CHANTING THE ORATIONS OF THE MASS
IN ROMAN MISSAL III

A. THE SIMPLEST PRAYER TONE: THE UNCHANGING TONE (RECTO TONO)

It is possible to chant the prayers very simply yet powerfully on the same pitch. This was once the norm for ferial days. The key here, as with the other options, lies in the idea of “sung speech”: the sense of phrase and natural word rhythm which the celebrant brings to chanting. The tempo should be measured but not slow, and the words should speak for themselves.

This option may be particularly appropriate during a penitential season. It is also a good option for those who have had little experience in singing publically.

B. THE PRAYER TONE AND ITS VARIATIONS

The music for the prayer is made up of six different patterns or phrases. Some of the patterns are used with only one, specific element of the prayer; others are used in several ways. The six phrases are given below with their main usage and a shorthand sign which can be helpful for preparing a text without a musical setting:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Main Usage</th>
<th>Short Hand</th>
<th>Musical Phrases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dropping Phrase</td>
<td>invitation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ascending Phrase</td>
<td>invocation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Phrase</td>
<td>body of the prayer</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Descending Phrase</td>
<td>body of the prayer</td>
<td>†</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Phrase</td>
<td>body of the prayer</td>
<td>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concluding Phrase</td>
<td>end of the prayer</td>
<td>ll</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For layout purposes, we will be using a two-line staff for the insert into the Missal used at the chair.

OPENING PRAYER FOR ADVENT SUNDAY II

Dropping Phrase Ascending Phrase

Let us pray. Almighty and merciful God,

Dropping Phrase Middle Phrase

may no earthly undertaking hinder those who set out in haste to meet your Son,

Descending Phrase

but may our learning of heavenly wisdom

Final Phrase

gain us admittance to his company.

Doxlogy Middle Phrase

Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

Concluding drop

one God, for ever and ever.

TONE PATTERNS TO BE AVOIDED

English texts will not support the use of certain traditional Latin chant patterns, e.g. the text ". . . the kingdom of heaven."
(the last syllable of "heaven" is unaccented), therefore the following patterns are not appropriate in English.

Drop of a half step: Drop of a fifth:

The kingdom of heav-en The kingdom of heav-en