

Greetings to all GIC members! In this issue of *Cantemus*, we update you on recent member activities and upcoming dates to note. We wish everyone all the best for 2009.

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The Gregorian Institute of Canada (GIC) undertakes research and education to promote the study and performance of Gregorian and other Western chant repertoire in Canada. GIC is a not-for-profit corporation, licensed and authorized to provide official tax receipts for donations in support of its mission. Founded in 2004, GIC is a non-denominational association. GIC is affiliated with the School of the Arts, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario.



## Colloquium 2008: Behind the Scenes at Magog

On Thursday, August 21, William Renwick and I left Hamilton, Ontario, for the drive to St-Benoît-du-Lac for the Gregorian Institute of Canada's third annual colloquium. Friday morning saw us scouring the basement kitchen at St Patrick's Church in search of cutlery and cooking utensils. Then it was off to the grocery store to buy a nourishing repast for the performers to eat after the gala concert on Saturday.

While several hundred gathered in the church to listen to some exciting chanting, deep down in the basement tables and chairs were being set up, buns sliced, salads served, drinks poured. When the concert ended, over 30 performers descended to enjoy the feast served up by two smiling directors. After the concert and meal, a few GIC members enjoyed the outdoor air in Magog before returning to the Abbey well past curfew.

Below is a report on the weekend by blogger Jeffrey Tucker, who has graciously agreed to let us reprint his blog post from the New Liturgical Movement website. *William Oates*

*SUNDAY, AUGUST 31, 2008*

*Report on Gregorian Institute of Canada Colloquium*

*By Jeffrey Tucker*

Last weekend, I attended the colloquium of the Gregorian Institute of Canada, a non-denominational organization dedicated to chant study and performance in Canada. The theme of the colloquium was the centenary of the Vatican edition of the *Graduale Romanum*. The key presenter was Dom Richard Gagné, OSB, former choirmaster at Solesmes (1996-2004) and

continued on page 4



# Colloquium 2008



*"A well-organized and well-paced event with highly qualified speakers. As a bonus, it took place in the most appropriate setting imaginable." Dominique Égré, Montréal*



*"An interesting event, particularly the workshop on verbal rhythm and nombre musical led by Dom Gagné. Chant practice with Jean-Pierre Noiseux's specifications on the St-Gall notation was equally interesting, as was the concert, which showcased the performance resources for Gregorian chant in Quebec's regions." Marc O'Reilly, Sherbrooke*



# Un colloque sous des notes de chant grégorien

FRANÇOIS GOUGEON

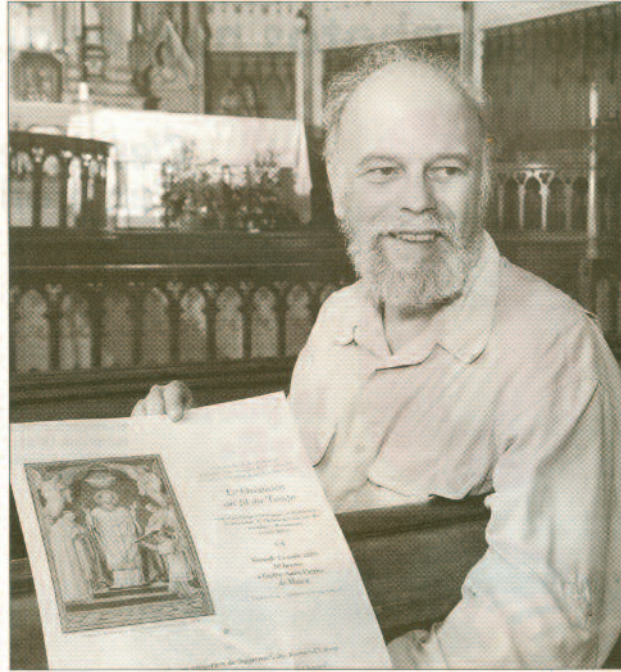
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**MAGOG** — La magnifique église de la paroisse Saint-Patrice de Magog va vivre le 23 août prochain un temps particulièrement fort: un grand concert de chant grégorien y sera offert, avec le support de l'organiste Marc O'Reilly, agissant également comme animateur de la soirée.

