

IN THE SPIRIT OF THE LITURGY

(Inculturation of the Roman Liturgy and its Chants in Nigeria)

Abstract

The church holds in high esteem the Latin chants and accords them a prime of place in her liturgy, especially when celebrated in Latin. It is the music proper to the Roman rite. However, in her Vatican II's Constitution on the Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the church allowed the use of good and suitable music styles from other cultures in her liturgy. This conciliar gesture gave rise to the upsurge of the so-called indigenous musical compositions that were sometimes good for liturgy and at other times inadequate and theologically bankrupt. Today, the practice of using only the indigenous liturgical music in the liturgy has relegated the traditional Roman rite practice of singing antiphons at Mass. This article calls for a rediscovery of the rich theological treasures in the traditional Latin chants. It suggests the translation of many of the Latin antiphons of the Mass into Igbo and the production of its common standard text. Thus, the vernacular texts become a principal source for liturgical music composition in Igboland. Thus, in the spirit of the liturgy, a balance will be struck between the tradition and modernity, between the substantial unity of the Roman rite and the legitimate cultural variations.

Keywords: Roman Liturgy, Latin chants, Adaptation, Inculturation, Igbo Liturgical music.

Introduction:

A reminiscence of the sweet memories of my childhood liturgical experiences as a young altar boy best introduces this topic. Altar service at pre Vatican II's Eucharistic liturgy, popularly symbolized in the phrase *Tridentine Mass* or "Latin Mass,"¹ was one of the memorable religious experiences that moulded my growing up. Its deep and lasting impression on me has continued to influence my views and thoughts about life. Latin plain chants and hymns² were among the quite impressive features of this Mass. At every 10 am Mass (the official Mass for the intention of the parishioners) then in the late 70s at St. Patricks Parish Ogbete Enugu,³ the Latin chant *asperges me* was usually sung. As a ritual music,⁴ it usually accompanied the penitential rites at the beginning of the Mass while the Parish Priest walked through the church and sprinkled the faithful with holy water. Its association with the penitential rite meant it was not sung at any other moment of the Mass. Regular Mass attendants and we, the Altar servers, knew the chant's melody and text very well and could sing it by heart. During the Easter season, antiphons such as *Vidi aquam* and *Fontes* replaced it.

Statement of the Problem

¹ In the late 70s, some priests still preferred to celebrate the Tridentine Mass rather than that of the Vatican II that already came into use as far back as 1967.

² The 1958 instruction *De musica sacra* expressly permitted the singing of vernacular hymns during low Mass. Cf. Sacred Congregation of Rites, *De musica sacra* (September 3, 1958), no. 33, in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* [AAS] 50 (1958): 643.

³ St. Patricks Ogbete is one of the oldest parishes in the Catholic Diocese of Enugu, with its foundation stone laid in 1926.

⁴ Edward Foley, an American liturgical musicologist, defines ritual music in general terms as music wed to human rituals, "music wed to a text, accompanying an action." See E. Foley, *Ritual Music. Studies in Liturgical Musicology*, The Pastoral Press Beltsville, Maryland 1995, 114.

The concern of this article is the fact that most of these beautiful and theologically affluent Latin chants have since disappeared in the liturgy of most of the Local Churches in Nigeria today. For example, in the Local Church in Igboland, eighty percent of her liturgical repertoires today consist of personally composed texts (by the choirmasters and composers) and most often, these texts are theologically impoverished and liturgically unsuitable. Latin chants/antiphons such as *Asperges me*, *Vidi aquam* and *Fontes* were proper to the seasons, appropriate for different occasions and parts of the Mass. Unfortunately, these and a plethora of other liturgical symbols of the Roman liturgy have disappeared legitimately or illegitimately from the liturgy of today.

