Performance Notes

The singing of psalms with antiphons during the processions of the Mass is an ancient practice of the Church. *Seven Communion Chants for the Advent and Christmas Seasons* is a collection of simple English-language settings of antiphon and psalm texts from the *Graduale Simplex* and *Graduale Romanum*. The modal melodies can be sung easily by assemblies of all sizes, with abundant or limited musical resources, from SATB choir to a single cantor. In addition, these chants may be sung with organ or keyboard accompaniment, or *a cappella*.

The chants are normally performed in the same manner as the responsorial psalm, with the assembly singing the antiphon after the cantor intonation, and after each verse of the psalm. All of the psalm verses may be used, or verses may be selected at will. In either case, the final verse should be the doxology, "Glory to the Father." The psalm verses may be sung in a variety of ways, by cantor or choir, in unison or harmony. Psalm verses of two or three lines of text might be alternated between a cantor or small group and the choir.

Some of the chants would be suitable for use in the Liturgy of the Hours, since many of the antiphons of the *Graduale Simplex* are also found in the Monastic Psalter, published by the monks of Solesmes. In this case, the antiphon would be sung only at the beginning and end of the psalm. The chants could also be sung as an anthem by choir alone.

"My Soul Rejoices in the Lord," the antiphon with Magnificat for the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, may be used for Marian feasts throughout the year. In addition, it is one of several Communion chants of the *Graduale Simplex* that are considered suitable for any celebration of the Mass.

SAMPLE

ADVENT SEASON I

The Lord Will Grant Abundance

Benignitatem fecit, Graduale Simplex — Charles Thatcher

Antiphon trans. by C.T.

Ps 85

ANTIPHON

Cantor/Choir/Assembly

S.A.

The Lord will grant a - bun - dance, and our land will yield its fruit.

T.B.

VERSE 1

Cantor/Choir

1. I will listen for the word of God; surely the LORD will proclaim peace to

To Antiphon

1. his people, to the faithful, to those who trust in him.

VERSES 2–6

Cantor/Choir — *To Antiphon*

2. Near indeed is salvation for the loyal; prosperity will fill our land.
3. Love and truth will meet; justice and peace will kiss.
4. Truth will spring from the earth; justice will look down from heaven.
5. Prosperity will march before the LORD, and good fortune will fol - low be - hind.

6a. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spirit.

6b. as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ev - er. A - men.

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SAMPLE

ADVENT SEASON II

You Have Favored Your Land

Benedixisti, Gaduale Simplex
Antiphon trans. by C.T.
Ps 85

Charles Thatcher

ANTIPHON

Cantor/Choir/Assembly

You have fa - vored your land, O Lord.

S.A.

You have fa - vored your land, O

T.B.

You have fa - vored your land, O Lord.

You have fa - vored your land.

Lord, fa - vored, fa - vored your land.

You have fa - vored your land.

You have fa - vored, fa - vored your land.

VERSE 1

Cantor/Choir

1. I will listen for the word of God; surely the LORD will proclaim peace

To Antiphon

1. to his people, to the faithful, to those who trust in him.

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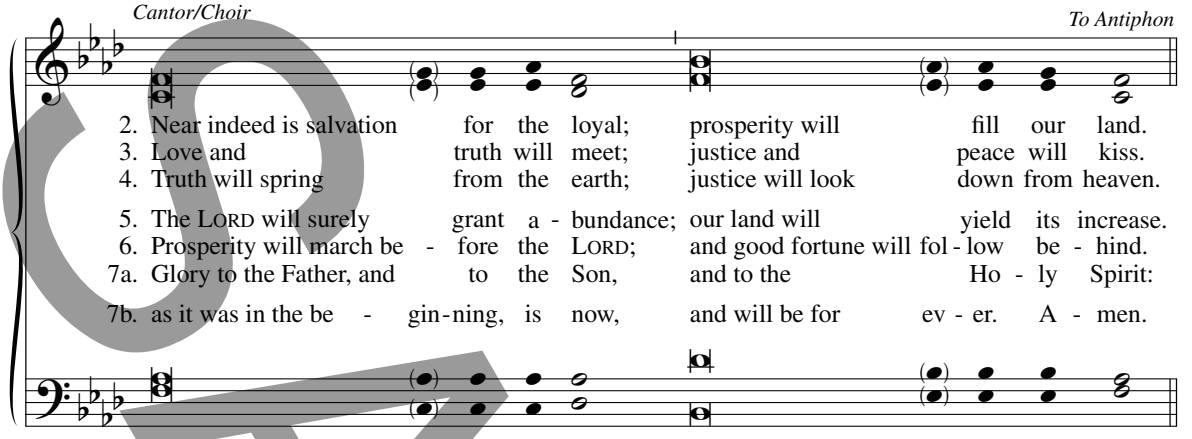
SAMPLE


