

ABSTRACT

American Diversity and the Genesis of Mass Settings Following the
Second Vatican Council:
A Case Study of *Mary Lou's Mass* and *La misa panamericana*

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This thesis will examine how ethnic diversity in American Catholicism contributed to the development of vernacular Mass settings in the wake of the Second Vatican Council. The case studies, *Mary Lou's Mass* and *La misa panamericana*, represent two large ethnic groups within the American Catholic populace. Through examination of musical aesthetics from two cultural traditions, African-American and Mexican-American, and their integration into the Catholic Mass, the thesis will explore how the United States' diverse Catholic population benefited from the changes of the Second Vatican Council.

American Diversity and the Genesis of Mass Settings Following the
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A Case Study of *Mary Lou's Mass* and *La misa panamericana*

by

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DEDICATION

To Sam Cross, for inspiring me to dream larger than life and giving me a religion lesson during every bass lesson.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

American Catholicism's unique spiritual, social, and musical traits stem from the diversity of the American population, a product of years of immigration.¹ Along with the inception of the vernacular Mass, the changes made by the Vatican II council have allowed American Catholics more freedom to celebrate Mass in a style that best represents their respective cultural identities.² The goal of this thesis is to investigate how the ethnic diversity of American culture impacted the development of vernacular mass settings after the Second Vatican Council and how these Mass settings reflect the uniqueness of American Catholicism. Through the study of two individual mass settings, Mary Lou Williams's jazz mass, *Mary Lou's Mass* (1969), and Juan Marco Leclerc's mariachi mass, *La misa panamericana* (1966), I will examine how the musical aesthetics of these two cultural traditions, as well as unique traits of American Catholicism within the African-American and Mexican-American communities allowed for the genesis of two culturally distinct vernacular Mass settings as a reflection of the heterogeneity of American Catholicism.

¹ For the terms of this paper I will use "American" to mean and simplify the phrase "United States Americans." Although the difficulties facing United States Catholics were also challenges for their fellow Catholics in the western hemisphere (such as in Canada, Central America and South America) the extremely heterogeneous immigrant population of the United States presented a larger cultural diaspora causing more difficulties in the early development of a national church community.

² For this purposes of this paper the term "cultural identities" will refer to the collective traditional traits that unify an ethnicity, race, or nationality. These collective traits can be identified through self-perception or exterior perception. Examples of these traits are language, music, and community values.

Throughout my travels around the United States and the world, my family and I have attended Mass at churches varying from local American parishes to famous cathedrals, and the lasting impression I retain from these services is the musical experience of the Mass.³ Raised in a musically affluent, older American parish, St. Louis in Clarksville, Maryland (est. 1855), I experienced the growth and change of American Catholic musical trends at the turn of the twenty-first century. However, once a year a Haitian parish visited us from Washington, D.C., bringing with them their choir to sing at Mass. While my parish's non-classical music groups' changed from folk to praise-band inspired over the years, the cultural influence in the Haitian choir's music never wavered. I much preferred the Haitian cultural influence to the non-classical groups attempts at American folk music, which was usually a peculiar assortment of guitarists, tambourine players, and singers. The Haitian performers included not only singers, but dancers as well. The dancers, dressed in traditional attire, danced through the church with gifts to present them between the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist. Swaying and rarely using print music, the singers seemed invested in inspiring the congregation to sing as well. Rather than being a featured ensemble, their love for the music seemed ingrained within them, truly enjoying their worship.

As I began studying music history in my undergraduate program, I began to seek out other unique Catholic music traditions. While I was searching for other Masses similar to the Haitian Mass setting I had heard many times, I stumbled upon musical

³ In the United States I have attended Mass at the Washington National Cathedral, St. Mary Cathedral (Austin, TX), St. Patrick's Cathedral (New York), and Cathedral of Mary Our Queen (Baltimore, MD). Internationally, I have attended Mass at the Basilica of Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré (Quebec, Canada), Notre Dame (Paris, France), La Basilique du Sacré Cœur (Paris, France), Santa Maria del Fiore Cathedral (Florence, Italy), Basilica of San Francesco d'Assisi (Assisi, Italy), and Cathedral of San Rufino (Assisi, Italy). In several of the aforementioned churches I have performed in choirs during Mass, such as those in Baltimore and Assisi, Italy.

Mass settings far removed from the familiar and standard American collection. A post-Vatican II Catholic, I am frequently reminded by my older Catholic brothers and sisters of the solemn Latin Mass prior to the Second Vatican Council. I was pleased to discover that both the jazz and mariachi Masses were composed following the synod. The Council's allowance of the use of the vernacular seemed to have sparked a creative movement in American Catholics.

Always a lover of jazz, in the fall of 2013, I discovered *Mary Lou's Mass* - originally titled *Mass for Peace* - while listening to some of Mary Lou's other music and reading about her conversion to Catholicism. Knowing only her secular works I was initially surprised that the composer had produced such a significant body of religious music. Only her secular works were discussed in the jazz history texts I had read. Initially, I intended to focus specifically on *Mary Lou's Mass*; however, several weeks later my father was listening to "All Things Considered" on NPR and heard a story about a mariachi Mass performed weekly in Houston.⁴ Since he was aware of my thesis ideas, he called to tell me about the segment and thought this particular Mass would fit into my scope of research. A few hours later, I had listened to the story and read the article, realizing that I had found my second work. The two Mass settings seemed on completely different sides of Catholic, even overall Christian, musical traditions; however, the more I read I noticed the similarities between the two liturgical works. Their date of composition following the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, their use of vernacular languages, and utilization of cultural traits of United States Catholic minority groups gave a strong

⁴ The NPR segment "Our Soul Music Is Mariachi Music': Houston's Mexican Mass" was written by John Burnett and featured during the Ecstatic Voices section of "All Things Considered" on January 3, 2014. The Mass recording used during this segment, as well as several interviews were conducted on December 12, 2013 during St. Joseph's celebration of the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

foundation for analyzing the two works side by side. As a post Vatican II Catholic, the changes resulting from the synod are aspects of the Church I have known my whole life, however these features of Catholicism were initially a dramatic difference for Catholics in countries around the world.

Vatican II impacted Catholicism worldwide, but particularly responded to the challenges faced by Catholics outside of Western Europe. To better understand the reforms of the Second Vatican Council and its resulting impact on the Mass settings discussed in this thesis, we must first look at the purpose of the historical council and how it affected American Catholicism. Through this discussion I will explain how *Mary Lou's Mass* and *La misa panamericana* exemplify the practical aspects of Vatican II and the resulting changes in worship.

The Second Vatican Council

From October 11, 1962 until December 8, 1965 in the cavernous St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City, the Second Vatican Council convened to discuss the relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and the modern world. Called by Pope John XXIII in 1959, the council was surprising and unexpected due to the establishment of the infallibility of the pontificate in 1870; thus, calling a council implied the need of input from other clergy.⁵ Thousands of bishops, clergy, sisters, auditors, and even laypersons attended the four sessions in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, which produced sixteen documents addressing issues such as dialogue with other religions, prayer, and the

⁵ Jordan Teicher, "Why is Vatican II So Important?" NPR, October 10, 2012, accessed April 29, 2015, <http://www.npr.org/2012/10/10/162573716/why-is-vatican-ii-so-important>.

continuity of the Catholic faith.⁶ The core of Vatican II was to attempt to create a compromise that would “maintain the older structure, while at the same time opening the Church to more democratic-participational structures.”⁷ As a response to the twentieth century, the council was focused on the renewal of Catholicism in a changing world rather than creating new dogmas or recalling heretical practices. No major theological beliefs were altered; only changes in the practices of worship were suggested. The use of the “human experience as a source of revelation,” an “interfacing of faith and culture,” and the acceptance of pluralism within the Catholic Church best defines the aspects of Vatican II most relevant to this discussion.⁸

The “human experience as a source of revelation” is a key part of this discussion because, as we will see later, the use of vernacular music in the Mass, such as jazz and mariachi music, originally associated with low-class communities, creates an association between pain and struggle - parts of the human experience - with the joy and love found within the Catholic Church. Using musical forms that were created out of the human experience, rather than developed as a functional religious tool, fosters a more intimate

⁶ Ibid. The sixteen documents are: *Sacrosanctum concilium* (Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, 1963), *Inter Mirifica* (Decree On the Means of Social Communication, 1963), *Lumen Gentium* (Dogmatic Constitution On the Church, 1964), *Orientalium Ecclesiarum* (Decree On the Catholic Churches of the Eastern Rite, 1964), *Unitatis Redintegratio* (Decree on Ecumenism, 1964), *Christus Dominus* (Decree Concerning the Pastoral Office of Bishops In the Church, 1965), *Perfectae Caritatis* (Decree On Renewal of Religious Life, 1965), *Optatam Totius* (Decree On Priestly Training, 1965), *Gravissimum Educationis* (Declaration On Christian Education, 1965), *Nostra Aetate* (Declaration On the Relation Of the Church to Non-Christian Religions, 1965), *Dei Verbum* (Dogmatic Constitution On Divine Revelation, 1965), *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (Decree On the Apostolate of the Laity, 1965), *Dignitatis Humanae* (Declaration On Religious Freedom, 1965), *Ad Gentes* (Decree On the Mission Activity of the Church, 1965), *Presbyterorum Ordinis* (Decree On the Ministry and Life of Priests, 1965), *Gaudium et Spes* (Pastoral Constitution On the Church In the Modern World, 1965).

⁷ Eugene C. Bianchi, “John XXIII, Vatican II, and American Catholicism,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 387, The Sixties: Radical Change in American Religion (Jan, 1970), 33.

⁸ Dermot A. Lane, “Vatican II: The Irish Experience,” *The Furrow* 55, No. 2 (Feb. 2004), 68-69.

relationship and worship setting. Using elements associated with the human experience is tied to the “interfacing of faith and culture,” as culture influences how people experience life and affects their expectations, observations, and reactions. Interfacing is a fusion or incorporation of two people or ideas. Thus the Catholic Church’s embracing of a union between culture and faith expanded the possible musical styles from which new church music could be created. Finally, pluralism is defined as a situation in which people of a variety of social strata, cultures, and races coexist in a single society. For the Catholic Church this definition articulates that all of these people coexist within the same religion. With such a myriad of cultures, races, and economic groups, the faith needed to be able to address the concerns of all these groups and acknowledge their differences while at the same time embracing the unity of the faith.⁹

One of the ways that the Catholic Church hoped to achieve these goals was by increasing the participation of the laypersons within congregations. Prior to the Second Vatican Council, not only did the priest face away from the congregation and recited a majority of the Mass prayers inaudible to the congregation, but the official language used in Roman Catholicism was Latin, a dead language.¹⁰ The separation between the congregation and the celebrant created a lack of involvement in the congregation. As a result, the congregation said limited prayers and responses, acting predominantly as observers rather than participants. Those involved in Vatican II hoped that the addition of culture and the human experience would help to connect the parish people with the clergy and as a result, strengthen the contribution of the laypeople.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Dead languages no longer have native speakers; however, they may still be used in sacred or special settings, but it is no longer used to communicate in every day language.

One of the most dramatic changes to result from Vatican II to increase the participation of the laity was that permission to say Mass in the vernacular language was granted nearly world wide. For approximately 1,650 years the Catholic community had said Mass in Latin, with very rare exceptions, thus the prospect of saying Mass in the vernacular inspired religious men and women throughout the world. Enthusiastic Catholic priests of the United States, a distant and often challenged community, hoped that the new vernacular tradition would also inspire increased participation of their congregations.¹¹ Immediately, they embraced the new opportunities for musical growth; Gregorian chant in the liturgy was replaced with folk music, while the singing of hymns was strongly encouraged. Over the next decade this movement was also reflected in the composition of vernacular Mass settings, such as *La misa panamericana* and *Mary Lou's Mass*, as well as other vernacular hymns and songs in popular styles.

While the exponential growth of vernacular church music may not have always resulted in traditional sacred music, the Mass became more approachable to musicians and composers; a higher rate of composition also increased the likelihood for quality music. The Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy in 1966 assessed that the introduction of the vernacular language into the liturgy necessitated more compositions that could be sung by the congregation to increase communal participation.¹² In the United States, where music was a source of contention within the culturally diverse population, Vatican II provided opportunities for every voice to be heard in the Catholic Church. Due to the

¹¹ Not only did distance isolate Catholics of North and South America, the struggles of colonization in Central and South America and the dominance of Protestantism in North America created difficulties in mutual understanding between the reigning European Catholic hierarchy and the Catholics of the Western Hemisphere.

¹² Bishops' Committee on Liturgy, *Newsletter 1965-1975* (Washington: USCC, 1977).

development of American Catholicism out of the Irish tradition, which will be discussed presently, later Catholic immigrants to the United States whose traditions included music and expressions of enthusiasm scandalized the American Catholics who preferred to display little to no devotion on an exterior level.¹³

American Catholicism

Across the United States, young Irish American Catholics such as myself share anecdotes of their childhood. My grandmother was an organist for twenty years, from 1955-1975, an anomaly for an Irish Catholic such as herself; however, her love of church music was limited to the religious songs and Irish hymns that existed in the Mass prior to Vatican II.¹⁴ Not surprisingly, the folk tradition that developed following Vatican II to encourage laity participation frequently ostracized the older members of the congregation, accustomed to soloist cantors and the occasional highly trained choir.¹⁵ The Vatican II council left the door open for musical development in the Catholic Church. The chance for Catholics to practice their faith in the vernacular dramatically changed the music composed for Masses and religious purposes. As one of the most diverse group of Catholics, American Catholics, their culture, and their music best reflect the impact of the Second Vatican Council on Mass settings. To better grasp the challenges faced by

¹³ Thomas Day, *Why Catholics Can't Sing: The Culture of Catholicism and the Triumph of Bad Taste* (New York: Crossroads, 1992), 18-19.

¹⁴ Female leadership was still an unusual occurrence in the Catholic Church, including music well into the late twentieth century.