Legitimate Suppression of Some Liturgical Chants

About four centuries before Vatican II, the Council of Trent (1545 –1563) abolished the use of some textual and musical additions to the Ordinary (*ordinarium missae*) and the Proper (*proprium missae*) of the Mass known as tropes⁵ and sequences,⁶ which were considered superfluous and thus an abuse of the church's liturgy and retained in use some others.⁷ Unfortunately, many other traditional Latin chants such as *Gaudete* (entrance antiphon of the third Sunday of Advent), *Rorate caeli* (entrance antiphon of the fourth Sunday of Advent), *Laetare* (entrance antiphon of fourth Sunday of Lent) and others that belong neither to those abolished tropes nor to sequences have also vanished from our liturgical celebrations. Some liturgical scholars have adduced reasons for the disappearance. Some shift the culpability to the post Vatican II's liturgical reforms, which granted to various cultures the admission into the then one and universal Roman liturgy. While others are of the opinion that Latin, the textual language of these chants, has become a dead language, which nobody today neither speaks nor understands. As such, Latin chants can no longer be used in the Mass and that vernacular has taken its place.

However, this article argues that the church's permission for the adaptation of the Roman liturgy to cultures is not responsible for the disappearance of the traditional Latin chants from the liturgy today. Instead, the people's partial receptivity and often the *ad hoc* poor interpretation of the original intention and demands of the Council in respect to liturgical adaptation (or inculturation) is culpable. Klaus Gamber shares the same view when he says the exclusive use of vernacular (texts and chants) in the liturgy was not the original intention of the Council Fathers.⁸ In the Conciliar Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (SC), the church emphasized the adaptation of the Roman liturgy to the concrete situations of the people. This has a dual implication. First, the adaptation of the Roman liturgy to the cultural context of the people stands for the liturgical unity of the universal church.

⁵ In an extended sense, the terms "trope" and "troping" often designate all additions and interpolations to the chant, thus including the sequence, for example, as a subclass under "tropes." They are categorized as plainchant that flourished from the 10th through the 12th centuries. They comprise musical and textual additions to the established repertoire of Mass (both Proper and Ordinary) and Office chants.

⁶ Sequences are long melodic passages (in prose form) attached to the Alleluia in the liturgy -- at first simply as extensions of the chant but later, in still larger and more elaborate forms, as new additions. Such extensions and additions were given the name *sequentia* or "sequence" (from the Latin "sequor," to follow), perhaps originally because of their position "following" the Alleluia. Later, it was sung before the Alleluia. See *Medieval Tropes and Sequence*, retrieved online on May 2 2023 at 9 PM.

⁷ Sequences retained in use by the Council are only four namely: *Victimae paschali laudes*, at Easter; *Veni Sancte Spiritus*, on Whitsunday (Pentecost); *Lauda Sion*, by St. Thomas Aquinas, for the festival of Corpus Christi; and the *Dies Irae* (for Requiem liturgy). However, the body charged with drafting and implementing the liturgy reforms removed it ca 1969-70 from the Mass of the Dead transferring it the Liturgy of the Hours. A fifth sequence the *Stabat Mater* for Our Lady of Sorrows was added in to the liturgy in 1727.

⁸ Klaus Gamber, *The Reform of the Roman Liturgy: Problems and Background*, (California: Una Voce Press, 1993), 60.

Second, the introduction of the peoples' cultural legitimate variations⁹ into the Roman liturgy represents the liturgical diversity in the church. Hence, any inculturation effort that emphasizes the former ignoring the latter or vice versa is incomplete and lopsided.

Therefore, an attempt to re-read the SC for a balanced understanding and interpretation of the Vatican II's original intention in relation to the inculturation of liturgy and its chants in Nigeria and particularly among the Igbos is necessary. The starting point of the re-reading task would be the explication of some keywords in the write-up namely, liturgical adaptation, liturgical inculturation and liturgical chants. This write-up also suggests a simple way to adapt the Roman liturgy and its Latin chants to native genius.

