

*By Flowing Waters: Chant for the Liturgy* by Paul F. Ford (Collegeville, Minnesota, The Liturgical Press, 1999). ISBN: 0 8146 2595 9. RRP: \$51.95 Available from: Office for Worship Bookshop, Melbourne. Tel. 03 9926 5677.

(from *One Voice: The Australian Magazine about Church Music*, Pentecost, 2001, p. 26)

The publication of this book marks a significant and important development, for the English-speaking world at least, in the reform of Catholic eucharistic liturgy. *By Flowing Waters* is an unofficial English adaptation of the official publication, *Graduale Simplex* (1967; 2nd edn, 1975), which came about by request of the Bishops during the Second Vatican Council for an accessible body of chant for smaller churches. It should be pointed out that, at this time, hymnody was not used — or indeed permitted — at Solemn (or High) Mass, which is the normative sung form of the Catholic eucharistic liturgy. Hymns, were only used during Low Mass. The only option for choir leaders at the time, therefore, was to sing the complex chants from the *Graduale Romanum*. Only cathedrals and some larger parishes had the resources to achieve these musical requirements.

The *Graduale Simplex* offered suites of chants (in Latin) to be used ‘seasonally’. Each suite included chants for the entrance, chants between the readings, offertory and communion. Major feasts of the calendar had their own chants and a number of ‘commons’ were provided for saints’ days.

*By Flowing Waters* is essentially an English translation of the *Graduale Simplex*. Antiphons are used with texts of the psalms to be sung in the responsorial manner. The music is to be sung unaccompanied and can be led by one or two cantors or choir.

Paul Ford is an expert at ‘Englishing’ the chant. Obviously, a direct translation of the Latin text will not fit directly into the chant melody. Ford’s adaptation of the melodies is masterly: he understands acutely the stresses and accents of English and is willing to dispense with superfluous notes, or to include additional notes, so that the melody remains the servant of the words.

The collection also includes chants not found in the *Graduale Simplex*. There is an additional suite of chants for the final day in Ordinary Time, making nine different settings for this season; and the entire contents of the collection *Jubilate Deo* are also included. Authorised by Pope Paul VI in 1974, *Jubilate Deo* was a universal chant collection that included several settings of the ordinary of the Mass and other popular chants to be sung by the assembly. In *By Flowing Waters*, English is used predominantly for these chants, but some of them also have the Latin text printed above the English.

In the long and detailed preface to the book, Paul Ford states in no uncertain terms that his publication is an ecumenical one. The use of the NRSV translation for most of the psalm and antiphon texts was, I suspect, the factor that prevented this publication becoming recognised by

the Vatican as an official translation of the *Graduale Simplex*.

Some will find it disappointing that Ford has opted to use modern notation rather than traditional square notation. With an increase in the number of educators being made familiar with the movable 'do' system through the popularisation of the Kodály method of music education, retention of the traditional notation may have been a more inclusive and longer-lasting option.

*By Flowing Waters* is beautifully produced, printed on thick paper, bound sturdily in vinyl with marker ribbons. It is sure to last many decades. This collection restores psalmody as the song of the church in the eucharist. Highly recommended!

Jeremy Fletcher