¹⁵ Day, *Why Catholics Can't Sing*, 9. The encouragement of the congregation, particularly of anyone who so chose to take the microphone at Mass as a cantor or keyboardist has grieved my grandmother and others of her generation since the reforms and these feelings have been carried down through generations.

American Catholics, the foundations of American Catholicism and its resulting traditions require explanation.

In general, the United States American Catholic community is far more culturally heterogeneous than their international brethren, which made the development of unification an arduous process that began with the first major waves of Catholic immigration. The most dominant ethnic group in the development of American Catholicism was the Irish Catholics, an assembly of people who were banned from practicing their religion for decades, resulting in a somber, muted church environment. Due to social and religious oppression in England and Ireland, English, and some Irish, Catholics initially immigrated to America during colonial times.

Henry VIII established the Church of Ireland and the Church of England in 1536 during the English Reformation. These denominations maintained Catholic theology while removing control of the Church from the Pontificate and Bishops. As the Protestant Reformation continued, later rulers of England transformed the religion into a Protestant faith and declared Catholicism heretical. For instance, the English government could arrest and try individuals for religious crimes, and other Christians (such as Presbyterians, Quakers, and Baptists) were also persecuted. As a result, original settlers of the United States often came in search of religious freedom. George Calvert, First Lord Baltimore in the peerage of Ireland, founded the only Catholic colony, Maryland, as a religious refuge. In 1634 his son Cecil Calvert arrived in America to physically establish the colony.¹⁶ Relative to the number of Protestant colonists however, the Catholic population was a small minority.

¹⁶ James McSherry, *History of Maryland; from its first settlement in 1634, to the year 1848*, Library of Congress, 1849.

During the early nineteenth century two and a half million Irish immigrated to the United States. In the first half of the century nearly one million Irish Catholics arrived to escape sectarian violence, agricultural changes, and limited employment. Later, during the Great Famine (1845-1849) resulting from the potato blight, one and a half million Irish Catholics arrived in the United States, impoverished, oppressed, and predominantly illiterate. The immigrant waves stemmed from two different social groups: the first being better educated, primarily in search of work, and having immigrated by choice, while the second wave of immigrants was predominately poor and forced to immigrate for survival. Regardless of their status in Ireland, both groups occupied the lowest level of the social strata in the United States, particularly ostracized for their religion. This massive influx of Irish Catholics increased the overall population of Catholics in the United States.¹⁷

The Irish Catholics were free to practice religion as they wished in the United States; however, the psychological effects of Protestant oppression led Irish-American Catholics to find pride in their plain liturgical settings.

American Catholics not only accepted the idea of the Mass without a note of music, they boasted about it. This was their mark of distinction. It set them apart from their Protestant neighbors who went to church “only for the music” and who had made music “the music center of their worship.” To a largely working-class Catholicism, music was the religion of the employers.¹⁸

Although this quote refers to “American Catholics,” it could also be applied to the vast majority of Catholics in the United States who had adapted to the aesthetic standard of Irish Catholics, the cultural group that dominated early Catholic maturity in the United

¹⁷ Lawrence McCaffrey, “Ireland and Irish America: Connections and Disconnections,” *U.S. Catholic Historian* 22, No. 3, Ireland and America: Religion, Politics, and Social Movements (Summer 2004), 1-3.

¹⁸ Thomas Day, *Why Catholics Can't Sing*, 9.

States. As the demographics of immigrants arriving changed throughout the twentieth century and American Catholics settled in different patterns, challenges arose as the diverse immigrants brought their own cultural traditions, which frequently conflicted with one another. Table 1 shows that by 1973 the population of the United States was a very diverse multicultural community that could benefit from the suggestions of and changes resulting from the Second Vatican Council (See Table 1).

Table 1 Percent Distribution of Regional Settlement in the United States, by Catholic Ethnic Group

Ethnicity	U.S. Total	New England	Middle Atlantic	E.North Central	W.North Central	South	West
Italian	22	15	38	15	4	10	14
Irish	18	27	19	14	11	25	12
German	16	1	11	22	47	22	17
French-Canadian	11	37	2	10	11	6	7
Polish	11	4	10	21	13	13	6
Eastern European	8	2	11	8	11	7	4
Spanish Speaking	8	2	4	3	0	9	36
English	3	5	3	3	2	7	3
Lithuanian	3	7	2	4	1	1	1
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Harold J. Abramson, *Ethnic Diversity in Catholic America* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1973), 29.

In his essay “Contemporary Theology and Inculturation in the United States” theologian Peter Phan relates inculturation to the Catholic experience through the words of Arij A. R. Crollius.¹⁹ Phan argues that “...the integration of the Christian experience of a local church in to the culture of its people, in such a way that this experience not only

¹⁹ Cenkenner, *The Multicultural Church*, (New York: Paulist Press, 1996), 110.

expresses itself in elements of this culture but becomes a force that animates, orients, and innovates this culture, so as to create a new unity and communion, not only within the culture in question, but also as an enrichment of the Church universal.”²⁰ Phan’s idea of creating a new community that affected the church universal was a direct consequence of Vatican II. Prior to Vatican II, the use of Latin and limited laity participation prevented local churches from experiencing intense inculturation. Inculturation was especially evident in the United States where musically and artistically devoid Irish aesthetic preferences ruled the majority of American Catholic parishes.²¹ However, as increased participation from the congregation was encouraged following the Vatican II council, the peoples that embraced the blending of their culture with their faith were not only given freedom but also encouraged to expand upon their practices. On April 14, 1964 Pope Paul VI gave an address to a group of bishops where he discussed liturgical reform and expanded on this subject. Clearly, the idea of Catholic communities *in transit* was part of his discourse when he stated that:

[t]he fact of these periodic movements of people is also a reminder to us of another needy category of the faithful, those who emigrate in order to find work...For these also the hierarchy must take the steps necessary so that the different groups of these people may have the possibility and the means to join and take an active part in the life and the organizations of their host dioceses.²²

Though not mentioned explicitly by the Pope, the United States had been the main destination during the movements of European people for work. Initial immigrants,

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Thomas Day, *Where Have You Gone Michaelangelo* (New York: Crossroads, 1993), 147. In comparison to the large choirs of the French and hymns of Polish communities, Irish and Irish American Catholics “choirs” consisted of a single soprano or tenor soloist.

²² *Documents on the Liturgy: Conciliar, Papal and Curial Texts, 1963-1979* (New York: Liturgical Press, 1982), 88.

primarily Irish, German, Polish, and English, landed in a country far removed from their own, interacting with traditions and cultures completely foreign to them, which caused conflict and frequently resulted in geographical segregation. As the American Catholic population continually evolves and becomes more diverse this struggle continues today with immigration of Hispanic and Asian Catholics.²³ The inculturation of church and culture continues to provide a faith community for immigrants.

A year following the previously mentioned remarks, Pope Paul VI addressed the translators of liturgical texts. In his address he discussed the need for the vernacular saying, “Like a caring mother, the Church, through the teaching of Vatican Council II, has called on its children, in full awareness of their responsibility in the Body of Christ, to share actively in the liturgical prayers and rites.”²⁴ The congregations’ ability to participate actively required the increased use of the vernacular. The use of the vernacular not only implied the use of local spoken languages but also the use of songs, religious texts, prayers, and hymns that had developed outside of the Catholic liturgy. However, the Pope noted the necessity of maintaining the integrity of the Latin texts’ meaning; “You must be convinced that there are not as many liturgies as there are languages used by the Church in the sacred rites; the voice of the church remains one and the same in celebrating the divine mysteries and administering the sacraments, although that voice speaks in a variety of tongues.”²⁵ With the restrictions of Latin lifted, cultural traditions,

²³ For more information on the changes in American Catholicism, see *American Catholics in Transition*. *American Catholics in Transition* is the fifth book in a twenty-five year study on Catholic laity in the United States. Chapter Two discusses the changes of American Catholicism in demographics and immigration in depth.

²⁴ *Documents on the Liturgy*, 273.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

already strongly associated with vernacular language, now could be more easily integrated into the Mass setting.

The use of Latin and the early Tridentine Mass was strongly associated with chant, polyphonic music, and a cappella voices of monks, clergy, and boy choirs, while the later centuries of the Latin Mass were associated with Mass cycles composed for full orchestras, choirs, and soloists only available to cathedrals and basilicas.²⁶ As large orchestral and choral resources and musical training were not available to small American parishes, these parishes ultimately preferred the silent traditions favored by the Irish. The use of the vernacular allowed for the integration of folk and popular music into the Mass settings. In fact, these popular styles were already used for hymns in several immigrant communities such as the Polish, Spaniards, and Latin Americans. Consequently, integrated Mass settings resulted in a more unified worship experience.²⁷ Through the integration of sacred liturgical symbolism and culture, which often developed more personal liturgical experiences, the Catholic Church hoped to increase in enthusiasm and participation within its congregations.

United States Musical Trends Following Vatican II

One of the most dramatic changes following Vatican II was a conceptual shift in the Mass. The liturgy now focused on God's relationship with the faithful rather than concentrating on the mysteries of God. Musical texts shifted from music of adoration to music of the people, from the image of a judgmental, mysterious God to a forgiving God

²⁶ The Tridentine Mass was created in response to the Council of Trent, from 1570 until 1970 it was the mandatory Mass setting used throughout the Roman Catholic Church, with the exception of some missals, primarily in France, which predated 1370.

²⁷ Day, *Why Catholics Can't Sing*, 80.

focused on the sheep in his flock. The priest, the hierarchy, and the dogmas represented the hard image of God, while the personalized experience embraced many softer aspects of Catholicism, such as the Virgin Mary, the saints, and music.²⁸ In the United States, the hard aspects had dominated the Mass and Catholicism, punctuated with occasional softness from the solo cantor or small choir mentioned earlier. However, many ethnicities within the heterogeneous American Catholic population favored dominance of the soft aspects, such the view of the Virgin Mary by the Hispanic faithful, and the changes following Vatican II favored the softness of these cultures.

One of the first musical responses, created in the 1970s, was *Glory and Praise*, a songbook published by the North American Liturgy Resources that was designed to be for the folk group during the new folk Masses. Over the years, however, the songbook turned into a collection resembling a hymnal, the music now used in folk and non-folk Masses alike.²⁹ The unusual feature about the music in this “hymnal” is that the majority of the works it contains were composed in the second half of the twentieth century, the only exceptions being the inclusion of an American folk hymn and several Christmas carols.³⁰ The texts of these hymns focus predominantly on the congregation as the centerpiece of the Mass and what God has done for them, rather than the receiving of

²⁸ Ibid., 67.

²⁹ Ibid, 69.

³⁰ The American folk hymn included is *Amazing Grace*. Thomas Day suggested there were several American spirituals found within *Glory and Praise*, however I found *Amazing Grace* in my own research of the songbook. There were ten carols (*Angels We Have Heard on High*, *Deck the Hall*, *The First Nowell*, *God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen*, *Hark! the Herald Angels Sing*, *Joy to the World*, *O Come, All Ye Faithful*, *Silent Night*, and *What Child Is This?*). Unusually, the carols are not listed in the Index and are only mentioned in the Table of Contents.

communion and the adoration of an almighty God. No doubt, within these texts the theological shifts resulting from Vatican II are clear.³¹

The folk movement in American Catholicism following the Second Vatican Council was only one of the movements occurring in the United States, and most importantly the new “hymnals” and “folky” materials were relatively vague in terms of ethnicity. In the United States this new “churchy” music was limited in its cultural influences to appeal to the masses, primarily utilizing the Anglo-Saxon folk traditions, while in the rest of the world Catholicism was now open to multiethnic cultural influences.³² Catholic Americans in several ethnic groups worked to integrate their culture with the liturgy and created Mass settings that reflected the cultural heterogeneousness of American Catholicism.

Case Studies – Introduction

While Irish immigrants and their descendants dominated the early development of the American Catholic Church, they were not the only ethnic group in the congregations across the country every Sunday. Despite the Irish frustrations with the changes resulting from Vatican II, other ethnic groups and communities within the Catholic Church, such as the Polish, French, Hispanic, and Africans, were inspired by the opportunity to

³¹ Ibid, 69-74. By 1984 *Glory and Praise* contained no music written prior to 1960. Each edition makes almost no reference to the liturgical seasons and has limited Mass settings. This lack of association with standard Catholic Ritual presents the collection as a hymnal rather than a full musical source for Catholic parishes.

³² Day, *Catholics Can't Sing*, 70-74. For Catholics embracing the changes of Vatican II in the 1970s, “churchy” music was the music that resembled music prior to Vatican II, which was previously seen as sacred or holy and was frequently associated with ritual. However, a new style of “churchy” was created as a reaction to the old style of “churchy,” establishing a tradition that music performed during the Mass was “churchy.”

incorporate their cultural traditions within the liturgy of the Catholic Mass.³³ Out of these traditions came unique Mass settings and the respective ethnic groups created movements parallel with the folk Mass and music of *Glory and Praise*. New cultural Mass settings represent the diversity of the American Catholic Church and showcase the music that can be integrated into the Catholic liturgy.

To discuss the distinctive features I have selected two Masses and their correlating cultural groups as case studies to analyze: Mary Lou Williams' jazz Mass, *Mary Lou's Mass* (1969), and Juan Marco Leclerc's mariachi Mass, *La misa panamericana* (1966). These two Masses represent large ethnic groups that challenged the Irish Catholic aesthetic and contributed their own cultural traditions to the American Catholic, and Catholic Church universal.

³³ Example of other Masses composed during this time include: Dave Brubeck's Mass (1980), a Polka Mass (1973), and a Tewa Pueblo Indian Mass.

CHAPTER TWO

Mary Lou's Mass

Black Catholicism in the United States

In 1793 a ship full of refugees from the Caribbean islands, predominately Catholics, arrived in Baltimore, Maryland from Santo Domingo. In 1864, this population became the foundation for the first Black Catholic parish established in the United States.¹ While the first Black parish was not established until the late nineteenth century, Black Catholics had long been an important part of the development of both the United States and American Catholicism. The earliest Black Catholics in the United States were originally from other parts of the “New World,” such as the French Canadian territories or islands and parts of Central and South America. These early Black Catholics were predominantly free individuals, which made settling in unregulated territories or free Northern states ideal. Maryland, as the only original colony founded by Catholics also had a large free Black Catholic community despite being a slave-holding state.