Liturgical Adaptation

The Second Vatican Council in its very first document SC employed just the word adaptation to refer to the celebration of liturgy that takes into consideration the concrete or cultural situation of the people. In the general directives on adaptation in the SC, the Council gives its original intention thus:

Even in the liturgy, the Church has no wish to impose a rigid uniformity in matters, which do not involve faith or the good of the whole community. Rather she respects and fosters the spiritual adornments and gifts of the various races and peoples. Anything in their way of life that is not indissolubly bound up with superstition and error she studies with sympathy and, if possible, preserves intact. Sometimes in fact she admits such things into the liturgy itself, as long as they harmonize with its true and authentic spirit. (SC 37)

The above understanding of liturgical adaptation stresses and respects both the unity of the Catholic faith and the genius of the cultures in the Church. The watchword for the original intention of the Council Fathers in the above citation is "harmony" between the new cultural forms and the authentic spirit of the liturgy. In the words of Francis Arinze,

The Council wanted the substantial unity of the Roman Rite to be maintained. Given that safeguard, it wanted liturgical books to allow for legitimate variations and adaptations to different groups, regions, and peoples, especially in what were in those days considered mission lands. It even speaks of possible structuring of rites and devising of rubrics (See SC 38).¹⁰

Reading the pages of the Council's legislation on sacred liturgy further, one can identify three levels or categories of liturgical adaptations. The first is *accomodatio* as the Latin text of some of the liturgical legislation calls it, without any easy equivalent in English except the term 'adaptation' (loosely translated). *Accomodatio* refers to the flexibility and choice of alternative texts that the newly revised Latin *editiones typicae* of the liturgical books¹¹ allowed the priest-celebrant to make use of, as he deems necessary. In the words of Arinze, it is the "provision in the liturgical books for the on-the-spot-options by the priest."¹² The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM)* and the *Roman Missal (RM)* itself outlined and explained this simplest form of adaptation entrusted to the priest-celebrant as mostly the "choice of certain rites or texts, that is, of the chants, readings, prayers, explanations, and gestures which may respond better to the needs, preparation, and culture of the participants."¹³

⁹ See Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments, *Varietates legitimae*: Inculturation and the Roman Liturgy, March 29 1994.

¹⁰ Francis Arinze, *Celebrating the Holy Eucharist*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco 2006, 70.

¹¹ The newly revised liturgical books were drawn up in the 1960s and 1970s differently from the books currently in use before the Council.

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM)* 24; cf. also Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, *Instruction Redemptionis Sacramentum (RS)*, March 25, 2004, 39.

The second level of adaptation concerns those things stipulated in the opening sections of all the liturgical books that the Council Fathers explicitly left to the decision of the Bishops' Conference when preparing the vernacular translations. They include:

- a. The gestures and postures of the faithful (see *GIRM* 43);
- b. The gestures of veneration toward the altar and the Book of the Gospels (see *GIRM* 273);
- c. The texts of chants at the entrance, the presentation of gifts, and at Communion (see *GIRM* 48, 74, 87);
- d. The readings from Sacred Scripture to be used in special circumstances (see the *GIRM* 362); the form of the gesture of peace (see the *GIRM* 82);
- e. The manner of receiving Holy Communion (see *GIRM* 160 and 283);
- f. The materials for the altar and sacred furnishings, especially the sacred vessels and the vestments (see *GIRM* 301, 326, 329, 339, 342 -46).¹⁴

Lastly, the third level of adaptation refers to radical adaptation, which involves creation of new rites within the Roman rites. "If the Bishops consider that the culture and traditions of their people make deeper demands than mere adaptation as hitherto indicated, the Bishops' Conference is to work according to the directives of *SC* 40; *Ad Gentes* 22; *Varietates Legitimae* (*VL*) 63-69; and as applied to the case of the missal, the *GIRM* 393-399."¹⁵ This refers to the liturgical adaptation in a stricter sense. Whereas, in a wider sense of the word, all that was said before are mere adaptations. The explication of these terms (*accomodatio*, *aptatio* "adaptation" and inculturation) and the identification of the three levels or steps of inculturation is necessary for a better understanding of the term "liturgical inculturation."

