

Throughout the Easter season, I've been singing part of the Eucharistic Prayer at Mass. That's the part that contains 'the Institution Narrative' – containing the words of consecration "He took the bread, blessed it, broke it...Then He took the cup, gave thanks and said..."

Many have you have commented that you have found it more prayerful when the Eucharistic Prayer is sung. I'm reminded of the words of St. Augustine: "He who sings prays twice." And some of you said that you find yourselves humming along, which is lovely. The Second Vatican Council's Document on the Liturgy (SACROSANCTUM CONCILIUM), said that "the active participation of the faithful is the aim to be sought above all else" at Mass. This is a huge departure from the pre-Vatican II Mass, which was largely something we watched while praying our private prayers. (This is still held over by people praying the rosary *during Mass* which is the complete opposite of what the Church is asking of us). The notion of active participation is what should drive all planning for liturgy and music.

While I have appreciated the nice comments, the credit for all three that we use is due to Greg Santa Croce, our Music Minister; he wrote them.

Prior to the publication of the new Roman Missal (in 2011), various composers whose hymns we sing, wrote Mass settings that contained the option of a sung Eucharistic Prayer for the presider to pray. One of the most popular was the MASS OF CREATION by Marty Haugen. However, with the publication of the new Missal – which contained a new translation of the Eucharistic prayers, all of those old settings became obsolete.

That left me with only a chant option, which I used when I first got here. I had memorized it from hearing one of my professors in seminary sing it, and it was simple enough for me to adapt myself to the new translation. There are also chant settings in the new Missal itself, but I didn't find any of them very effective. I also found that I was missing something more melodic, more musically interesting, and therefore, easier to memorize. So, I asked Greg if he would be able to write one. I reminded him that I have a very small musical range – barely a full octave, which is not a lot for him to work with. He obliged, kept it in my small vocal range, and eventually wrote all three of the settings to match the various Mass parts that we use (the Holy Holy, Memorial Acclamation, and Great Amen, as well as the Gloria and Lamb of God.)

Some of you have mentioned that you would like this done every Sunday. But there is another principle of liturgy at work here – called 'progressive solemnity.' The bigger feasts should be celebrated more robustly than 'ordinary time.' So, you'll notice that I sing the Eucharistic Prayer on Holy Days, during the Christmas season, the Easter season, and for Pentecost, The Feast of the Holy Trinity, and the Feast of Corpus Christi. (These are also days when we use incense, for the same reason).

I had asked Greg to write something up about this himself, but he was too humble to do so. But I wanted you to know of his generosity as well as his talent.