«Les spectateurs auront l'occasion unique de voir évoluer trois chorales grégoriennes, celle de Sherbrooke, celle de Saguenay et le Schola Saint Grégoire de Montréal, que j'ai l'honneur de diriger», exprime avec enthousiasme le principal organisateur de l'événement, Jean-Pierre Noiseux.

Pour ce concert intitulé *Le Grégorien au fil du temps*, chaque groupe va y aller de prestations reliées à différents temps liturgiques de l'année. Comme le mercredi des Cendres, le jeudi de la quatrième semaine du Carême, le dimanche des Rameaux, le jeudi saint, le dimanche de Pâques et autres pour le Chœur grégorien de Sherbrooke. Et ainsi de suite pour chaque groupe, de même qu'avec des prestations les trois chorales ensemble, regroupant ainsi près de 30 chanteurs grégoriens.

«Et l'église Saint-Patrice est un endroit extraordinaire pour présenter ce genre de concert», ajoute M. Noiseux. Ce n'est pas très écho et en raison du bois partout, c'est très bon pour l'acoustique et une présentation de chant grégorien. C'est



## Colloque canadien

La soirée du 23 août s'insère à l'intérieur du troisième colloque annuel de l'Institut grégorien du Canada, dont M. Noiseux est un des sept directeurs. C'est lui qui organise l'activité qui se déroulera du 22 au 24 août, à l'abbaye Saint-Benoît-du-Lac.

«Ces colloques, tenus antérieurement à Ottawa et à Québec, visent la promotion du chant grégorien. Il y a des conférences et ateliers portant aussi sur la formation», note Jean-Pierre Noiseux à propos de l'événement maintenant à guichet fermé pour l'hébergement, avec 56 participants.

**«L'église Saint-Patrice est un endroit extraordinaire pour présenter ce genre de concert.»**

«Cette année, il y a un fait marquant, soit le centenaire de la première édition vaticane du graduel romain (*Graduale Romanum*). C'est le livre de chant grégorien restauré d'après les manuscrits du Moyen-Âge et qui rayonne dans tout le monde catholique depuis 1908. Le projet a été réalisé sous saint Pie X», a aussi confié le responsable.

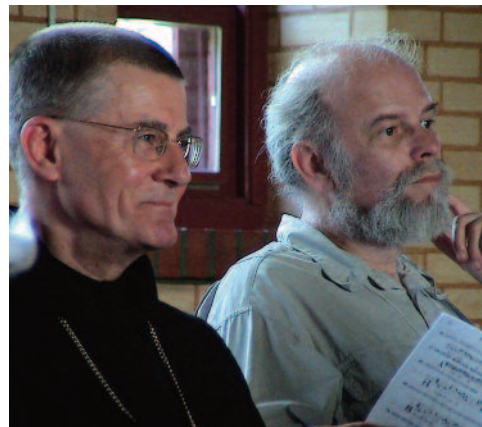
Alors bien sûr qu'il en sera question au colloque, de même que de la participation des moines de Saint-Benoît, comme chanteurs lors des laudes et des vêpres, notamment.

*“Good speakers, in a contemplative setting. Participants were able to enjoy positive interaction.”*

*Mireille Galipeau, Québec*

*“Considering this was our initiation to Gregorian chant, we are quite satisfied with our experience. [...] Bravo for Saturday night's concert. It was a wonderful experience to attend such a performance in the context of the symposium.”*

*Benoît Raymond et Guylaine Lapointe, Montréal*



OPPOSITE, clockwise from top left: Chœur grégorien de Sherbrooke in concert at St-Patrice Church in Magog; workshop for beginners; workshop led by Jean-Pierre Noiseux.

THIS PAGE, from top: Interview with Jean-Pierre Noiseux in Sherbrooke's daily newspaper, *La Tribune* (Aug. 18, 2008); Schola of St-Benoît-du-Lac Abbey (foreground), and Dom Richard Gagné conducting participants (background); Abbott Dom André Laberge and Jean-Pierre Noiseux.



continued from page 1

current choirmaster at his home abbey of St-Benoît-du-Lac.