Liturgical Inculturation

In Catholic theological circles, the term inculturation has become a household term to express the relationship between the Gospel and the cultures. Thus, the liturgical inculturation would ordinarily mean the relationship of the Roman liturgy to/with cultures. However, the Vatican II Fathers did not use the term inculturation. Instead, they used the term "adaptation" to indicate "how the rite are to be changed to enable them communicate the gospel more effectively to those who celebrate them."¹⁶ The key articles of the liturgy Constitution bears the following title, "Norms for Adapting the Liturgy to the Temperament and Traditions of Peoples" (*SC*, 37-40). To understand then the usage of the neologism inculturation to indicate the relation between liturgy and culture requires, therefore, a clarification of the origin and signification of the term inculturation, especially in the sense of radical adaptation.¹⁷

A French theologian J. Mason used the term inculturation first in the 1960s in his article where he discussed the possibility of inculturating Catholicism in a pluriform manner.¹⁸ Latter, the term became among theologians and missiologists a favourite term used in contrast to the

¹⁴ *Ibid* 72.

¹⁵ *Ibid* 74-75.

¹⁶ For the reasons why the term "inculturation" should rightly substitute in many instances the Council's "adaptation", see Anscar Chupungco's clear explanation on the issue in his article "A Definition of Liturgical Inculturation," *Ecclesia Orans* 5 (1988), 11-23; see also his "Liturgy and Inculturation," in A.J. Chupungco, ed., *Handbook for Liturgical Studies II, Fundamental Liturgy*, (Liturgical Press, Collegeville Minnesota 1997), 337-75.

¹⁷ See Vatican II, The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, (*SC*), December 4, 1963, nos 40, 43, and 77.

¹⁸ J. Masson, "L'Eglise ouverte sur le monde," *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 84 (1962), 1038.

anthropological term enculturation.¹⁹ Theologians have also employed other synonyms such as indigenization, incarnation, contextualization, revision, accommodation and acculturation to describe the process of more effective proclamation of the Christian faith in diverse cultural contexts.²⁰ However, the term first became part of the ecclesiastical and theological lexicon when Pope John Paul II used it in 1979 in his address to the Pontifical Biblical Commission to express “one of the elements of the great mysteries of the incarnation.”²¹ Reading then in between the lines of John Paul II’s thought on inculturation as incarnation, one can rightly define inculturation as the incarnation of the gospel in the people’s culture, which entails a deep exchange between faith and culture.

This “synthesis,” according to the Pope, “is not just a demand of culture but also of faith. A faith which does not become culture is a faith which has not been fully received, not thoroughly thought through, not fully lived out.”²² In his *Redemptoris Missio*, (REM) the Pope thinking along the inculturation-incarnation paradigm defines inculturation as the “the incarnation of the Gospel in autonomous cultures and at the same time the introduction of these cultures into the life of the Church.”²³ Thus, inculturation as incarnation is a dialogue between faith and culture that transforms and enriches both the culture in which the faith is proclaimed and the universal church.²⁴ It also implies conversion and transformation – conversion and purification of the receiving culture and the total transformation of the church. As the Son of God took on human nature in a particular culture, the Gospel takes on all that is good, noble, or true in a culture. Some it assumes, others it purifies and elevates and some it rejects.²⁵

Liturgy is the traditional faith (the revealed truth) that is confessed, celebrated in symbols perceptible to the senses,²⁶ communicated, sung and lived for ages. Therefore, liturgical inculturation implies a profound interaction and a creative dialogue between the local culture and the Roman liturgy. Such that the Roman liturgy takes flesh in the local culture, converts it and is itself transformed by the culture. Thus, “the liturgy, like the Gospel, must respect cultures, but at the same time invite them to purify and sanctify themselves.”²⁷ This process involves a proper and faithful translation of the Roman liturgical texts and a liturgical creativity necessary for the liturgy to speak to the people of the local culture, as in creating new texts or rites through the liturgical inculturation process of organic progression for instance.²⁸