Although free Black Catholics were socially accepted in the eighteenth century, the Jesuits, founders of universities such as Georgetown University (est. 1789) and Loyola University Maryland (est. 1852), owned nearly three hundred slaves on their property in Maryland in the early nineteenth century.² Other convents and religious

¹ Cyprian Davis, “Black Catholics in Nineteenth Century America,” *A Church of Many Cultures: Selected Historical Essays on Ethnic American Catholicism*, edited by Dolores Ann Liptak, from *The Heritage of American Catholicism: A Twenty-Eight-Volume Series Documenting the History of America's Largest Religious Denomination*, edited by Timothy Walch. (New York: Garland Pub, 1988), 360.

² Ibid., 362. Ignatius of Loyola (later canonized in 1622), Francis Xavier (also canonized in 1622), and Peter Faber (not canonized until 2013) founded the Jesuit Order, formally known as the Society of

houses also maintained slaves well into the pre-Civil War years. Despite a lack of understanding and the initial inability to see the evils of slavery, the Catholic Church was one of the earliest religions to support the causes for equality during the civil rights movements in the latter half of the twentieth century. This was a result of the dominant Haitian community of Catholics and progressive group of laity that had emerged with their own newspaper and lay congresses.³ Black Catholics moved into the twentieth century, “as a people conscious of its responsibility and devoted to a common ideal.”⁴

This “common ideal,” as the author, Father Cyprian Davis (1930-2015), interprets, is a distinctive quality of Black Catholicism. As we will see later during discussion of *Mary Lou’s Mass* in this chapter, there appears to be counterpoints between Catholic tradition, African-American Christianity, and worship in Black Catholicism, which Black lay Catholics desired to unify in the twentieth century. Non-Catholic Christian faiths, with more freedom of expression and natural segregation, afforded African Americans the opportunity to create a distinctive style of worship based on expressive African rituals, music, preaching, prayer, and testimony.⁵ Performance

Jesus, in 1540. The male religious order focuses on education, intellectual research, and culture. They profess vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience to the pope. The Jesuits were involved actively in missionary work in the colonization of Canadian territories as well as in South America, especially the Amazon rainforest and the Philippines. They did not arrive in the United States until the early nineteenth century.

³ Daniel Rudd (1854-1933) was the founder of the first Catholic weekly newspaper (title unknown). He was born into slavery but moved north after the Civil War to attend school. Rudd organized a series of national congresses of lay leaders as he saw the Catholic Church as a great hope for African Americans. From 1889 to 1894, there were five black congresses, which he organized to connect Black lay Catholics, as well as to establish a pattern of black laity leadership initiatives. Fr. Cyprian Davis, “A Brief History of African American Catholics,” The National Black Catholic Congress, 2003, accessed June 17, 2015, <http://nbccongress.org/features/history-african-american-catholics.asp>.

⁴ Ibid., 376.

⁵ Mary E. McGann and Eva Marie Lumas, *Let It Shine!: The Emergence of African American Catholic Worship* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 5.

practices such as call-and-response, found in African music and rituals, were blended with Christian texts and ideals. This combination of performance practice elements was incorporated into the fusion of native African religious celebrations and Christian feasts to create a unique religious experience and theology.⁶ For example, over the centuries, the Haitian dancers presenting the gifts discussed in Chapter One had combined a dance of thanks for a bountiful harvest with the presentation of the Eucharist. In contrast to the freedom of Protestant worship, Catholicism had established rituals, music, and prayers that seemed to eschew the particular proclivities of certain practices in African-American worship. In reality, Black Catholics were being nurtured by both traditions, Catholic parish life and Black religious heritage.⁷

This duality of tradition and culture was precisely what the Catholic Church was aiming to resolve during the Second Vatican Council. For Black Catholics, the American Civil Rights movement aligned with the development of a Catholic faith hoping to unite culture, traditions, and theology. As a result, there was movement towards emergence of a unified Black Catholic community within the greater Catholic Church as a whole. Both Pope Paul VI (1897-1978) and John Paul II (1920-2005) called for African traditions and Black cultural heritage and traditions to be contributed to the Catholic Church to help enrich the faith and make “her witness of universality more complete.”⁸ This impetus for

⁶ MGann, *Let It Shine!*, 58. The dominance of the Holy Spirit as an active presence in African American Christianity is an example of theological blending. Belief in an active presence of God stems from African religious tradition, where achieving harmony with and empowerment from the spirits were core beliefs. Through a combination of African religious beliefs with the Christian name, the Holy Spirit, different theology than that of Western Europeans and their descendants was developed.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid, 7. Said by Pope John Paul II to representatives of the African American Catholic Community in New Orleans.

change prompted the rise of Father Clarence R.J. Rivers (1931-2004), an enthusiastic leader of the Black Catholic community.

Father Clarence R. J. Rivers inspired a “Black Renaissance” in the American Catholic liturgy using music, art, culture, and religious expression to revitalize Catholic worship. Rivers was the first composer to introduce Black musical idioms such as jazz, gospel, and spirituals into liturgical settings.⁹ While these initial works did not survive in the standard repertoire of liturgical works, they have set a precedent for other more established composers to begin writing for the Catholic Church.¹⁰ Within the context of a Catholic faith inspired to use Black Christian and cultural traditions, Mary Lou Williams was moved to begin her series of religious compositions.¹¹

⁹ These Black musical idioms are genres that are associated with cultural experiences. Father Rivers particularly utilized the genres of jazz and gospel.

¹⁰ Ibid., 7-10. Father Rivers was the first director of the National Office for Black Catholics Department of Culture and Worship, which was founded in 1970 to create “a platform for a true indigenization of Black Catholic worship.” While he composed many works, most importantly his *American Mass Program*, which combined Gregorian chant with African American spirituals, few of these works have survived outside his former parish in the diocese of Cincinnati, Ohio. In conversations with Dr. Tammy Lynn Kernodle (April 17, 2015), I learned that every year this parish (the name of which I have not found) performs a tribute of his music.

¹¹ Personal conversation with Dr. Tammy Kernodle, April 17, 2015. In conversations with Dr. Tammy Kernodle (musicologist and researcher of African-American music, jazz, and gender studies) I have learned that so far there is no evidence of Mary Lou Williams and Father Rivers interacting. While it is almost certain that they would have been aware of one another, and Mary Lou particularly aware of the Black Catholic conferences and organizations growing around the United States, there has been no evidence that she was involved with these groups. Mary Lou’s concept of universalism and evangelist voice as a woman disseminator of the Gospel through jazz music was not entirely aligned with the Black Nationalist tendencies of these Black Catholic organizations.

Mary Lou Williams

Biography and Musical Development

Mary Lou Williams was born Mary Elfrieda Scuggs in Atlanta, Georgia in 1910.¹² Raised by a religious and musical mother during her early years in Georgia, the family migrated north and settled in Pittsburgh where Mary's musical talent was discovered and fostered. In Pittsburgh, neighbors who used to invite the little girl to play for them in their homes initially recognized Mary's talent, which Mary kept a secret from her mother. When Mary broke her arm and did not come to play, a few concerned neighbors came to the Scuggs home and revealed Mary's secret to her mother.¹³ Mary's stepfather arrived in Pittsburgh not long after these incidents and immediately began encouraging the young woman's musical talent. As a gambler in the evenings, he began to take Mary to game events to play piano for the men and she frequently earned a hefty tip. Her earnings were contributed to the family's income. Her stepfather, brother-in-law, and other responsible men in the community also escorted young Mary to performances where she first encountered stride piano.

By the age of fourteen Mary had left home several times to play piano for vaudeville shows with black dance and musical troupes throughout Pennsylvania and

¹² Linda Dahl, *Morning Glory: A Biography of Mary Lou Williams* (Oakland, CA: University of California, 2001), 8. According to African and African American beliefs, the gift of second sight, visions, or creative talent was shown upon a child's birth if their eyes were still covered by a veil when the child was born. Mary was born with this physical condition, which is a portion of the membrane that can cover a fetus' head at birth, and she frequently displayed unnerving visions. These visions and occasional outbursts continued throughout her life and she attributed her musical abilities such as learning by ear to this second sight.

¹³ Ibid., 23. Mary was the name Mary Lou Williams used throughout her young life and early career. While I have not discovered when exactly she began using the name Mary Lou, I will use her permanent move to New York City to make the name change.

Ohio.¹⁴ She formally discontinued her education as a sophomore in high school while she was enrolled in her first music class. She later claimed that ending her only formal music education at such a young age was a personal weakness. Mary relied on her ear to learn everything she played early in her career; she could not read music and learned the dance troupe music while rehearsing with the band, pretending to read the sheet music in front of her.¹⁵ Mary's major break into show business came in the early 1920s, when she was hired to play with Buzzin' Harris and his Hits 'n Bits in 1923 – she was 13 years old. She met her first husband John Williams (1905-1996), a talented saxophonist, in this ensemble. She married him in 1926 at the age of seventeen.¹⁶ Following some financial hardships and unsuccessful runs with musical groups throughout the Midwest, Mary eventually followed her husband to Oklahoma City and then Kansas City with the Dark Clouds of Joy. During this time in her life, Mary was following her husband as a wife, rather than as a fellow musician as she was not actively performing jazz.¹⁷

In Kansas City Mary became a featured player of the after hours scene and jam sessions for which the city was known in the 1920s-1930s.¹⁸ These musical experiences

¹⁴ Either for a summer tour or she would move out of the family home and live with her oldest sister, the true matriarch of the family, and brother-in-law.

¹⁵ “That is when I really learned how to use my ears. I probably was a fraction behind each note they played, and after the first chorus, I knew the melody and what notes would follow. When the leader called other arrangements, I would get the piano part and would play and look as if I was reading. I think my ESP carried me through a great deal. I was pretending I could read.” Dahl, *Morning Glory*, 33.

¹⁶ Tammy Lynn Kernodle, *Soul on Soul: The Life and Music of Mary Lou Williams* (Holliston, MA: Northeastern, 2004), 44.

¹⁷ Dahl, *Morning Glory*, 63 - 69. This group eventually became Andy Kirk's Clouds of Joy, which was the name under which the group saw the most success.

¹⁸ Frank Driggs and Chuck Haddis, *Kansas City Jazz: From Ragtime to Bebop – A History*, (New York: Oxford, 2005), 84-106. As a central location in the United States, “cradles of jazz” Kansas City was a meeting point for musicians from New Orleans, New York, and Chicago. The city was known among musicians for its all night jam sessions, after the clubs were closed to patrons. These sessions featured extended solos and improvisation of the melodic material and arrangements, unlike the short solos and big

revealed Mary as a talented player as and helped her to expand her musical vocabulary. She soon became a member of Andy Kirk's band. Because Andy Kirk disliked Mary's aggressive musical personality, she was able to join only because of the group's unreliable pianist.¹⁹ During this time of musical growth, Mary became extensively involved with the arrangements and compositions of the group. Her playing and progressive arrangements eventually led to a recording contract for the group. The group's popularity survived the early years of the Great Depression, but the financial strain eventually reached them as well. Following several disappointing years with the group and her relationship, Mary divorced her husband and left Andy Kirk's Dark Clouds of Joy. With her newfound freedom Mary Lou began her career in New York City on her own.²⁰

Although her career allowed her to travel throughout the United States and Europe, New York City would remain Mary Lou's home for the rest of her life - and in the 1940s the city was treating her well.²¹ She performed extended gigs at the Café Society Downtown (1945-1947) and arranged a large amount of music for Duke

band charts used by most big bands at the time. Kansas City jazz also focused on the twelve-bar blues and riffs, short repeated phrases rather than extended melodies. Mary Lou's ability to perform hour-long solo shows was fostered in this competitive environment. Musicians to come out of this scene were Count Basie (1904-1984), as well as Charlie Parker (1920-1955).

¹⁹ "NEA Jazz Masters: Andy Kirk," *National Endowment for the Arts*, http://arts.gov/honors/jazz/andy-kirk?id=1991_03&type=bio, accessed May 11, 2015. The Clouds of Joy were centered in Kansas City and began performing and recording in their form with Mary Lou in 1929. As the primary band recorded out of Kansas City, they came to epitomize the sound of the time. Mary Lou recorded sporadically with the group until 1942. The group formally disbanded in 1948.

²⁰ She experienced great difficulties throughout her career and frequently struggled with financial issues. Mary Lou did marry a second time, a trombonist Harold Baker. Although this marriage lasted less than a year the couple never divorced and upon Harold's death in the 1960s, Mary was officially his widow. Love was a difficult emotion for Mary Lou; music would always be her true love and soul mate.

²¹ Dahl, *Morning Glory*, 134. Mary Lou rented apartment 21 at 63 Hamilton Terrace in November 1943 and continued to rent the apartment for the remainder of her life.

Ellington in 1946.²² Soon she would be performing regular jobs, playing and teaching on a radio show, and making instrumental records outlining the history of jazz. Her *Zodiac Suite* was comprised of twelve movements for each astrological sign, often recalling the personalities of jazz musicians born under each sign. The suite brought her to the attention of musicians and critics within the New York jazz scene and it was her first critical success.²³ She was thoroughly invested in the early development of bebop; her love of different harmonies naturally led her towards bop and the musicians developing the new genre.²⁴ Mary was integrating genres such as bebop, blues, boogie-woogie, and stride piano techniques on history records and performances, frequently displaying her wide-ranging experience and always demonstrating her distinctive harmonies and powerful left hand.²⁵ Despite continuous displays of mastery at the piano, Mary Lou did not release a record as a composer or band leader and takes of her arrangements were often thrown to the side. Mary Lou became discouraged and depressed.