This was the third annual colloquium of the GIC and the first one I had attended. My impression is that previous colloquia had more of a practical element, but at this one there was only minimal time allotted to singing. The reason for this was simple: throughout the colloquium, the participants attended the hours and mass at the monastic oratory. We were asked not to participate in singing along with the monks, as they have a well-established chant rhythm; if the colloquium participants (who well outnumbered the monks) had chanted along with them, that would likely have thrown them off and disturbed the rhythm of their prayer. The request seemed to me quite sensible, and there was much to be learned simply by listening and participating interiorly in the prayer. The participants were, however, given the opportunity to sing the ordinary of the mass in alternation with the monks, and at the Sunday mass the monastic choir “sat out” the offertory chant and allowed us to sing it instead.

The majority of the participants (80% or more) were francophone, and the colloquium was conducted almost entirely in French. Happily, most of the English-speaking participants knew enough French to follow the presentations.

The colloquium opened with a very interesting presentation by Jean-Pierre Noiseux (director of the accomplished Schola St-Grégoire in Montreal and one of the main organizers of the colloquium) on the subject of the history of the Vatican edition. Noiseux pointed out that it is surely the melodies from the Vatican edition that each of us would have first heard, sparking our interest in chant. Whatever its shortcomings, the Vatican edition is of monumental importance in the history of chant study and practice.

Dom Gagné’s presentation on Gregorian rhythm, spread out over two days and entitled “Le rythme verbal de Dom Pothier et le nombre musicale de Dom Mocquereau,” was certainly a highlight of the colloquium. Dom Gagné gave us a detailed explanation of Dom Pothier’s teaching on chant rhythm. I had not been aware that Dom Pothier’s rhythmic approach is reflected in the Vatican edition, which indicates the rhythm by a system of blank spaces of various sizes between the neumes (1/2 space, 1/4 space, full space, etc.) and by bar-line division. All of the subsequent editions based on the Vatican edition, including the 1974 *Graduale*, retain the exact spacing between the neumes of the original; this is considered an integral part of the Vatican edition, which must be reproduced in any official version.



ABOVE: Una Voce Choir of Saguenay in concert at St-Patrice Church in Magog. BELOW: Part of St-Benoît-du-Lac Benedictine Community singing the Divine Office.



Dom Gagné then took us through the central points of Mocquereau’s theory, on which the classical Solesmes method is based. He concluded by giving us a brief explanation of the “new Solesmes” approach (essentially that which is outlined in Dom Jean Claire’s unsigned preface to the *Liber Hymnarius*), using an example from the new *Antiphonale Monasticum*. This represents something of a synthesis in continuity with the theories that went before, a return of sorts to Dom Pothier’s verbal rhythm, taking into account recent scholarship.

Interdisciplinary scholar Antoine Ouellette gave an interesting presentation on the diversity of interpretations of Gregorian chant in the 20th century, with musical samples from a number of recordings. The workshop participants found some of these interpretations rather bizarre and others strangely pleasing. Although this diversity is evidently of great interest and value from a musicological perspective, Ouellette conceded at the end of his presentation that,

for regular liturgical use, it would be difficult to replace the Solesmes method.

On Saturday evening, we attended a splendid concert in a nearby town at a church with wonderful acoustics. Three chant choirs took us on a tour of the melodies of the Vatican edition. The event was well attended, and the choirs were excellent.

Here it is worth noting some observations on chant practice at St-Benoît-du-Lac. The monks sing lauds and vespers almost entirely in Latin (the readings from scripture are in French) with light organ accompaniment. They do not appear to use the new monastic *Antiphonale*; I could not tell whether they were using the *Psalterium Monasticum* or some other books. Compline is chanted mostly in French, without organ accompaniment, to adapted Gregorian melodies. Matins are chanted in French, unaccompanied and recto tono. (I did not manage to attend other minor hours.)

At Mass at St-Benoît everything is chanted. The introit, gradual, alleluia, offertory and communion are the proper chants from the *Graduale*. A large number of the faithful assist at mass at the monastery, and it is probably for this reason that the ordinary is Kyrie XVI, Gloria VIII and Sanctus/Agnus XVIII, apparently every week. The responses, Eucharistic prayer, et cetera are chanted in French. The chant is in the style of the recent Solesmes recordings – a light tone of voice, high in pitch. The approach that the choir under Dom Gagné takes to the propers is really not that much of a departure from classical Solesmes, with some nuances. (Dom Gagné mentioned during his presentation his admiration for the Solesmes recordings from the 1950s under Dom Gajard, which he prefers to the recordings from the 1930s under the same choirmaster – he characterized the latter as “true Solesmes.”)