Cantor/Choir
To Antiphon
2. Near indeed is salvation for the loyal; prosperity will fill our land.
3. Love and truth will meet; justice and peace will kiss.
4. Truth will spring from the earth; justice will look down from heaven.
5. The LORD will surely grant a - bundance; our land will yield its increase.
6. Prosperity will march be - fore the LORD; and good fortune will fol - low be - hind.
7a. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spirit:
7b. as it was in the be - gin - ning, is now, and will be for ev - er. A - men.

SAMPLE

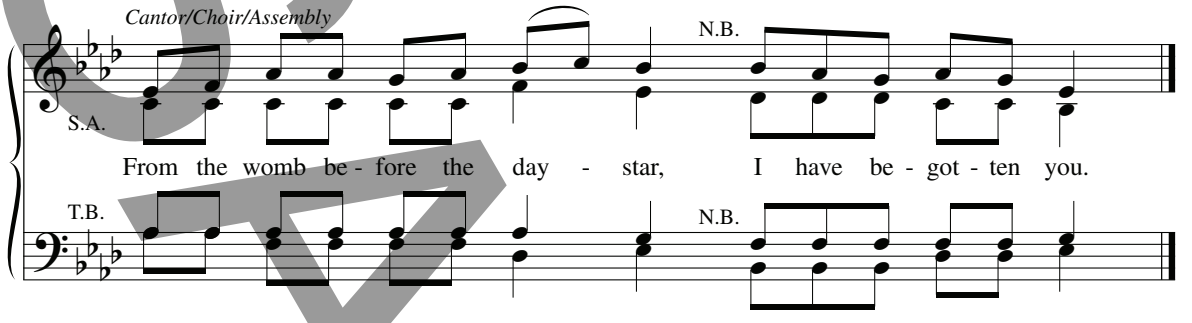
CHRISTMAS

From the Womb before the Daystar

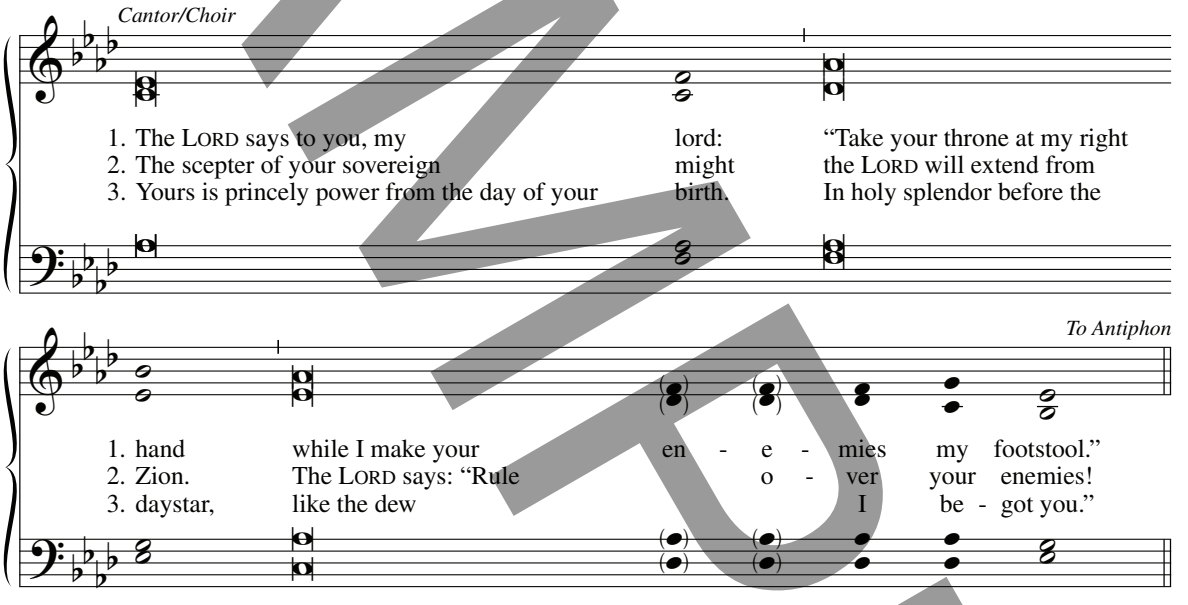
In splendoribus, *Graduale Romanum*
Antiphon trans. by C.T.
Ps 110