In 1952 Mary Lou arrived in England for a tour and while she enjoyed the British appreciation for jazz, her depression continued throughout her trip in Britain. Instead of

²² Ibid., 132.

²³ The *Zodiac Suite* was a significant work in Mary Lou's career as she performed a new movement each week on her radio, which brought her some popular success. She also performed selections with the New York Pops as part of the Carnegie Hall Pops series, exposing her to the general public.

²⁴ Kernodle, *Soul on Soul*, 112-116. Throughout her career, Mary Lou Williams was seen as a harmonic innovator. Her unusual chord choices, as early as her days in Andy Kirk's band, were what created a demand for recordings. Bebop was a musical development created in an attempt to reclaim jazz music as music of African Americans, rather than the simplistic dance arrangements performed by predominantly white bands. The style features long, convoluted lines and a smooth tone color from wind instrumentalists.

²⁵ While bebop is a style characterized by fast tempos and virtuosic harmonic progressions for improvisation, the blues is a precursor to jazz and a genre that has continued on its own path as well. It is characterized by the use of the pentatonic scale, 12 bar forms, short musical ideas such as riffs, and a focus on expression of emotions. Other independent forms associated with early jazz were boogie-woogie and stride piano. These musical styles that are more commonly associated with dancing and both feature strong left hands in the piano, usually a standard pattern for each style, and are more up-tempo than the blues.

returning home Mary Lou moved to France, a place where many African-American jazz musicians felt comfortable during the middle of the twentieth century due to segregation and tensions rising in the early years of the Civil Rights Movement. Musicians, such as Miles Davis (1926-1991), Hazel Scott (1920-1981), and Dizzy Gillespie (1917-1993), performed primarily in Paris in famous clubs such as Le Grand Duc, Chez Florence, and Bricktop; the neighborhood of Montmartre embraced the ideals of the Harlem Renaissance and provided a home to American jazz musicians. During a difficult period of depression in France, Mary Lou moved from Paris to the countryside with her French boyfriend. However, neither music nor love seemed to heal her wounds from many years of struggle. It was during this time that religion, specifically Catholicism, entered Mary Lou's life. Mary Lou was reintroduced to the Bible and Psalms, and then formally introduced to Roman Catholicism by the soldiers Hon. Gerald Lascelles and Colonel Brennan, both jazz fans who were associated with her circles in Paris. After having a vision in a Catholic Church in France, Mary Lou contacted her old friend Hazel Scott, who told her to read the Bible and "pray, pray, pray."²⁶ One night in 1954 she walked off the stage in Paris, vowed never to perform publically again, and devoted her life to her religious conversion. Until her triumphant return to the stage at the Newport Jazz Festival in 1957 Mary Lou Williams had seemingly abandoned jazz.²⁷

²⁶ Dahl, *Morning Glory*, 240-241.

²⁷ The Newport Jazz Festival has been hosted in Newport, Rhode Island (and occasionally New York City in the 1980s) every summer since 1954. It is an important venue for jazz performers and features the most prominent names in jazz. Mary Lou's return to jazz at the Newport Jazz Festival with Dizzy Gillespie asserted her staying power as a major figure in the jazz scene.

Mary Lou's Conversion to Catholicism

Upon Mary Lou's return to the United States at the end of 1954, she decided to devote her life to God, giving up music, clubs, and sinful ways in the process.²⁸ The composer initially immersed herself in a local Baptist community, such as the one she was raised in in Georgia, however her disappointment in the church led her to look elsewhere. Her visions, which she referred to as psychic powers, led her to the local Catholic Church where she began to pray regularly, eventually becoming confident enough in the parish to take Catholic classes. Mary Lou changed churches yet again and discovered Father John Crowley. Through Father John Crowley and Father Anthony Woods, along with the support of Lorraine and Dizzy Gillespie, Mary Lou Williams was baptized and confirmed in the Catholic faith and managed to blend her music - and visions - with her newfound convictions.²⁹

During this time Mary Lou began a second-hand store to raise money to support poor jazz musicians; many of them had drug addictions. She also opened her home to those in need and created the Bel Canto Foundation to aid in her efforts, but these ventures were largely unsuccessful and still somehow left Mary Lou unfulfilled. With financial and musical disappointments building, she was persuaded to return to the stage in 1957 by Dizzy Gillespie for the Newport Jazz Festival. Her music provided the finances she needed to continue her charitable work, but it was also encouraged by her

²⁸ Dahl, *Morning Glory*, 243.

²⁹ The Gillespie's were great friends to Mary Lou throughout her life. Lorraine and Mary Lou were baptized and confirmed together, while Dizzy was a constant source of encouragement and a driving force behind Mary Lou's return to the jazz scene. Although I contacted Fathers Crowley and Woods's former parishes and was directed to their respective orders for more information on their dates, I did not receive answers to my inquiries.

religious counselors as a way to unite her two passions and explore a new realm of Catholic worship.

Mary Lou's Mass

*Jazz created for all people.
Jazz created through suffering.
Got beaten everyday.
And school – Amy Frank.*

Discovered amongst a box of Mary Lou's belongings long after her death, this poem defines why Mary Lou began writing religious jazz music.³⁰ Mary Lou was a firm believer that jazz was created to assist in the healing of the soul; Catholicism helped to heal Mary Lou's hurting soul, scarred by years of insult and even physical injury. She composed her first "jazz" hymns in 1963 – her most celebrated being "Black Christ of the Andes" (St. Martin de Porres), and began composing jazz liturgical music in 1967. Two years passed before she composed her most substantial religious jazz work, *Music for Peace*, following a visit to Copenhagen and Rome.

The *Mary Lou's Mass* that is heard today comes from a version of the Mass published in 1975, the same year in which Mary Lou finally heard her Mass performed in a major liturgical setting – St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City. The work was originally a papal commission as a Mass for peace and justice, which Mary Lou embraced with her texts and title, *Music for Peace*. The work contains the *Ordinary* of the Mass, the texts set to music that are common to every Mass, as well as the *Propers*, the scriptural texts used for a specific feast day or purpose, and the *Propers* for *Music for*

³⁰ Dahl, *Morning Glory*, 4.

Peace were chosen from the Votive Mass for Peace.³¹ The work also contains several preludes, hymns composed by Mary Lou for earlier religious works, and instrumental pieces. In all, the version of the Mass recorded and released by Mary Lou is comprised of twenty-four parts. Table 2 outlines the stylistic influences and origin of each movement. The list of styles that each movement features shows the variety of genres in which Mary Lou composed, as well as establishes the connection between movements. Her use of original music, both instrumental and hymns, integrated within the original Mass movements displays how she created a unique Mass setting dedicated for a specific need. Her use of titles associated with the Civil Rights movement, trouble, and peace show how the work is designed as a Mass for peace (See Table 2).

The work was originally premiered at Holy Family Church for a memorial service of assassinated Kenyan leader Tom Mboya on July 15, 1969.³² Renowned choreographer and dancer Alvin Ailey (1931-1989) heard the work at the premier. After previous discussion of working together with the composer, he decided to choreograph a full-length work to the score of *Music for Peace*, which with the added material became *Mary Lou's Mass*.³³ The reworked composition was first performed in the fall of 1971 and remained in the company repertoire for two years. Portions of the recording of *Mary Lou's Mass* heard today were recorded for Alvin Ailey's tours.

³¹ Rev. Peter O'Brien, S.J., "Introduction," *Mary Lou's Mass*, CD jacket.

³² Tammy Kernodle, "Song Notes," *Mary Lou's Mass*, CD Liner Notes, 2004. Tom Mboya was a Kenyan Nationalist who was involved in Kenyan independence from Britain; he was shot in Nairobi while leaving a pharmacy.

³³ Tammy Lynn Kernodle, "This Is My Story, This Is My Song", 92. Alvin Ailey was a choreographer who embraced African American musical styles, such as gospels and spirituals, for his dances. He also choreographed to modern music outside of the African American idiom. Notably, Ailey had worked with Leonard Bernstein on his *Mass*, which made his relationship with Mary Lou an obvious choice.

Table 2 *Mary Lou's Mass Movements*

Title	Lyrics or Instrumental	Mass Part or Original/Hymn	Main Stylistic Influence
Willis	Instrumental	Original	Jazz
O.W.	Wordless Vocals	Original	Jazz, Funk
Praise the Lord	Lyrics	Original/Hymn	Gospel
Old Time Spiritual	Instrumental	Original	Blues, Jazz
The Lord Says	Lyrics	Original	Gospel
Act of Contrition	Lyrics	Mass Part	Jazz
Kyrie Eleison	Lyrics	Mass Part	Jazz, Gospel
Gloria	Lyrics	Mass Part	Jazz
Medi I & Medi II	Instrumental	Original	Blues, Jazz
In His Day/Peace I Leave With You/Alleluia	Lyrics	Original/Hymn	Jazz
Lazarus	Lyrics	Original/Hymn	Jazz
Credo	Lyrics	Mass Part	Jazz, Blues
Credo	Instrumental	Original	Jazz, Blues
Holy, Holy, Holy	Lyrics	Mass Part	Jazz
Amen	Lyrics	Mass Part	Jazz
Our Father	Lyrics	Mass Part	Jazz
Lamb of God	Lyrics	Mass Part	Classical
It is Always Spring	Wordless Vocals	Original/Hymn	Jazz, Blues
People in Trouble	Lyrics	Original/Hymn	Jazz
One	Lyrics (Music & Lyrics by Leon Thomas)	Original/Hymn	Jazz
Praise the Lord	Lyrics	Original/Hymn	Jazz
Jesus is the Best	Lyrics	Original/Hymn	Gospel
Tell Him Not to Talk Too Long	Lyrics	Original/Hymn	Jazz, Blues
I Have A Dream	Lyrics	Original/Hymn	Gospel

Sounds of Mary Lou's Mass

Mary Lou's career had spanned over four decades by the time she began writing *Mary Lou's Mass*. Consequently, the influence of the myriad of musical genres she performed and mastered throughout her career are suggestive when listening to the work. Overall, the work predominately features a late 1960s hard bop and rock influenced

sound; however, she additionally incorporates a variety of styles such as funk, blues, gospel, and even Gregorian chant.³⁴ The music of contemporary composers such as Arnold Schoenberg (1874-1951), Anton Webern (1883-1945), and Kryzstof Penderecki (b. 1933), also inspired her. Alvin Ailey introduced the music of these composers to her during the reworking of the Mass. The primary instrumentation is piano, bass, drums, congas, and flute, but each movement varies and some incorporate guitar and French horn. Distinct from the rest of the work, the recording of the final two movements features Mary Lou on the pipe organ. They are the only recorded examples of her pipe organ playing and are from performances in Rome, rather than the same studio sessions as the other movements.

The music was predominantly written in standard jazz notation, with the melody notated on the staff, lyrics written below, and the chord progression above the staff. For later performances, a piano part was written out, with the left hand presenting the bass line and the melody written in its own staff (See Figure 1.A in Appendix). When Mary Lou performed the Mass with various groups she often re-orchestrated or re-harmonized the parts to suit the vocalists and instrumentalists performing. This constant reworking is clear from her collection of manuscripts at the Institute of Jazz Studies where one finds a number of various parts and arrangements (See Figure 1 for an example of one of these manuscripts). Most of these smaller performances featured only Mary Lou on piano and a small choir, usually of school children. As the entire Mass takes just over one hour to perform, Mary Lou also performed shortened versions without all of the hymns. Her

³⁴ Hard bop is a musical style, which evolved from bebop, and is also considered a response to cool jazz. It features additional blues and gospel elements such as brief, catchy phrases (riffs) and rougher instrumental tone quality, and places emphasis on melodic material and improvisation. The major performers of hard bop were Horace Silver (1928-2014) and Art Blakey (1919-1990).

original hymn lyrics came from scripture, primarily the psalms, and could be eliminated to better suit the liturgical purpose of the Mass. Mary Lou thoroughly enjoyed performing *Mary Lou's Mass* throughout the last decade of her life around the East Coast; she felt it was important to be the one performing the work as a form of her evangelization.³⁵

Mary Lou saw jazz as “music of the soul” and felt that jazz was created out of a need for healing. When she reconciled these feelings with her Catholic beliefs she felt that the Mass needed a jazz setting. She frequently traveled to performances of her works later in life and would rescore the vocal parts for the available voice parts, particularly for choirs of children. This ability to accommodate the choir and congregation fit in well with the Vatican II council desires of actively involving the people in the Mass as well as harkening back to her early touring roots and the improvisatory nature of jazz and its adaptability as a musical genre.

³⁵ Personal Conversation with Dr. Kernodle, April 17, 2015. Mary Lou saw herself as an evangelist, preaching the healing power of jazz and Catholicism through her music.

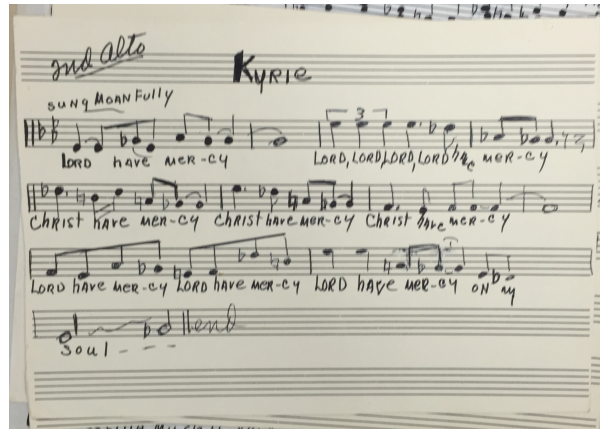


Figure 1 *Kyrie* Sample

Source: Institute of Jazz Studies: Mary Lou Williams Collection.

Musical Analysis

In my examination of Mary Lou’s use and combination of vernacular musical customs with traditions of the Catholic Church, I will focus on three sections of her work: an instrumental prelude and two sections of the *Mass Ordinary*.

