodies, treasures of the spirit, communicated through the simplest instrument,

that of the voice expanding in a nave.

Ambrose is great at giving each of his hymns (thirteen are supposed to be authentic on eleven melodies employed)

the strength of synthesis: in them are encompassed and described, in the rolling lines of iambic dimeter, the fundamental truths of Christianity together with the sweetness of melos expressing and defining in turn in its ways inner life, contemplation or joy, on the G chord, before the risen Christ.

The congregation learning to sing with him was divided into women and men, white and dark voices, opposed and united in prayer.

An example of absolute modernity still viewed by contemporary liturgy with utmost ecstatic admiration. St Augustine is as effective in his outline of the poetics of an Ambrosian hymn:

"It calls for three elements: (I) singing because « if you praise God and you do not sing this is not reciting a hymn »;

(II) the praise of God, because "if you sing and do not praise God this is not reciting a hymn";

(III) praise referring to God, because "if you praise something which does not pertain to the praise of God this is not reciting a hymn"

Therefore a hymn has these three components: both a canticle and the praise of God".

This is another masterpiece of synthesis introducing Ambrose's hymns.

All that is left to do is to experience them in the outgoing natural flow of singing. Still nowadays.

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