Liturgical Chants of the Roman Liturgy

In the last two centuries before the Second Vatican Council, the Church preferred using the terminology sacred music for music used in her liturgy. Official Catholic documents then frequently used the term sacred music to refer to music used both during the liturgy and in

¹⁹ A term used to describe the “the cultural learning process of the individual, by which a person is inserted into his or her culture.” See Aylward Shorter, *Toward a Theology of Inculturation* (Maryknoll, Orbis Books, New York 1988), 5.

²⁰ On the nuances of these terms, see A. Chupungco, *Liturgical Inculturation: Sacramentals, Religiosity and Catechesis* (Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota 1992), 13-32.

²¹ John Paul II, “Address to the Pontifical Biblical Commission,” *Fede e Cultura alla luce della Bibbia* (Elle di Ci, Torino 1981), 5.

²² See John Paul II’s opening address to the Pontifical Council for Culture, *The Pope Speaks* 27 (1982), 157.

²³ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Slavorum Apostoli* (SA), June 2, 1985, 21.

²⁴ See John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Redemptoris missio* (REM), December 7, 1990, no 52.

²⁵ See Vatican II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium*, (LG), November 21, 1964, nos 13, 17; Vatican II, Decrees on the Church’s Missionary Activities, *Ad Gentes Divinitus*, (AG), December 7, 1965, no 9.

²⁶ SC 7.

²⁷ VL 19.

²⁸ On the process of liturgical inculturation please see Mark R. Francis, *Shape a Circle Ever Wider. Liturgical Inculturation in the United States*, (Liturgical Training Publications, Chicago 2000), 48-66.

popular devotion. According to Joseph Gelineau, sacred music is that which “by its inspiration, purpose and destination, or manner of use has a connection with [Catholic Christian] faith.”²⁹ Therefore, sacred music consists of liturgical and religious musics.

Meanwhile the term liturgical music was almost non-existence during the pre-Vatican II era. It only took on prominence after the Vatican II as a specific term reserved only for the music integral to [Catholic] liturgy. Thus, Gelineau defines it as that “which the Church admits, both in law and in practice, to the celebration of her official and public worship.”³⁰ While Edward Foley sees it as music “which weds itself to the liturgical action, serves to reveal the full significance of the rites and, in turn, derives its full meaning from the liturgy.”³¹ The term liturgical chant is not a neologism but a synonym of liturgical music. Hence, this article use both terminologies interchangeably.

On the strength of these definitions and clarifications, we can now attempt a classification of the different levels of liturgical chants of the Mass. Moving from the top to bottom, the chants of the Roman Eucharistic liturgy are:

- i. The liturgical chants of the celebrant, beginning with the sign of the cross till the dismissal rites, which includes the eucological texts (prayer texts).
- ii. the *Ordinarium Missae*, (the Ordinary of the Mass) is the part of the Mass that is usually constant regardless of the date on which the liturgy is celebrated such as *Kyrie*, *Gloria* (for Sundays outside of Lent, Solemnities and feast days), *Credo* (for Sundays and Solemnities), *Sanctus*, *Agnus Dei*.
- iii. the *Proprium Missae* (the Proper of the Mass), which varies according to the date, observance within the liturgical year, feast, memorial or *common* of the saints and solemnities. It comprises *ad Introitum* (the entrance antiphon or song), *ad offertorium* (the offertory) and *ad communionem* (the communion antiphon).
- iv. *Responsorial Psalm* (*psalmus responsorius*, Alleluia verse (*psalmus alleluiaticus*), in Lent Acclamation antiphon (*antiphona acclamationis*).

The above listed sung-liturgical-forms constitute the traditional liturgical chants of the Roman liturgy par excellence. According to Dylan Schrader insightful explanations, the traditional Roman liturgical musical form consists of singing antiphons at the beginning of the Mass, during offertory and communion.