Charles Thatcher

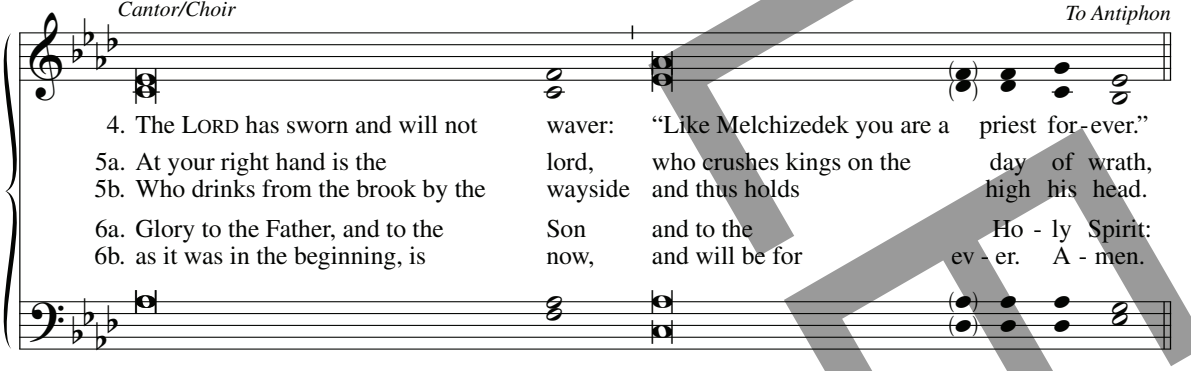
ANTIPHON



VERSES 1–3



VERSES 4–6



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SAMPLE

HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

Mary Treasured All These Words

Maria autem conservabat, Graduale Simplex — Charles Thatcher

Antiphon trans. by C.T.

Ps 78

ANTIPHON

Cantor/Choir/Assembly

Ma - ry treas-ured all these words, re - flec - ting on them in her heart.

S.A.

Ah

T.B.

VERSE 1

Cantor/Choir — *To Antiphon*

1a. Attend, my people, to my teaching; listen to the words of my mouth.
1b. I will open my mouth in story, drawing lessons from of old.

VERSE 2

Cantor/Choir

2a. We have heard them, we know them; our ancestors have recited them to us.
2b. we recite them to the next gener - ation, The praiseworthy and mighty deeds of the Lord,

To Antiphon

2a. We do not keep them from our children;
2b. the wonders that he per - formed.

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SAMPLE

VERSES 3–5

To Antiphon

3a. So he commanded the skies a - bove; the doors of heav - en he opened.
3b. God rained manna upon them for food; bread from heav - en he gave them.
3c. They ate and were well filled; he gave them what they had craved.

4a. From tending sheep God brought David to shepherd Jacob,
his people, Is - ra - el his heritage.
4b. He shepherded them with a pure heart; with skilled hands he guided them.