At the practical workshops, we rehearsed the offertory we were to sing at the Sunday mass, under J.P. Noiseux's direction. I felt that I learned quite a bit about effective chant performance from these brief sessions. This was my first introduction to singing from the St-Gall notation, and I admit that this particular aspect left me somewhat confused (at one point, some folks were questioning whether a mark on the page was a rhythmic indication or just a speck of photocopier dust).

Noiseux told us that 10 people singing chant in perfect unison will have a fuller sound than a hesitant group of 40. At the end of the day, I would have to say that our group did not achieve this unison. I came away from the weekend persuaded by the possibilities for beauty offered by a nuanced approach to chant rhythm – and also as convinced as ever of the value of the Solesmes method for achieving a consistent result with limited rehearsal time.

The Gregorian Institute is a promising initiative for Canada, and I am grateful for having had the opportunity to attend this event.

*Reprinted with permission from New Liturgical Movement website: [www.newliturgicalmovement.org](http://www.newliturgicalmovement.org)*

To read a poem about the experience by colloquium participant Guy Lemire of Chicoutimi, go to [www.gregorian.ca/docs/Lemire.pdf](http://www.gregorian.ca/docs/Lemire.pdf)



## **Montreal's Second “Journées grégoriennes”**

*Organized by GIC Director Jean-Pierre Noiseux*

**May 9 and 10, 2008**

**St-Viateur-d'Outremont Church, Montreal**

- Chant workshops for all levels of experience
- Guided tour of chant references in the decoration of St-Viateur Church
- Concert featuring Toronto's Schola Magdalena
  - Sunday mass sung by all participants

*More details to come on [www.gregorian.ca](http://www.gregorian.ca)*

## **4th Annual Colloquium of the Gregorian Institute of Canada**

**August 13-16, 2009**

**McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario**

**PLENARY SPEAKER**

Joseph Dyer

“Observations on the Origins of the  
Antiphonale Missarum”

**FEATURED ARTIST**

Juan Carlos Asensio (Spain)

Director of the Schola Antiqua of Madrid

*For more information, see back page*



# Schola Magdalena



Schola Magdalena is dedicated to the performance of medieval music – from Gregorian chant to Hildegard of Bingen to early polyphony based on chant.

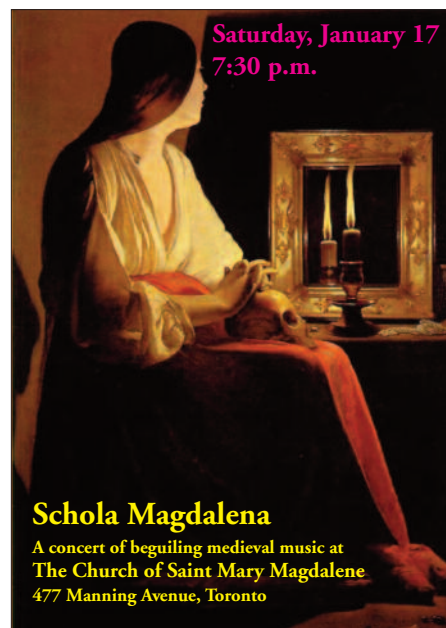
Sister Mary Adela, C.S.C. In 1943, Sister Mary Adela made Profession of Vows in the Community of the Sisters of the Church, whose convent used to be next door to the Church of St. Mary Magdalene. Sister Mary Adela died November 14, 2008; she was 96. During the reception afterward, the choristers were thanked for contributing to the mass. Sister Benedicta spoke of coming to St. Mary Magdalene's as a child with her parents and of her music studies with Dr. Healey

- On October 4, 2008, Schola Magdalena performed at St. Thomas's Anglican Church, Toronto, as part of Nuit Blanche, Toronto's third annual all-night arts festival. About 1,500 people wandered through the church to take in the music and art exhibits between 7 p.m. and 6 a.m. During Schola Magdalena's performance at 11 p.m., about 150 people listened to Gregorian chant, Hildegard of Bingen, and early polyphony.

