Performance Notes

The Reproaches have been sung for many centuries during the Veneration of the Cross at the Celebration of the Lord’s Passion on Good Friday. The structure of the text, alternating between refrains sung by the choir and couplets sung by one or more cantors, allows the length of the music to be adjusted easily to fit the ceremonial.

This edition/adaptation enables the text to be sung in English, either using the exquisite polyphony of Tomás Luis de Victoria for the refrains (sections 1 and 3), or in plainchant throughout (using sections 1a and 3a instead).

After the opening refrain (1 or 1a) has been sung by the entire choir, the cantors on each side of the choir alternate in singing the couplets 2, 4, and 5. In the second refrain, the Trias (3 or 3a), the Greek and English (originally Latin) portions alternate between the two sides of the choir. If the choir is not divided, a small group within the choir may be designated to sing the Greek portions, and the same cantor(s) may be used throughout.

The couplets of Part II, the lesser Reproaches (6 to 14), are also traditionally sung by two cantors alternating, one on each side of the choir, while the entire choir sings the refrain (1 or 1a).

The plainchant melody is believed to be of Gallican origin, and this English adaptation has deliberately preserved its florid character. In performing the chant, there should be a relatively even flow of notes, with a flexibility of dynamic level that allows for the natural accentuation of the English text.

Some features of the original plainchant notation are inevitably lost in the simplified notation presented here. The horizontal episema (,) placed over a note indicates a slight lengthening, not a doubling or stress. Interpretations of the three-note quillama group (__) vary; but the most common is that the first of the three notes is slightly lengthened, while the middle note is sung quickly and lightly. The hollow/open notes should receive twice the value of the black notes.

The Greek text is properly pronounced:

HAH-ghee-os  Ho thay-OS.
HAH-ghee-os is-kee-ROS.
HAH-ghee-os a-THAIH-nah-tos ch-LEH-ee-son hii-MAHS.

— G.C.

Edition 6235 The Reproaches

Printed in USA

Text of the Reproaches from the English translation of Rite of Holy Week © 1972, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. (ICEL). All rights reserved. Used with permission. Music © 1996, Geoffrey Cox. Published by TRINITAS. All rights reserved.
Cantor(s) I:

I led you out of Egypt, from slavery to freedom, but you led your Savior to the cross.

Choir I:

Ha-gios o The-ós. Holy is God!

Choir II:

Ha-gios Is-chy-rós. Holy and strong! Ha-gios A-

Ha-gios Is-chy-rós. Holy and strong! Ha-gios A-

Ha-gios Is-chy-rós. Holy and strong! Ha-gios A-

Choir II:

thá-na-tos, elé-is-son by má-sas. Holy im-mor-

thá-na-tos, elé-is-son by má-sas. Holy im-mor-

thá-na-tos, elé-is-son by má-sas. Holy im-mor-

The Reproaches  
The Reproaches
Cantor(s) I:

What move could I have done for you? I planted you as my fairest vine, but you yielded only bitterness: when I was thirsty you gave me vinegar to drink, and you pierced your Savior with a lance.

Part II
(The Lesser Reproaches)

Cantor(s):

For your sake I scourged your captors and their first-born sons, but you brought your scourges down on me.

Cantor(s):

I led you from slavery to freedom, and drowned your captors in the sea, but you handed me over to your high priests.
Cantor(s):
I opened the sea before you.
but you opened my side with a spear.

Cantor(s):
I led you on your way in a pillar of cloud,
but you led me to Pilate's court.

Cantor(s):
I bore you up with manna in the desert,
but you struck me down and scourged me.

Cantor(s):
I gave you saving water from the rock,
but you gave me gall and vinegar to drink.

Cantor(s):
For you I struck down the kings of Canaan.
but you struck my head with a reed.

Cantor(s):
I gave you a royal scepter,
but you gave me a crown of thorns.

Cantor(s):
I raised you to the height of majesty.
but you have raised me high on a cross.
Alternative Refrains (Plainsong)

Choirs I & II:

My people, what have I done to you? How have I offended you? Answer me!

Choir I:

Holy immortal One, have mercy on us!

Choir II:

Holy is God!

Choir I:

Holy Is chy-ros.

Choir II:

Holy and strong!

Choir I:

Hagi-os o The-os.

Choir II:

Hagi-os A-tha-na-tos,

e-le i-son hy-mas.

The Reprehens