Willis

“Willis” is the first movement of the Mass and is an instrumental prelude.³⁶ Written for a jazz piano trio with double bass and drums, an aural analysis of the recording reveals that the movement features a “groove” section as well as “straight ahead” swing, both at a fast bebop-inclined tempo.³⁷ Mary Lou’s improvisation is the predominant characteristic of the track and she displays her full prowess at the piano. As the only recorded performance of “Willis” demonstrates, along with the soloists on other movements throughout *Mary Lou’s Mass*, Mary Lou found improvisation to be a key trait

³⁶ This movement was composed in honor of Mary Lou Williams’s half-brother Willis Scruggs.

³⁷ The “groove” section is characterized by an ostinato bass pattern with the drums playing a complementing pattern. “Straight ahead swing” is a term used for a style of jazz where the bass is usually playing quarter notes, or “walking”, while the drum keeps time on the ride cymbal.

of the jazz tradition. Improvisation is not only a major characteristic of jazz, but also a feature of cultural association in black music.³⁸ As jazz developed as a genre, emerging as a blend of blues, ragtime, and the brass band, the embellishment of melodic material became an important trait of the music. As players progressed, this embellishment evolved into fully improvisational sections of music played over the harmonic material used under the original melody.³⁹ While Mary Lou incorporates improvisation in most movements of the Mass, featuring improvisation as the primary focus of the first prelude establishes jazz as the predominant influence of *Mary Lou's Mass*. The use of a standard lead sheet with a chord progression and limited melodic figures suggests that Mary Lou relied on her foundation as a jazz musician in her compositional process (See Appendix A.1).⁴⁰

The chord progression over which Mary Lou improvised is another feature that indicates a jazz influence. Mary Lou demonstrated her inclination towards extended harmonies and thick chord voicings, or chords built with extra notes outside of a triad, in the block chords she plays during the introductory material as well as under her own solo. The chords evoke the style and voicings of McCoy Tyner (b. 1938), a jazz pianist best known for performing with the Coltrane Quartet during the 1960s. Precisely, the use of fourths within this particular movement is a chord voicing frequently used by Tyner (See Figure 2). The chords contain stacked intervals of fourths within an octave, creating rich,

³⁸ Samuel Floyd, *The Power of Black Music: Interpreting Its History from Africa to the United States* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 140.

³⁹ Eileen Southern, *The Music of Black Americans*, 3rd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 1997), 369. Over time special scales, patterns, and material to facilitate improvisation were created and learned. These improvised sections, usually played between an opening and closing chorus of the original melody, became known as the solo section. They are an identifying characteristic of jazz even today.

⁴⁰ “Jazz is primarily an aural music: its written score represents but a skeleton of what actually takes place during a performance.” Ibid., 368.

colorful voicings, and are occasionally inverted, for example in measure 5 (See Figure 2). Presented in a thirty-two bar form, a conventional length for jazz works, the short work also exemplifies the interaction between musicians in a jazz ensemble.

The rhythm section on *Willis* worked together to create an “intertextual engagement,” which in this case allowed Mary Lou the freedom to improvise while the bass and drums supported her.⁴¹ On the recording of *Willis*, bassist Carline Ray (1925-2013) mainly played an ostinato rhythm on a single pitch while the drums kept time. This consistency created a foundation for Mary Lou to play over, exploring pitch and rhythm. Mary Lou’s improvisational style in this movement focuses on patterns and scales in her right hand, while the left hand outlines the harmonic progression in syncopated block chords. She uses grace notes, rests, and rapid sequences to create rhythmic interest, while parallel quartal chords and riffs (short repeated phrases) in the right hand provide melodic contrast. Jerome Harris (b. 1953), a jazz bassist and guitarist, described this type of interaction using the example of McCoy Tyner, drummer Elvin Jones (1927-2004), and bassist Steve Davis (1929-1987) saying,

You get into the details of whether the piano is going to be the one that's playing the riff ... and the bass and drums are going to be freed up to dance around that. Or if the bass player is going to be playing the ostinato-type line and the drums and the comping instrument are going to be free. Or whether the bass and drums are going to be together. That's just another resource to use.⁴²

While Mary Lou’s instrumental piece fits into the greater jazz tradition, how does one explain how she placed what appears to be an instrumental jazz piece into a Catholic

⁴¹ Ingrid Monson, *Saying Something: Jazz Improvisation and Interaction* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1996), 110. “Intertextual engagement” is the interplay of textures and roles within the rhythm section; in this instance, Monson suggests that some instruments maintain a foundation, which allows others to explore more freely within their improvisations.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 113.

Mass setting? She followed a tradition long established within the Catholic Church through the use of an instrumental prelude. Instrumental and sacred non-liturgical choral selections were and still are frequently used prior to the start of Mass as a way to stimulate feelings of joy or contemplation.⁴³ As mentioned previously, through improvisation and instrumentation, Mary Lou established jazz as the musical focus of her Mass setting. *Willis* sets the tone for the entirety of the Mass setting, thus helping to anchor and unify a Mass, which otherwise, may seem like a varied collection of musical styles.

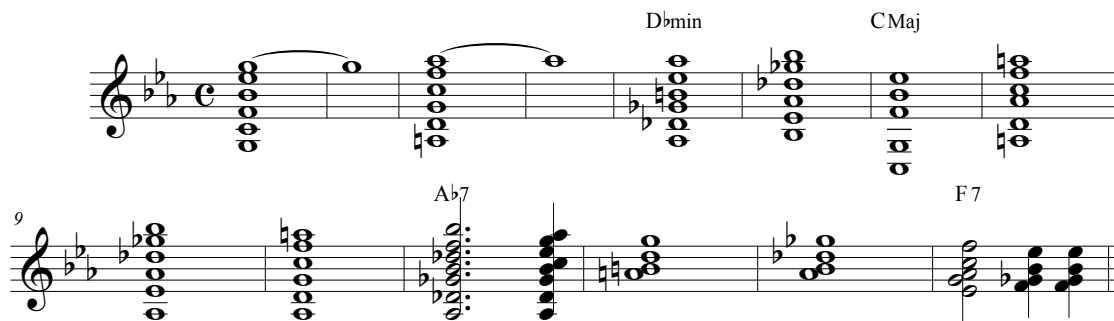


Figure 2 *Willis* Example

Source: Mary Lou Williams, *Mary Lou's Mass: Willis*, transcribed by Sarah Favinger mm 1-14.

Kyrie

Kyrie eleison is a prayer in the Liturgy of the Word, or the first half of the Catholic Mass, that calls on God and Jesus Christ to have mercy on human souls for the sins that have been committed. The *Kyrie*, a text written originally in Greek, is sung in a

⁴³ --, *Music in Catholic Worship*, 17.

three-part ABA form.⁴⁴ Here, we find a major departure from Catholic tradition with the use of her own vernacular text incorporated into the prayer. Her text relates back to the Mass's original title, *Music for Peace*, and touches on social problems of the day.⁴⁵ The use of the vernacular invocations addressed to Christ and the declaration of specific sins create a more personal experience in the prayer.

The music of Mary Lou's *Kyrie* is inspired by gospel and call-and-response traditions, which are an important part of many Black Christian worship experiences.⁴⁶ Mary Lou's interpretation of the styles has the first half of each declaration sung by a group of lower voiced males, while the response "Lord have mercy" or "Christ have mercy" comes in the form of an interjection from the upper voices, both male and female (See Figure 3). The latter portion of Mary Lou's arrangement features a female soloist who improvises over the choir. This soloist's use of text interpolation, slurs, shouts, chromaticism, and other musical ideas is a vocal technique that recalls performance practices from the gospel tradition.⁴⁷ Improvisatory vocal gestures, such as the aforementioned techniques, are most closely related to the gospel tradition, but they also

⁴⁴ Ibid., 25. The Latin text reads "Kyrie eléison, Chríste eléison, Kyrie eléison" and is translated in English into "Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy." It is the first movement of the *Mass Ordinary*.

⁴⁵ The lyrics to her arrangement are, "For our lack of faith, Lord have mercy. For our lack of hope, Lord have mercy. For our failure to care, Lord have mercy. // For letting ourselves be paralyzed with fear, Christ have mercy. For our division, Christ have mercy. For our jealousies, Christ have mercy. // For our hatred, Lord have mercy. For not being peacemakers, Lord have mercy. For our lies, Lord have mercy on our souls." Mary Lou Williams.

⁴⁶ Southern, *Music of Black Americans*, 457. The primary features of call-and-response are when a soloist is responded to by choral (SATB or congregational) or musical exclamations.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 476-477.

correspond to the vocal solo tradition in jazz demonstrated by women such as Ella Fitzgerald (1917-1996) and Sarah Vaughan (1924-1990).⁴⁸

The short movement encompasses most aspects of Samuel A. Floyd's defining characteristics of gospel performers of the 1950s with "precise rhythmic articulation; improvisatory, blues-inflected melismatic and motivic delivery; rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic repetition; emphasis on the primary chords (I, IV, V); [and] call-and-response dialogue involving the singers and their accompanying instruments."⁴⁹ Musical characteristics and compositional traits of the *Kyrie*, such as dialogue between a soloist and choir as well as harmonic repetition, are shown in Figure 3. The movement follows the text and is a simple ABA plus Coda format. While the repetitive nature of melody throughout the three parts of the movement allows the congregation to join in, the I – IV – V progression in the A section harmonically contrasts with the dominant pedal of the B section, creating musical interest. An addition of a coda creates a higher sense of joy and concludes the movement. Mary Lou's upbringing, with a mother who was a gospel piano player, probably cemented an association between the celebration of Christ and these joyous gospel musical ideas.

The jazz influence in the *Kyrie* is also notable with the inclusion of flute improvisations over the voices as well as the underlying shuffle style provided by the drums.⁵⁰ Mary Lou's jazz experience meant she did not dictate what her drummers

⁴⁸ Gayle Murchison, "Mary Lou Williams' Hymn 'Black Christ of the Andes (St. Martin de Porres):' Vatican II, Civil Rights, and Jazz as Sacred Music," *The Musical Quarterly* 86, No. 4 (Winter 2002): 613.

⁴⁹ Floyd, *The Power of Black Music*, 174.

⁵⁰ Shuffle is a specific style of swing music, it is a style usually characterized by the drummer's right hand playing the ride cymbal with swung eighth notes in a specific pattern.

played but probably vocalized a specific style she was aiming for with each of the movements. During the 1960s as Mary Lou was formulating her ideas and composing this Mass, gospel began to enter mainstream music and began gleaning material from other genres such as jazz and R&B.⁵¹ As an active musician in New York City, Mary Lou frequently attended performances of her friends and visited a variety of churches. Most likely, she witnessed a blend of styles there, and incorporated it into her setting of *Kyrie* in this Mass.

The musical score is for a Kyrie Eleison setting. It is written in 4/4 time and B-flat major. The first system features Soprano, Vocals, and Piano parts. The Soprano part has the lyrics 'Have mer - cy on my so - ul ____'. The Vocals part has the lyrics 'Lord have mer - cy ____'. The Piano part provides harmonic support. The second system features Soprano (S), Vocals (Vox), and Piano (Pno.) parts. The Soprano part has the lyrics 'have mer - cy - Lord on my soul ____'. The Vocals part has the lyrics 'Lord have mer - cy ____' repeated three times. The Piano part continues the harmonic support. The third system features Vocals (Vox) and Piano (Pno.) parts. The Vocals part has the lyrics 'Lord have mer - cy ____' repeated three times. The Piano part continues the harmonic support.

Figure 3 Kyrie Example

Source: Mary Lou Williams, *Mary Lou's Mass: Kyrie Eleison (Lord, Have Mercy)*, transcribed by Sarah Favinger, mm 32-39.

⁵¹ Floyd, *Power of Black Music*, 198.

Lamb of God

When Mary Lou originally composed *Mass for Peace* she had written a simple *Lamb of God* setting for the performances, but she did not record it.⁵² Later, while Alvin Ailey was examining the work for his choreography, he noticed the lack of this *Mass Ordinary* text. The *Lamb of God* is the English translation for the Latin text of the *Agnus Dei*, which is a movement of the *Mass Ordinary*. Hoping for a movement composed in a more avant-garde style, he introduced her to the music of Schoenberg, Webern, and Penderecki.⁵³ Mary Lou was taken by the music of these composers and composed an atonal movement, which also incorporates the foundation of Catholic music, Gregorian chant.

The basses begin the work reciting “Lamb of God” on a single tone, acting as a cantus firmus, which is then sung over with a florid tenor line. This organum-like style of composition harkens back to early Catholic chant tradition (See Figure 4, mm 1-3). As the remainder of the choir slowly joins, an increasing amount of dissonance is introduced. While the music is not set in the standard ABA form and is far from a congregational song, this was not unusual for the time as the *Lamb of God* was not necessarily “a song of the people” and could be sung exclusively by the choir.⁵⁴ With limited instrumentation – piano, bass, and flute – the choir is the focus of this movement. A limited instrumentation could be interpreted as a vestige of early Christian music traditions associated with

⁵² Text: Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, grant us peace.

⁵³ Tammy Kernodle, “Song Notes,” *Mary Lou’s Mass*, CD jacket, 22.

⁵⁴ *Music in Catholic Worship*, 25.

Gregorian chant, in which the voice was the primary instrument of the Church. The use of Dorian melodic ideas is also reminiscent of the modal basis for chant.

A blend of new and old, the chant tradition is then combined with twentieth century conventions like melodic ideas suggestive of influence from Penderecki's choral writing, such as his *Te Deum*. Mary Lou's melodic use of minor seconds, minor thirds, minor sixths, and tritones was also characteristic of Penderecki's religious choral music (See Figure 4).⁵⁵ An additional Penderecki technique in Mary Lou's work is the use of cries and screams from the choir members.⁵⁶ While there is no evidence remaining as to why Mary Lou chose to incorporate the cries and screams, the dark musical setting of a text full of hope may reveal Mary Lou's awareness of the world's need for forgiveness and mercy.