The traditional practice of the Roman Rite is to sing antiphons at the entrance, offertory, and Communion of Mass. An antiphon is a short text, usually a line of Scripture, relevant to the liturgical day being celebrated. The antiphons for a given Mass are part of it, just as the Collect or Prayer after Communion are. The antiphons contribute to the identity of the particular Mass being celebrated. In fact, it is even customary to refer to a given Mass by the first few words of its entrance antiphon, since this is the first text proper to that Mass. For instance, the fourth Sunday of Lent is called *Laetare Sunday* after its entrance antiphon.³²

Inculturation of the Liturgical Chants/Hymns

In the liturgical circle, scholars are unanimous that translation is the first step toward inculturation. In the *Varietates Legitimae*, it is stated, “The first significant measure of

²⁹ Jan Michael Joncas “Liturgy and Music,” in A. J., Chupungco ed., *Handbook for Liturgical Studies. Fundamental Liturgy II* (Liturgical Press, Collegeville, Minnesota 1997), 281.

³⁰ Joseph Gelineau, *Voices and Instruments in Christian Worship*, Liturgical Press, Minnesota 1960, 60.

³¹ Edward Foley, “Liturgical Music,” *A New Dictionary of Sacramental Worship*, ed. Peter E. Fink, Liturgical Press, Collegeville Minnesota 1991, 855.

³² Dylan Schrader, “Gathering Song” or “Entrance Chant”: What’s in a Name? *Adoremus Bulletin*, ed. Christopher Carstens, La Crosse, Wisconsin, 2020, retrieved online 5th May 2023.

[liturgical] inculturation is the translation of liturgical books into the language of the people.”³³ It is one of the major roles and the legislative competence of the Conference of Bishops of a country or region. They are to initiate and regulate the translation of the important books or documents of the Church such as the Sacred Scripture,³⁴ the Roman liturgical texts, which include the chant and hymn texts, into their various indigenous languages, to aid the participation of the people in the liturgy.

Nigeria being a multi-ethnic nation with over 250 indigenous cultures and languages has the largest cultural diversity in Africa. In terms of inculturation areas, therefore, the Nigerian Bishops are organized on national and regional levels. The Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) represents the national level and the Bishops having the same regional provenance constitute the regional grouping. For example, this article paid particular attention to the inculturation activities of the Bishops of Igbo Speaking Dioceses (BISD)³⁵ and the results so far seen.

The BISD formed a liturgical Commission known as Inter Diocesan Liturgy commission of the Igbo Speaking Areas of Nigeria (IDLC-ISAN).³⁶ Through this Commission, the bishops of Igbo extraction have executed several significant inculturation works in the area of liturgy in Igboland. The Bishops have translated and published the *Baibụlụ Nso*, the Igbo Bible; a part of the Roman Missal in Igbo called *Usoro Emume Nke Missa* (1973)³⁷ the Order of Mass (*Ordo Missae*), its revised edition with confirmation from Rome known as *Usoro Emume Misa* (2018).³⁸ They have also translated and published in Igbo Prayer Books and Hymn Books separately or together in one volume, for example the *Akwụkwọ Ukwe Ohurū N’Asụsụ Igbo* (New Catholic Igbo Hymn Book (1982). Work is still on going on the translation of a standard Igbo text for the Lectionary, Book of the Gospel, the Sacramentary, and to revise and produce in another form the “Order of Seven Sacraments” *Usoro Emume Sakramenti Asaa* that is currently out of print.

Evaluation

As the above evidences for liturgical inculturation in Nigeria, particularly among the Igbos, demonstrate, the Roman Liturgy has taken root in Igbo culture. It now speaks the Igbo language and communicates to the people. It has also changed the way the Igbo Catholics worship and view the world. Igbo culture has also been listed among the strong culture areas

³³ Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments, *Instruction on the Roman Liturgy and Inculturation Varietates Legitimae*, January 25, 1994, 53; see also SC 36, 54, 63.