5a. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spirit:
5b. as it was in the begin - ning, is now, and will be for ev - er. A - men.

SAMPLE

SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD

My Soul Rejoices in the Lord

Sanctum nomen Domini, Graduale Simplex — Charles Thatcher

Antiphon trans. by C.T.

Lk 1

ANTIPHON

Cantor/Choir/Assembly

S.A.

My soul re - joic - es in the Lord; I glo - ri - fy the ho - ly name of God.

T.B.

VERSES 1–5

Cantor/Choir — *To Antiphon*

1a. My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior.
1b. For he has looked with favor on his low - ly servant; From this day all generations will call me blesséd:
2a. the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name.
2b. He has mercy on those who fear him in every gen - er - ation.
3a. He has shown the strength of his arm, he has scattered the proud in their con - ceit.
3b. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the lowly.
3c. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent a - way empty.
4a. He has come to the help of his serv - ant Israel, for he has remembered his prom-ise of mercy,
4b. the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and his chil-dren for ever.
5a. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spirit:
5b. as it was in the begin - ning, is now, and will be for ev - er. A - men.

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SAMPLE

EPIPHANY

We Have Seen His Star

Vidimus stellam eius, Graduale Simplex
Antiphon trans. by C.T.
Ps 96

Charles Thatcher

ANTIPHON

Cantor/Choir/Assembly

We have seen his star in the east and have come with gifts to a - dore him.

VERSES 1–2, 4, 6

Cantor/Choir

To Antiphon

1a. Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth.
1b. Sing to the LORD, bless his name; announce his salvation day af - ter day.
1c. Tell God's glory among the nations; among all peoples, God's mar - vel - ous deeds.

2a. For great is the LORD
and highly to be praised; to be feared a - bove all gods.
2b. Splendor and power go be - fore him; power and grandeur are in his ho - ly place.

4a. Bring gifts and enter his courts; bow down to the LORD, splen-did in holiness.
4b. Tremble before God, all the earth; say among the nations: The LORD is king.

6a. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spirit:
6b. as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ev - er. A - men.

VERSE 3

Cantor/Choir

To Antiphon

3. Give to the LORD,
you families of nations, give to the
LORD the glory and might; give to the
LORD the glory due his name!

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SAMPLE

VERSE 5

Cantor/Choir

5. Let all the trees
of the forest re - joice before the Lord who comes, who comes to gov - ern the earth.

To Antiphon

5. To govern the world with justice and the peo - ples with faithfulness.

SAMPLE

BAPTISM OF THE LORD

All of You Who Were Baptized

Omnes qui in Christo, Graduale Romanum
Antiphon trans. by C.T.
Ps 29

Charles Thatcher

ANTIPHON

Cantor/Choir/Assembly

All of you who were bap - tized in Christ, have

S.A.

All bap - tized are

T.B.

clothed your - selves in Christ, al - le - lu - ia.

To Verses

clothed in Christ, al - le - lu - ia.

VERSES 1, 3, 5–6

Cantor/Choir

To Antiphon

1a. Give to the LORD, you heav - en - ly beings, give to the LORD glo - ry and might;
1b. Give to the LORD the glory due God's name. Bow down before the LORD's ho - ly splendor!

3a. The voice of the LORD is power; the voice of the LORD is splendor.
3b. The voice of the LORD cracks the cedars; the LORD splinters the ce - dars of Lebanon.

5a. The LORD sits enthroned a - bove the flood! the LORD reigns as king for - ever!
5b. May the LORD give might to his people; may the LORD bless his peo - ple with peace!

6a. Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Ho - ly Spirit:
6b. as it was in the begin - ning, is now, and will be for ev - er. A - men.

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SAMPLE

VERSES 2, 4

Cantor/Choir

2. The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glo - ry thunders,
4. The voice of the LORD strikes with fiery flame; the voice of the LORD rocks the desert;

2. the LORD, over the might - y waters.
4. the LORD rocks the des - ert of Kadesh.

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SAMPLE