Figure 4 is the primary written material for this particular movement, however it does not contain any notation for several of these important musical elements. The choral interjections in minor seconds heard on the recording are not notated, nor are the screams and cries. Following the material seen in Figure 4, the choir sings on vowel sounds while soloists scream and cry above them, occurring in the middle and end of the movement. The use of the textless section provides contrast and would have been performed during a meditative section of the Mass. Due to Mary Lou's interest in rearranging the Mass for each performance and Alvin Ailey's influence on this movement, one may consider the possibility that the recorded version was arranged specifically for the choreographer.

⁵⁵ Ray Robinson, "The Penderecki *Te Deum*," *The Choral Journal* 21, No. 8 (April 1981), 5.

⁵⁶ The cries and screams also seem to be reminiscent of moments found at times in black worship and gospel traditions, however the screams and shouts usually found in these experiences represent joy rather than pain.

The display of post-tonal techniques makes the *Lamb of God* movement perhaps the most avant-garde selection of music ever composed by Mary Lou Williams. As a pianist, Mary Lou was known for her use of extended harmonies, though her chord choices rarely strayed outside of tonal harmonic function.⁵⁷ The *Lamb of God*, however, utilizes atonal harmonic structures. Atonal harmonic vocabulary was predominately employed in classical composition during this time. Her attraction to this music is not entirely surprising, as she may have felt the dissonances and significant cries and shouts allowed her to express musically the pain she felt during a point in the Mass used for meditation followed by the healing act of receiving the Eucharist.

Cohesive Nature of the Mass

While these three movements follow different compositional idioms, they contain the major components that link together the Mass composed by a musician with diverse influences. Performance practices from African-American sacred and secular traditions are at full display in the movements, while harmonic entities found in jazz also surface in gospel traditions. The *Lamb of God* appears to be entirely different from the other movements of the work, but the techniques used in the movement share points of connection with the Mass. The use of improvisation, for example, with cries and screams, as well as the call and response of the chant are concepts used throughout the Mass, realized her personal eclectic aesthetic. In *Lamb of God* these techniques are simply featured in a different harmonic and stylistic structure. The use of chant, a traditional feature of Catholic music, also grounds the post tonal techniques encounters in the movement within the Mass setting. In keeping the original text, rather than making

⁵⁷ Extended harmonies are those beyond the octave, such as 9ths, 11ths, and 13ths, commonly used in jazz piano voicings.

additions as in the case of the *Kyrie*, Mary Lou ensured that the movement is heard within the context of the entire Mass. These significant features may not provide the most immediate aural relationships or connections, but they conceptually link the Mass together as a unified work.

LAMB OF GOD

Composed by Mary Lou Williams

With love

Doia, Lamb of God, who take a - way the sins of the world,

have mer - - cy on us. Lamb of God, who

take a - way the sins of the world have mer - - - cy on us.

Lamb of God who take a - way the sins of the world, grant

us peace.

Figure 4 *Lamb of God* Example
Source: Institute of Jazz Studies, Mary Lou Williams Collection

Observing Mary Lou and her use of jazz in liturgical music, Father Anthony Woods states, “I see her as an apostle in the musical world. Jazz and Catholicism are in harmony with her. Jazz is an expression of the American Negro culture, and it has something beautiful to offer the church in the way of music.”⁵⁸ After struggling with financial, career, personal, and physical challenges throughout her life, Mary Lou found peace and healing in jazz and Catholicism, essential parts of her being. Through her religious music Mary Lou sought to share the peace she had found with others dealing with the trials of life.

Social and Religious Impact

During the 1960s the Catholic Church had been a voice for civil rights and on October 20, 1962 declared that humanity should accept the brotherhood of man and embrace social justice. Earlier that year, the canonization of the first Black Catholic saint, Martin de Porres (1579-1639), encouraged Black Catholics that their faith supported them in their search for equality.⁵⁹ The 1970s was a decade of growth for the Black Catholic community, beginning with the founding of the National Office for Black Catholics and the First National Black Lay Congress. As the decade progressed, six Black bishops were ordained.⁶⁰ It is no surprise then that *Mary Lou’s Mass* was

⁵⁸ Dahl, *Morning Glory*, 273.

⁵⁹ Murchison, “Mary Lou Williams’ Hymn ‘Black Christ of the Andes (St. Martin de Porres):’,” *The Musical Quarterly* 86, No. 4 (Winter 2002):601-604. Martin de Porres was a Peruvian saint of African and Castilian descent. He lived during the seventeenth century, however miracles attributed to him began in South America in the mid-twentieth century. He was seen as a symbol of inspiration to African American Catholics in the clergy. Within South America, he was the unofficial patron saint of social justice until his official proclamation in 1945.

⁶⁰ McGann, *Let it Shine!*, 9. Those ordained were: Divine Word Father Harold R. Perry, Father Joseph Lawson Howze, Josephite Father Eugene A. Marino, Divine Word Father Joseph Abel Francis, Divine Word Father Raymond Rodly Caesar, and Franciscan Friar James Patterson Lyke.

performed at St. Patrick's Cathedral in the midst of such progress for Black Catholics. Most likely, Mary Lou's music was being used as a litmus test for the use of popular music in the liturgy in the wake of the Vatican II Council.⁶¹ When Mary Lou requested of Cardinal Terence James Cooke (1921-1983) of New York that her Mass be performed at St. Patrick's Cathedral, she mentioned that the music was rather loud and noisy, to which Cardinal Cooke responded, "That's what we need." This is an excellent example of the American clergy embracing Vatican II's call for new, vernacular music within the liturgy.⁶²

For theologian Diana Hayes, "To be a Black Catholic means to be one whose faith pervades every aspect of their life. It means loving music in all its forms, from Gospel to classical, to hip-hop."⁶³ Mary Lou Williams embodied this definition in her passion for music and demonstrated it through her incorporation of a variety of musical genres into her Mass; she truly embraced all music. Her belief in the healing power of jazz and the healing power of Catholicism consumed much of her life, resulting in a desire to evangelize through music. *Mary Lou's Mass* was composed following the major changes to come out of the Vatican II Council. However, the work was also written within the context of the Civil Rights movement; in fact, Mary Lou included two hymns she composed in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.

⁶¹ Kernodle, "This Is My Story, This Is My Song", 94.

⁶² Dahl, *Morning Glory*, 309-310.

⁶³ Phan and Hayes, *Many Faces, One Church*, 63.

As a result of Vatican II, Black Catholics were able to integrate their own song traditions with the liturgy and pageantry, creating a sense of contribution to the liturgy.⁶⁴ The integration of vernacular musical traditions into the Catholic liturgy fostered a mutual growth for both Black Catholics and the overall culture of American Catholicism. As American Catholicism explored new musical genres during this time, the introduction of jazz into the Mass gave a significant opportunity for learning and exposure to Catholics of all backgrounds. The use of jazz in the Mass provided a means to incorporate black worship traditions into the Catholic faith, but it also exposed the music to audiences who might otherwise have shunned or neglected to listen to it.⁶⁵ The Catholic Church's desire to embrace its multicultural facets in the late 1960s and throughout the 1970s established a foundation for a more active congregation. Black Catholics were not the only cultural group in the United States to take advantage of the new vernacular and musical opportunities presented by the Vatican II Council changes; the Hispanic Catholics of Texas also began absorbing their own popular music into the Mass.

⁶⁴ McGann, *Let it Shine!*, 21. The Catholic Church's traditions of incense, robes, and pageantry seem to attract blacks because of the theatrical nature.

⁶⁵ Kernodle, "This Is My Story, This Is My Song", 87.

CHAPTER THREE

La misa panamericana

Hispanic Catholicism in the United States

As one of the largest growing Catholic groups in the United States the Mexican American Catholic population emerged from major waves of immigration over the past eighty years, bringing with them nearly four centuries of religious traditions. The Franciscans first brought Catholicism to Mexico in 1524; over the following centuries they spread Catholicism throughout Central and South America and the southwestern United States.¹ The religious culture of the Spanish colonies was heavily guided by the Spanish religious traditions and integration of traditional native, pagan rituals, creating syncretic practices.² Unlike the suffering of the Irish Catholics, Spanish Catholics and their colonial counterparts' lives centered on the Roman Catholic Church and its teaching until the mid-nineteenth century.

Most current Mexican American Catholics' ancestors were Mexican peasants who were distrustful of controlling Spanish power and the clergy associated with it, creating a

¹ The Franciscan friars, a Catholic male religious order, was founded on October 3, 1226, upon the teachings of St. Francis of Assisi (1181/1182). St. Francis was best known for his celebration of poverty and his regard for nature, animals, and children as representatives and reflections of God. Franciscan monks traveled as missionaries throughout the world administering and preaching to predominantly poor communities. The Twelve Apostles of Mexico were a group of Franciscan monks sent in 1524 to evangelize the native population of New Spain, which later became Mexico, Spanish Central America, the Spanish Caribbean, and Florida.

² Dale Hoyt Palfrey, "Mexico Holiday and Fiesta Calendar," *Mexconnect*, <http://www.mexconnect.com/articles/1953-mexico-holiday-and-fiesta-calendar-mexican-holidays>, accessed May 11, 2015. An example of this integration of syncretic practices are the feast days of Carnival, brought from Europe and coincided with the Mayan holiday Cabik. Another example is Guelaguetza; a pagan ritual celebrated in Oaxaca to propitiate the gods in exchange for rain, when the Spanish came it was attached with a celebration of the Virgin of Carmen, celebrated on the two Mondays following July 16th.

unique religious environment within a devout culture.³ Comparable to the Black Catholics, and quite unlike the Irish Catholics, Hispanic Catholics in the United States are a community-oriented assembly with an affinity for music and religious celebrations.⁴ Fiestas, for feast days such as Our Lady of Guadalupe, December 12, are a defining feature of Hispanic Catholic culture and also shine light on the culture's distinctive emphasis on the saints.⁵

The distrust and reluctance to rely on parish clergy resulted in a stronger need for intermediaries to God in the Hispanic population. Historian James S. Olson, noted, "The Virgin of Guadalupe was their favorite, with a pilgrimage to her basilica in Mexico City the devotional peak of one's life. The Virgin Mother intervened with God, averted danger, cured illnesses, ended drought, and helped maintain the precarious balance of life."⁶ Other Catholic saints were also prayed to for intercession and thus developed a tradition of blending native rituals and artwork, resulting in *retablo* (devotional paintings)

³ Olson, James S. "The Hispanic Catholics." *A Church of Many Cultures: Selected Historical Essays on Ethnic American Catholicism*. Edited by Dolores Ann Liptak. From The Heritage of American Catholicism: A Twenty-Eight-Volume Series Documenting the History of America's Largest Religious Denomination. Edited by Timothy Walch. New York: Garland Pub, 1988.381.

⁴ For brevity and clarity, Mexican American Catholics will be referred to in this work as Hispanic Catholics. I recognize that other Central and South American Catholics can be included in this group, but most of the contemporary scholarship refers to this group collectively as Hispanic Catholics. The Mexican Americans are also the vast majority of the Hispanic Catholics in the United States. The immigrant population is much lower from other Central and South American countries and the dominating traditions in current Hispanic United States American Catholics are Mexican.

⁵ Sheehy, 145. December 12th is the Feast Day of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Our Lady of Guadalupe is the patron saint of Mexico. According to Catholic reports state that on December 9th, 1531 Juan Diego, now a saint, saw an apparition of a maiden on the Hill of Tepeyac, who requested, in Diego's native Aztec tongue, that a church be built on this site in her honor. Juan Diego informed the archbishop, who asked Diego to request miracles as a sign. The two miracles that followed were the healing of Juan Diego's uncle and his finding of Castilian roses on top of the barren hill in December. When Juan Diego brought the roses to the archbishop, arranged in his cloak by the Virgin, they fell out of his cloak and the vision appeared on the fabric. The showing of the Virgin of Guadalupe was taken by many Spaniards in New Spain as an indication that God approved of the Spanish mission in the New World. English translation of the *Nican Mopohua*, a 17th-century account written in the native Nahuatl language.

⁶ Olson, "The Hispanic Catholics", 382.

and *veladoras* (religious candles). Following the Mexican War of Independence (1810-1821), the Mexican American War (1846-1848), and the Reform War (1857-1861), Mexicans were granted freedom from the oppression of an increasingly Anglicized Spain.⁷ Half a century later the first major wave of immigration from Mexico to the United States began, thus introducing Hispanic Catholicism to the southwestern states. While a large number of Irish Catholics deserted the American army during the Mexican American War to support their Catholic brethren, culturally the two disparate faith traditions have been unable to unify over the past eighty years.⁸

In 1973, sociologist Harold J. Abramson quoted Joseph Fichter writing in 1960, “The Mexican Catholics of the Southwest and the Irish Catholics of the Northeast have carried ethnic overtones so that in these cases we must talk about the Americanization of the Mexicans and Irish, rather than the Americanization of Catholics.”⁹ This statement was made far too early in the development of an American Catholic culture, as the Irish Catholics grew to dominate the American Catholic aesthetics, particularly in the facet of music. In fact, early discussion of American Catholicism was focused on the four major

⁷ The Mexican War of Independence (1810-1821) was a war between Spain and Mexico, resulting in Mexican Independence from Spain. Occurring in two phases, the war was initially a revolt led by Miguel Hildago y Costilla and a small band of men. Guerrilla bands of Mexican Nationalists fighting against royalist forces were the primary forces in the second phase of the conflict. Following a coup in Spain, the Spanish Constitution of 1812 was reinstated in 1820, through this Mexico was later able to gain independence. Fifteen years later, the Mexican American War (1846-1848) resulted from the United States’ annexation of Texas in 1845, and armed conflict occurred throughout Texas, New Mexico, California, and Northern, Central and Eastern Mexico. As a result of the war, Alta California and New Mexico were ceded to the United States and Mexico recognized Texas’s independence. Following a government failure, civil war broke out in Mexico between the liberals, who wanted limited Catholic Church and military influence, and the conservatives, who desired a centralist government. The Reform War (1857-1861) was ended by French intervention in Mexico in 1861.