³⁴ See *GIRM* 392.

³⁵ One of the first fruits of inculturation done by the BISD group was the translation of Rituals for Baptism (*Usoro Emume Sakramenti nke Baptizim*), Confirmation (*nke Ido Ike n’Okwukwe*) and Matrimony (*nke Alụmdi na Nwunye*) into Igbo in 1973. Latter, the Blessing of oils, Sacrament of Anointing of the sick, Order of Christian Burial were added to the other three and was published in 1977 as *Usoro Emume Sakramenti Ise na Ekpere Ndị ọzọga*. Rituals for five sacraments and other prayers. In 1998, the current Rituals for the Seven Sacraments and other prayers were finally published in Igbo as *Usoro Emume Sakramenti Asaa*. Cf. Christopher Amamgbo Ifenatụọra, “Okwu Nkọwa” na *Usoro Emume Sakramenti Asaa* (Preface to the Rituals of the Seven Sacraments), 21st March 1998.

³⁶ The author of this article is an ex officio member and the current Vice President of the Commission (IDLC-ISAN).

³⁷ The Catholic Bishops of East Central State, Nigeria (CBECSN) published the first edition of *Usoro Emume Nke Missa*. The then Episcopal Conference of Nigeria (ECN) jointly with the Sacred Congregation of Divine Worship approved and authorized its use among the then East Central States comprising all the Igbo speaking dioceses.

³⁸ This new *Usoro Emume Misa* contains more prefaces and Eucharistic Prayers than the 1973 edition and shows a more language development; new Igbo words and expressions were added. In this edition, we also notice a change in nomenclature from the group of Bishops of Igbo Speaking Dioceses (BISD) to Catholic Bishops of Onitsha and Owerri Provinces (CBOOP).

of Catholicism today. The Igbo Hymnbook of 1982 contains the Latin “Ordinary of the Mass” and other Latin chants and hymns that are translated in Igbo and are variously set to music. These Igbo liturgical songs have been exported to different countries of the world by the Igbos in diaspora and are used in the liturgy today.

However, some traditional, beautiful and theology-rich Latin Chants and Hymns such as *Te Deum*, *Rorate Caeli* (Introit of 4th Sunday of Advent), *Gaudete* (Introit of 3rd Sunday of Advent), *Laetare* (Introit of 4th Sunday of lent), *Panis Angelicus*, *Adoro Te*, *devote* have not yet been translated into Igbo. The Local Church in Igboland is missing the rich theological and liturgical treasures in these Latin chants. Indeed, more inculturation works need to be done in this area. In the spirit of the liturgy, there is urgent need of translation of the Roman liturgical Chant Books such as *Graduale Romanum* and *Graduale Simplex* and the vernacular text set to music. These two contain in different musical and textual forms the Ordinary of the Mass and the above-listed Proper of the Mass, that is, Entrance antiphon, Offertory, and Communion antiphon) of Sundays in Ordinary Time and Seasons (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter), of solemnities, Feast days and Memorials. For they are liturgical music par excellence.

Conclusion

The Sunday Bulletins of many Dioceses contain the antiphons in Latin, English and Igbo. Therefore, in the spirit of the liturgy, composers can begin already the musical inculturation by setting in Igbo tonal music style the antiphonal texts from the bulletin. Here, I must commend and recommend to young Igbo indigenous liturgical music composers and choir directors to borrow a leaf from Mrs Dorothy E. Ipere who has based virtually all her indigenous music works for liturgy on the weekly and Sunday diocesan bulletins. Thus, one can perceive visibly the parallel theme of the celebration through the liturgical music. Meanwhile, the production of a standard, common text for the entire Igbo speaking dioceses is long overdue. Until such a standard approved vernacular texts are done and available to the people, liturgical musical inculturation in Igboland will remain a lopsided exercise, producing only indigenous compositions some of which are often counter theological and not in the Spirit of the Liturgy.