- Schola Magdalena also participated in St. Mary Magdalene's Festival of Chant. On November 22, along with the Ritual Choir, the Schola sang during the Solemn Requiem Mass for

Willan. The following day, at 4:30 p.m., Schola Magdalena participated in the Festival of Chant concert, singing two "sets" of three works each, including Hildegard's "O Sapientiae" and "O certe precipuus Marie Magdalene," the responsory for First Vespers of Mary Magdalene, from the *Sarum Antiphonale*.

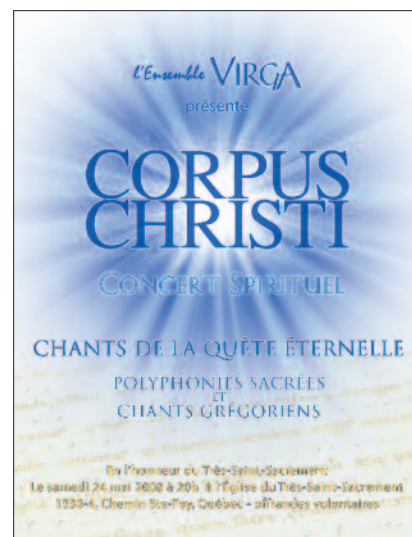
- On January 17, Schola Magdalena will present a concert at the Church of St. Mary Magdalene at 7:30 pm. Admission is "pay what you can." See poster at left.



- Schola Magdalena also looks forward to participating in the Second "Journées grégoriennes" on May 9 and 10 at St-Viateur-d'Outremont Church, Montreal, at the invitation of GIC board member Jean-Pierre Noiseux. For details, see the previous page.

# Journées grégoriennes in Quebec City

On May 24 and 25, 2008, the ensemble Schola Scandicus held its first Chant Weekend in Quebec City's Très-Saint-Sacrement Church. All day Saturday, approximately 20 chant lovers from all parts of the province gathered to attend workshops lead by Jean-Pierre Noiseux, who introduced them to the neumatic notation of St-Gall and to its performance.



In the evening, Montreal's Ensemble Virga (women's voices), under the direction of Alain Vadeboncoeur, performed a chant concert entitled Corpus Christi, which also featured some early medieval polyphonic works. The sanctuary stalls were packed with some 70 listeners who had come to enjoy a fine performance in remarkable acoustics.

On Sunday, after an early morning rehearsal, participants gathered in the organ loft to sing the complete Corpus Christi mass, concluding what was a highly successful chant weekend. May this wonderful experience be repeated in the near future.

Jean-Pierre Noiseux

# Festival of Chant 2008

*Two days of chant, chant, chant –  
something for every chant lover*

The Third Annual Festival of Chant at the Church of St. Mary Magdalene took place on the weekend of November 22 and 23, 2008. Saturday started with the very beautiful Solemn Requiem Mass for Sr. Mary Adela, with Gregorian ordinary and propers sung by the Ritual Choir and Schola Magdalena.

After a small break, Bill Oates of the Gregorian Institute of Canada presented “An Introduction to the History of Chant.” The session included a wide-ranging presentation on the early history and development of what we now know as Gregorian chant, including a look at the development of the mass reading cycles and the development of musical notation. A few pieces of chant were sung during the presentation to illustrate some of the developments.

After a refreshing lunch break, Albert Mahon, who served as cantor at St. Mary Magdalene’s from 1947 to 1975, recounted some personal experiences of his time with Healey Willan, director of music at SMM for 47 years. One highlight of the presentation was an opportunity to listen to performances by the Ritual Choir from roughly 1960, including a recording of a choir practice taken by Dr. Willan – an insight into the heart of the heritage of chant at SMM.

On Sunday, November 23, at 4:30 p.m., about 150 keen chant lovers made their way through a chilly wind to the chant recital, featuring the SMM Ritual Choir (led by Rob Castle, cantor), Schola Magdalena (led by Stephanie Martin, director of music at SMM) and the SMM Chant Club. There were many newcomers in the crowd. Some had heard a concert preview that the Ritual Choir presented on CFMX Classical 96.3 on Wednesday, November 19. The choir performed live on radio and on the web. The show was hosted by Kerry Stratton, who interviewed Rob Castle in between small chant sets. Kerry was very enthusiastic about the choir’s performance, the Festival of Chant and the role St. Mary Magdalene’s continues to play in Canadian church music.