⁸ “Mexican Americans suffer from an unfinished or undefined identity. Their Spanish is too anglicized for the Mexicans, and their English is too Mexicanized for the Anglo-Americans. For Mexicans, Hispanics are too close to the United States, and for Anglo-Americans they are too close to Mexico. The mestizo reality is feared and rejected by both racial groups that produce it because it blurs the identity-constituting boundaries between them.” Cenker, *The Multicultural Church*, 121.

⁹ Abramson, *Ethnic Diversity in Catholic America*, 33.

regions of the United States, the Southwest being dominated by the Hispanic Catholics.¹⁰

Unlike Black Catholics, who maintain a wide geographic reach, Hispanic Catholics are still the majority of southwestern American Catholics and as their culture permeated parish churches in the region a retreat of Anglo-American Catholics to their own segregated parishes began.¹¹

Uncomfortable with Hispanic Catholic theology, aesthetics, and traditions, the Anglo-American Catholics have struggled to incorporate the two traditions into a united parish community.¹² The lack of foundation on conviction and teaching as well as a strong emphasis on community and fiestas in Hispanic Catholicism contrasted with the stoic and educated Anglo-American Catholicism. This resulted from the colonial period when the proportion of priests to congregants was very low and, as a result, limited the Church in many areas of Latin America from functioning as an instructional and religious entity. The lack of native Latin Americans becoming priests also created a cultural disparity, unlike Europe, and particularly Ireland where firstborn sons were often dedicated to the church at birth. This gap between clergy and congregation resulted in more of a community based on commonality and customs rather than religious instruction and conviction. The tradition of fiestas, devotional art, and celebrations is commonly

¹⁰ For the purposes of this discussion, the Southwest is defined as Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, and southern California. To see the other regions of the United States, see Table 1 in Chapter 1.

¹¹ Abramson, *Ethnic Diversity in Catholic America*, 28-33; 139-141. Mexican American Catholics transferred their communities and societal structure from Mexico to the southwestern United States. This structure was created due to the distance between the clergy and the people, which will be discussed later. As religion is a core feature of Mexican American communities, parishes were established to provide a community center in areas with large immigrant populations.

¹² As mentioned previously, the rigid and aesthetically barren traditions of Irish Catholicism permeated United States Catholic parishes and became standard in many Anglo-American Catholic parishes. The jubilant, expressive, and celebratory traditions of other ethnic Catholic cultural communities often made the Anglo-American Catholics uncomfortable.

discussed in Catholic American study, but the specific role and styles of music is neglected in academia.¹³

Catholic Music and Musicians in Texas, a small but detailed text written in 1936 in San Antonio, Texas, by Sister Joan of Arc, discusses the early hymns and vernacular texts used by Mexican and early Mexican-American Catholics.¹⁴ Sister Joan focuses on several hymnbooks and establishes that the melodies were Spanish or Mexican in origin. The collection also contained melodies of posadas, alabanzas, and Native American tribal songs.¹⁵ While the melodies are mentioned in the publication, the discussion is limited on the actual style and instrumentation of the music used in Mexican and early Mexican-American Catholic worship.

The earliest known appearance of a specific musically-styled Mass for Mexican Americans in the United States is found in the 1960s during the encouragement of vernacular music. One such example is the mariachi Mass. According to Kip Lornell, “The ‘Mariachi Mass,’ begun in Mexico and now quite popular in many Catholic Churches with large Mexican congregations, offers mariachi arrangements of all the

¹³ Abramson., 140-141.

¹⁴ Congregation of Divine Providence, “Texas 1866: Heritage,” Sisters of Divine Providence, 2014, accessed May 7, 2015, <http://www.cdptexas.org/texas1866.html>. After much searching, limited information has been found on Sister Joan of Arc. The name Joan of Arc was popular for nuns in the early twentieth century, creating difficulties in establishing who each specific sister is. The information I have uncovered is that she was a Sister of Divine Providence; it is likely she was originally from France, as she was a part of the missionary work begun in 1866 in San Antonio, Texas. Her association with this specific group of sisters is clear due to the publication of the work at Our Lady of the Lake College in San Antonio, Texas, which is operated by this congregation of sisters.

¹⁵ The most important hymnbooks mentioned are: *Colección de Cantos Sagrados Populares* (Mexico), *Cánticos Mexicanos* (Texas), and *Cánticos Piadosos* (Texas). Sister Joan of Arc, *Catholic Music and Musicians in Texas*, San Antonio 1936, 18-19.

major parts of the Mass, as well as hymns for regular or special occasions.”¹⁶ The mariachi Mass was one of earliest responses to the Second Vatican Council changes, showing that Mexicans and Mexican Americans were ready for the incorporation of their culture into worship, as well as having a musical style that naturally suited the Mass.

Mariachi Music

Beginnings

The musical ancestor to today’s mariachi music began to appear in history in the mid-nineteenth century, not as a specific style of music, but rather a collection of musicians performing. Notably, the use of the term “mariachi” and references to the musicians were first stated by Catholic priests in relation to social celebrations.¹⁷ The concept of mariachi as a musical group, as a symbol of Mexico, and with a specific dress and musical style developed over the next seventy years.¹⁸ In the 1920s, Mariachi Coculense “Rodríguez” made the first traditional music recordings, which were included in the first sound film in Mexico. According to ethnomusicologist Donald Henriques,

¹⁶ Daniel Sheehy, “Mexican Mariachi Music: Made in the U.S.A.” *Musics of Multicultural America: A Study of Twelve Musical Communities*, Edited by Kip Lornell and Anne K. Rasmussen (London: Schirmer Books, 1997), 145.

¹⁷ The term “mariachi” encapsulates several different meanings. Prior to the twentieth century, mariachi could refer to the music itself, the musicians playing the music, the occasion at which the music was being performed and danced to, or even the platform upon which the dancers danced. Sheehy, *Mariachi Music in America*, 15-16.

¹⁸ Mariachi music originated in the Jalisco region of Mexico and was a regional style of *son* music, a type of Mexican folk music that varies by region but has core elements that groups the regionalized versions into a single genre. The *son* is usually in compound duple or compound quadruple meter and features sesquialtera (or hemiola) rhythms. As this rural style migrated to larger cities the musical style became popular and was adopted by the Mexican government in an effort to establish a Mexican cultural identity. Ethnomusicologists Daniel Sheehy and Donald Henriques both discuss the concept of mariachi music as a symbol of Mexico in their works, *Mariachi Music in America* and *Transnational Encounters: Music and Performance at the US/Mexico Border*.

“[t]hese ‘firsts’ more firmly established mariachi music as a professional form of entertainment in burgeoning Mexico City, and it placed the mariachi more in the arena of the Mexican electronic media.”¹⁹ With the development of film and radio over the next thirty years, mariachi music began to transform into a permanent symbol of Mexican music and was, most importantly for our discussion, imported to the United States.

Traditional Mariachi groups typically contain violin, guitar, *vihuela* - a sixteenth-century Spanish guitar, and *guitarrón* - a much larger *vihuela* that acts as the bass of the ensemble. In the 1940s and 50s due to the influence of jazz and big bands, trumpet was added and occasionally harp is also included in the group as it was an instrument used in several founding ensembles.²⁰ This standard instrumentation came into prominence in the early to mid-twentieth century, as mariachi groups became major symbols in popular culture. 1935-1955 was the Golden Age of Mexican Cinema and throughout North America the *comedia ranchera* (ranch play films) with charro singers and mariachi groups performing *canción ranchera* (signature musical genre) became a prominent film genre.²¹

It was this foundation that secured mariachi music as a staple of Mexican communities immigrating into Texas, New Mexico, and California. With such a powerful connection to the Mexican community, social connotations, and accessibility as a

¹⁹ Ibid., 20.

²⁰ The violin and the trumpet act as melodic voices and generally harmonize in 3rds and 6ths. They can play melodic material in place of a vocalist during an interlude or also provide interjections while the vocalist is singing. The *vihuela* is the harmonic vehicle for the ensemble, providing both rhythm as well as the harmonic progression. The *guitarrón*, as mentioned earlier, is the bass instrument of a mariachi ensemble, it helps to emphasize the progression played by the *vihuela* as well as create time and style.

²¹ Alejandro L. Madrid, *Transitional Encounters*, 85. Examples of these films are *Allá en el rancho grande* (1936) featuring Tito Guízar, which is credited with being the first major screen success of a film featuring a mariachi singer, and *¡Ay Jalisco... no te rajes!* (1941), which was the first film featuring Jorge Negrete.

popular, vernacular musical genre it is no surprise that mariachi music was adapted into the Catholic Mass in parishes with large Hispanic populations. In 1966, the bishop of Cuernavaca, Mexico, Sergio Méndez Arceo (1907-1992) commissioned *La misa panamericana*, the Panamerican Mass. A Canadian priest, Juan Marco Leclerc, composed the work in the style of a mariachi folk Mass, and while other mariachi Masses appear to have been used throughout the past fifty years *La misa panamericana* has remained the standard repertoire of mariachis in church.²² The mariachi Mass was widely accepted in Mexico, as it represented a predominant cultural feature in the Mass. Originally performed in a smaller parish, the new Mass drew crowds of such significant size that its celebration had to move to the cathedral in Cuernavaca.²³ While St. Joseph's in Houston is the only parish in the United States to perform *La misa panamericana* continuously, the Cathedral of the Ascension in Cuernavaca has been the home of the mariachi Mass in Mexico for forty-nine years.

Mariachi Mass in Houston

While Sister Joan of Arc's text focuses on the music of Texas in San Antonio and further west, she does mention the establishment of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Houston in 1911, acknowledging the fledgling Hispanic population in Houston. This church was founded to minister to the growing needs of this new community, which was ever increasing.²⁴ *La misa panamericana* is performed weekly at St. Joseph Catholic Church

²² As in the case of my attempts to obtain information on Sister Joan of Arc, I was unable to find dates and additional details about Fr. Juan Marco Leclerc. Burnett, John. "Our Soul is Mariachi Music."

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ As the Mexican population grew throughout Houston, a foundation for the acceptance of a mariachi Mass was established within the city's Catholic parishes; however, the mariachi Mass coming to Houston developed through a unique circumstance.

in Houston, the second oldest functioning Catholic Church in Houston.²⁵ Founded in 1880, the church originally served Anglo-Americans rather than the Mexican population. As demographics changed throughout the city, the Mexican population remained in historic Houston and became the primary congregation of St. Joseph's parish. By the mid-1960s it was the ideal congregation for the incorporation of a mariachi Mass.

Father Patricio Flores (b. 1929), a Mexican-American Priest at St. Joseph's Catholic Church, took the Mariachi Norteño to Cuernavaca, Mexico in 1967 to hear the mariachi Mass. The members of the group, also members of St. Joseph's, listened to the Mass, learned it by ear, and brought it back with them to Houston.²⁶ Mariachi Norteño stands as the only group in the United States to perform the mariachi Mass continually, regardless of church season or festival.²⁷

Experiencing the Mariachi Mass

I attended Mass at St. Joseph in Houston, Texas on the 3rd Sunday of Lent, 2015, where I heard the mariachi Mass performed during the noon Mass by the Mariachi Norteño. As I arrived ten minutes early, during a prayer cycle said before Mass, I saw the musicians briefly in the narthex before taking a seat and noticed that they were dressed in

²⁵ The Church of the Annunciation is the oldest functioning church in Houston. This parish was established as an outgrowth of St. Vincent's in 1839. St. Vincent's, the first Catholic Church in Houston, is no longer in existence.

²⁶ Cuernavaca is the capital of the state of Morelos located south of Mexico City and in central Mexico. John Burnett, "Our Soul Music is Mariachi Music": Houston's Mexican Mass," National Public Radio, January 3, 2014, accessed January 10, 2014, <http://www.npr.org/2014/01/03/259389094/our-soul-is-mariachi-music-houstons-mexican-mass>.

²⁷ While the Mariachi Norteño is the only group to perform the entire *La misa panamericana*, in 2013 several portions of the Mass were published in the Oramos Cantando/We Pray in Song hymnal. This hymnal lists the original titles differently (*Misa Panamericana* and *Misa Mariachi*) and attributes the music to different composers. However, the use of the same melodic material shows that the mariachi Mass traveled throughout the United States and was a popular setting. As the Mariachi Norteño learned the music through transcription it is highly likely that others did and carried parts of the Mass to other parishes.

the traditional style of *traje de charro*, wearing Mexican cowboy-style suits.²⁸ The church itself is a small sanctuary designed in a gothic style with paired stained glass windows, matching rose windows at each end of the church, an elaborate tabernacle, and high archways. I could hear the mariachi musicians softly tuning their instruments in the front of the church, where they sit amongst the congregation in the front right of the church, rather than near the altar or in the choir loft. The stonework of the church provides natural amplification for the musicians' voices and instruments. When the music begins they stand up from their seats and perform in front of their pews, at the base of the altar. The vocalist leading that particular song, the *guitarrón* player, and the *vihuela* player stand in front and act as leaders for the congregation while the violinists stand together behind them.

The configuration of the Mariachi Norteño that performed that particular Sunday was made up of 5 violinists, *vihuela*, and *guitarrón*. However, the ensemble also had guitar in the past and uses trumpets during other seasons of the church calendar.²⁹ The oldest member of the ensemble and *guitarrón* player, Jesús Escareño (b. 1939), stood closest to the altar and led the music.³⁰

The Mass began at 12:00 noon following a recitation of prayers in Spanish. When it was time for the Mass to begin the Mariachi started to play their opening hymn or song,

²⁸ The Mexican cowboy-style suits are made up of a *chamarra* (jacket) and pants that are decorated with *botonadura* (buttoned or stitched ornaments on the jacket sleeves, chest, and pant legs). The suit is usually black for mariachi musicians and they frequently wear a sombrero. Sheehy, *Mariachi Music in America*, 3.

²⁹ Lent is the most solemn season of the Roman Catholic Church and as such the music of the season reflects the solemnity and penitentiary mood of the season. The Kyrie is often the musical focal point of the Liturgy of the Word, the first half of the Mass, because the Gloria and Alleluia are omitted during this season, symbolic of Jesus' suffering.