The concert showed off nicely the beautiful renovations recently completed at the church which, if anything, have improved its already stellar acoustics. As the vesper light streamed in through the new windows, we were treated to a variety of Gregorian chant with a touch of Hildegard to ice the cake!

We look forward to **Chant Fest 2009** to be held once again on the **Feast of Christ the King!** *W. Oates*



TOP TO BOTTOM: Ancient music, high-tech presentation: Bill Oates leads an introduction to the history of chant; Albert Mahon shares memories of his days as cantor at St. Mary Magdalene’s, working with Healey Willan; current cantor (and Festival of Chant organizer) Rob Castle with Albert Mahon; the SMM Ritual Choir in procession during the concert.



# Kalamazoo 2008



GIC group chanting on University of Western Michigan campus. Left to right: Martin Quesnel, Pascale Duhamel, Juan Carlos Asensio, Raymond Laforge, Bill Oates, Jean-Pierre Noiseux, William Renwick, Luca Ricossa.

From May 8 to 11, 2008, a group of GIC members from Chicoutimi, Montreal, Toronto and Hamilton attended the 43rd International Congress of Medieval Studies held at the University of Western Michigan, in Kalamazoo. William Renwick presented a paper on new digital resources for Sarum chant. The GIC also invited two European scholars to join the group. During a session sponsored by the GIC, Juan Carlos Asensio (Spain) pleaded for a re-evaluation of ancient Spanish psalmody, and Luca Ricossa (Switzerland) discussed the issue of Absonia in Old Roman chant. In his introduction to the session, William Oates gave a paper on recent research into the core problems of Gregorian chant. Our two guests also joined the GIC Schola in a concert of chant dedicated to the Virgin Mary from various repertoires, including Old Spanish and Old Roman. There was even an impromptu repeat performance of the concert outdoors on a beautiful Saturday afternoon, near the pond situated at the heart of the University of Western Michigan campus. The whole experience was most enriching and, among other things, allowed the friendships with our European and Canadian colleagues to develop and solidify.

Jean-Pierre Noiseux



# 4th Annual Colloquium

The Gregorian Institute of Canada  
TRADITIONS IN WESTERN PLAINCHANT

August 13-16, 2009

McMaster University, Hamilton

## Plenary speaker

Joseph Dyer

“Observations on the Origins of the  
*Antiphonale Missarum*”

## Featured artists

Juan Carlos Asensio (Spain),

Director of the Schola Antiqua of Madrid

Recent plainchant scholarship has focused on specialized topics, such as the early dissemination of variants and palaeographical issues, while opening up new areas of research. These diverse approaches have had a significant impact on our understanding of plainchant cultures (Old Roman, Hispano-Wisigothic, Gregorian), as well as on palaeographical and performance practices. The revival of Gregorian chant in the 19th century has led to the relatively recent development of the so-called “Solesmes tradition” of performance, while other schools of performance have evolved on the basis of contrasting approaches to musical style and palaeography.

This conference of the Gregorian Institute of Canada offers the opportunity to discuss the significance of recent scholarship and new approaches to plainchant as they relate to different traditions. Since the Gregorian Institute of Canada has focused from its inception on performance, the conference will provide a unique opportunity for scholars and performers from Canada and around the world to share and discuss their ideas, research and experiences.

The organizers welcome proposals dealing with any aspect of tradition in Western plainchant, including but not limited to music, analysis, palaeography, pedagogy, theory and performance practice. The conference will also include workshops on approaches to performance practice.

*Please send a 250-word abstract to [igc.gic@gmail.com](mailto:igc.gic@gmail.com) for review by the program committee. Proposals abstracts may be sent, and papers given, in either English or French. Conference papers will be limited to 30 minutes, followed by a 10-minute discussion period. Performance practice workshops will last 40 minutes. Students are encouraged to submit paper proposals.*

*The deadline for proposals is February 1, 2009.*