³⁰ Jesús, a founder of the Mariachi Norteño, has been performing the mariachi Mass at St. Joseph's since the tradition began 48 years ago.

to which the priest, readers, and altar servers with the crucifix processed down the aisle. The *Kyrie* was sung by the mariachi and congregation, followed immediately by the prayers before the reading of the scripture. Between the Liturgy of the Word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist there was no music during the Offertory or Presentation of the Gifts, when songs or hymns are usually sung. The Liturgy of the Eucharist contained the most music with the *Sanctus*, *Mystery of Faith*, *Amen*, and *Agnus Dei* all sung and played by the mariachi. After each member of the group had received communion, the ensemble continued to play music as part of the liturgy. The Mass ended quietly, without any music at all as the priest processed through the church and out to the narthex.

Sounds of the Mariachi Mass

Mariachi Norteño's performance of the Mass contained the typical musical characteristics of mariachi music performance practice such as call and response, alternation between verse and chorus, systematic interaction of the violin, and use of wide vibrato in both the vocalists and instrumentalists.³¹ The use of call and response was used mostly within the Mariachi ensemble itself, rather than interacting with the congregation: one member would start a phrase as a soloist and the rest of the ensemble interjected and completed the idea. Similar in style was the use of a cantor or soloist for the verses and the ensemble singing the chorus (See Table 3). The violins played during the instrumental interludes and while the soloist performed, and during choruses the instrumentalists became a singing ensemble.

³¹ As there are no commercial recordings of *La misa panamericana*, my field recordings and those graciously given to me by John Barnett of NPR are the only recordings I could use for listening, writing, and transcribing purposes. I was very excited to be able to have the opportunity to experience *La misa panamericana* and record the music myself, however it also presented significant demands. While I recorded with the best equipment available, the clarity, resulting from the echo in the church, caused some challenges for its accurate transcription.

The mariachi Mass sounded much like the music one would hear from a mariachi group performing for a different occasion or venue. However, from reading interviews and discussing the Mass with the Mariachi Norteño, the musicians find a deeper sense of faith in the music while performing the Mass, rather than at any other event such as a *quinceañera*, a young woman's fifteenth birthday celebration, or a family party.³² As in other American Catholic churches, not much was sung by the congregation; there were a few spirited singers and a general humming of the melody throughout the assembly, but congregational singing was limited.³³ However, there was congregational participation during the Mass Ordinary sections. Like the majority of post-Vatican II Mass settings, not all parts of the Mass Ordinary were sung; the Credo was spoken, unlike *Mary Lou's Mass*.

Table 3 *La misa panamericana* Movements

Title	Singing Forces	Source (Mass or Hymn)
Angelus	Mariachi Alone	Hymn/Devotion
Kyrie eleison	Congregation	Mass
Gloria	Congregation	Mass (not during Lent)
Alleluia	Congregation	Mass (not during Lent)
Offertory	Mariachi Alone	Hymn
Sanctus	Congregation	Mass
Mystery of Faith	Congregation	Mass
Agnus Dei	Congregation	Mass
Communion Song	Mariachi Alone	Hymn

³² Following the end of Mass, which was entirely in Spanish, I approached the Mariachi Norteño members and mentioned my study of *La misa panamericana* and their group. I was quickly directed to Jesús, who provided me with some of the aforementioned information in a casual conversation, however I was able to confirm many of his details through other sources as well.

³³ Thomas Day discusses this phenomenon in *Why Catholics Can't Sing*, 3-4.

Musical Analysis

As in the previous chapter, I will now more closely analyze two sections from the Mass Ordinary to discuss the mariachi Mass's use and combination of vernacular musical customs with traditions of the Catholic Church.

Kyrie eleison

While Mary Lou's *Kyrie* uses new text as well as the English Mass translation, *La misa panamericana* contains the standard Spanish translation with only the addition of *ten piedad de nosotros* ("have mercy on us") rather than new texts requesting forgiveness for specific sins.³⁴ In the mariachi Mass the same *Kyrie* musical setting is heard every season.³⁵ The poetic form of the *Kyrie* is unusual for mariachi music since it only presents three lines of text, which are each repeated twice. The typical poetic form for mariachi music is usually based on couplets or four line stanzas with an alternating rhyme scheme.³⁶

The movement is homophonic, containing no melodic imitation, featuring this particular characteristic of mariachi music. Simple stepwise motion and consistent rhythm is the primary melodic focus, however the use of skip motion in the melody and a modulation in the B section offers a different emphasis when the text changes. The use of

³⁴ *Señor, ten piedad (ten piedad de nosotros. Cristo, ten piedad (ten piedad de nosotros). Señor, ten piedad (ten piedad de nosotros).* Translated: Lord, have mercy (have mercy on us). Christ, have mercy (have mercy on us). Lord, have mercy (have mercy on us).

³⁵ The Catholic Church seasons are Advent, Christmas, Ordinary Time, Lent, Easter Triduum and the Easter season. There are also feasts, such as the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, which are celebrated to varying degrees around the world.

³⁶ The use of the three lines, in ABA form, is due to the significance of the number three in Catholicism, symbolic for the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Thus, the *Kyrie* original form is maintained despite translation.

repetition is also important in mariachi music and can be seen in Figure 5. Repetition is used to encourage congregational singing, as the assembly has heard all the material once before and is invited to sing with the mariachi ensemble. This is a common musical performance practice in the *Kyrie* of most post-Vatican II Mass settings, regardless of musical style.

The style of the movement is a less common mariachi form, which most closely resembles a march in a duple feel, which may have been used to make congregational singing easier. Steady strumming patterns in the *vihuela* and *guitarrón* place emphasis on the melodic material in the violins, which is also the vocal rhythm used for both A and B sections (See Figure 5). While the *Kyrie* is slower than a typical march to accommodate the lyrics, the style resembles the quick duple march in the latter half of *El Jarabe Tapatio*.³⁷ Even though the overall length of the form is unusual for mariachi music, the length fulfills the requirements of a religious text and eliminates a long ending, as it is a continuation of the opening rites of the Mass.

While the movement does not reflect the most common stylistic traits of mariachi in terms of form or poetics, there are attributes of style that create the mariachi feel of the movement. Throughout *La misa panamericana*, and particularly in this movement, parallel thirds and sixths are featured in the improvised violin harmonies. Parallel thirds and sixths are typical in mariachi music. Call and response or phrase completion by the chorus ensemble members, who also play violin in the instrumental sections, are also

³⁷ Daniel Sheehy, "Mexican Mariachi Music," 135. Also known as the Mexican Hat Dance, *El Jarabe Tapatio* is a long, sectionalized Mexican folk dance that incorporates both triple and duple meters, as well as other characteristics of the forms found in mariachi music performance practice. In concert settings it usually features dancers.

common mariachi performance practices. The movement, while short, represents well the mariachi influences in *La misa panamericana*.

$\text{♩} = 105$

Se - ñor, ten pie - dad, _____ ten pie - dad de no - so - tros.

5
Se - ñor, ten pie - dad, _____ ten pie - dad de no - so - tros.

9
Cris - to, ten pie - dad, _____ ten pie - dad de no - so - tros.

13
Cris - to, ten pie - dad, _____ ten pie - dad de no - so - tros.

17
Cris - to, ten pie - dad, _____ ten pie - dad de no - so - tros.

21
Se - ñor, ten pie - dad, _____ ten pie - dad de no - so - tros.

25
Se - ñor, ten pie - dad, _____ ten pie - dad de no - so - tros.

Figure 5 *Kyrie* Transcription

Source: Juan Marco Leclerc, *La misa panamericana: Kyrie eleison*, transcribed by Sarah Favinger.

Agnus Dei

The *Agnus Dei* is part of the Liturgy of the Eucharist, the latter half of the Mass.³⁸ As in the *Kyrie*, this movement is also in a three-part form; however, the poetic form is AAB. Melodically the movement is AAA¹. In a minor key, the movement has a more somber feeling than the *Kyrie*. The *Agnus Dei* is also in the less common, but still used, form of a slow march. The duple feel is emphasized here by the *guitarrón*, which plays consistently on beats 1 and 2. Melodically the *Agnus Dei* contains wider intervals, but it stays within a fifth, with one exception, the first note of each phrase is an octave lower than the highest pitch.

This movement contains extensive repetition, particularly as the music never changes for the three sections. However, rather than repeating the entire vocal phrase by the ensemble and congregation, the style employs a call-and-response technique, with the ensemble repeating the very last phrase sung by the cantor (See Figure 6). Another unusual feature is the fifteen-bar vocal verse alternating with a sixteen-bar instrumental phrase. These musical phrases do not sound unusual due to the two sections seemingly “sharing” one measure between the two phrases (See Table 4).³⁹ While the movement has some unusual qualities, such as the poetic form and phrase length, it also embraces traditional mariachi features similar to those found in the *Kyrie*.

Using a common mariachi device, *Agnus Dei* features sections in which the ensemble responds to the vocal soloist in harmony of thirds and sixths. Instrumental

³⁸ *Cordero de Dios, que quitas el pecado del mundo, ten piedad de nosotros. Cordero de Dios, que quitas el pecado del mundo, ten piedad de nosotros. Cordero de Dios, que quitas el pecado del mundo, danos la paz.* Translated: Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, have mercy on us. Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world, grant us peace.

³⁹ When notating this movement it was a challenge to understand where the seemingly missing measure disappeared in the standard 32-bar form.

phrases also use the violins as the main melodic voice, a common device used in mariachi music, particularly when trumpets are not present. The use of repetitive melodic material is also similar to the *Kyrie* and reminiscent of mariachi melodic form, which matches a repeating poetic form rather than using a through-composed musical movement.

$\text{♩} = 105$

1. Cor - de - ro de Dios, Cor - de - ro de Dios, que qui-tas el pe - ca - do del mun-do,

8
ten pie - dad _____ de no - so - tros ten pie - dad _____ de no - so - tros.

16
Cor - de - ro de Dios, Cor - de - ro de Dios, que qui-tas el pe - ca - do del mun-do,

24
ten pie - dad _____ de no - so - tros ten pie - dad _____ de no - so - tros.

32
Cor - de - ro de Dios, Cor - de - ro de Dios, que qui-tas el pe - ca - do del mun-do,

40
da _____ nos _____ la - paz. Da _____ nos _____ la - paz.

Figure 6 *Agnus Dei* Transcription

Source: Juan Marco Leclerc, *La misa panamericana: Agnus Dei*, transcribed by Sarah Favinger

Table 4 <i>Agnus Dei</i> Form					
Inst.	A ¹	Inst.	A ²	Inst.	A ³
8	15	16	15	16	15

Cohesive Nature of the Mass and Performance Practice

La misa panamericana reflects a unity within the Mexican-American community in Houston, but it is also a musically cohesive Mass setting that adheres to the modern notion of Mass movements being relatable to one another. Despite some divergence, such as in poetic forms established for religious purposes, the overall Mass represents the musical characteristics of mariachi music performance practice. The use of the typical mariachi orchestration, thirds and sixths for harmonization, and traditions such as call and response unite the Mass in a way that would be approachable and create familiarity for Mexican-American worshippers.

Another dominant feature of *La misa panamericana* is the traditional vocal style in which the mariachi members sing. The mariachi style of singing is a longstanding tradition, established by mariachi singers and movie stars Tito Guízar (1908-1999) and Jorge Negrete (1911-1953). During the “Golden Age of Mexican Cinema,” from 1935-1955, Mexican folk songs and mariachi music with the singing charro and his band was introduced to the United States and spread further throughout Mexico. During this time Mexicans preferred the aesthetics of Spanish and Italian musicians coming to perform in Mexico, especially the sound of bel canto vocalists in opera.⁴⁰ Trained as a vocalist by

⁴⁰ The characteristics of bel canto singing utilized in mariachi singing are portamentos, or sliding from one pitch to the next, extended length of vowel sounds, rubato, and prosodic singing, the use of accents. Vincenzo Bellini (1801–1835) and Gaetano Donizetti (1797–1848) were the primary composers associated with the bel canto style in opera.

José Pierson (1861-1957) in Mexico, Tito Guízar eventually traveled to New York City to record popular songs. There he studied opera with Tito Schipa (1888-1965) of the Metropolitan Opera, an Italian lyric tenor in the bel canto tradition. Encouraged to remain in popular music and through the medium of radio, in the 1920s and 30s Guízar used his operatic training and established the bel canto tradition in mariachi music. In the 1940s, as cinema grew more popular, Jorge Negrete replaced Guízar as the dominant voice of mariachi song. Also trained in opera, Negrete continued to solidify the bel canto tradition as a permanent feature and ideal vocal performance style for mariachi singers. Negrete's film roles also established machismo and reinforced the romantic traits of the charro singer, including the tradition of communicating to audiences the charro's pride for his Catholic faith.⁴¹

The Mariachi Norteño in Houston continues to use the bel canto vocal style, which makes the music easily identifiable as a part of the mariachi tradition. They also wear the *traje de charro*, or Mexican cowboy-style suit, which was fully developed in the "Golden Age of Mexican Cinema" as a way to establish a Mexican and mariachi identity.⁴² Mirroring the structure of mariachi groups in films, Mariachi Norteño stand in a formation with the leading vocalist in front of the rest of the ensemble. The charro singer figure, once represented by Negrete in Mexican films, is now acting as a cantor to lead the congregation, singing in a charismatic fashion. Along with the use of the aforementioned instruments, the Mariachi Norteño not only embrace and reinforce the

⁴¹ Henriques, Donald "Mariachi Reimaginings: Encounters with Technology, Aesthetics, and Identity" 85-106.

⁴² The only missing feature of the Mariachi Norteño's uniform is the sombrero, which cannot be worn in the sanctuary of the Catholic Church.

musical aspects of the mariachi tradition, but also the physical and social expectations that are enduring features of mariachi music.

Social and Religious Impact

Due to the missionary nature of the early days of Mexican Catholicism, the foundations of faith for Hispanic Catholics rely heavily on social and religious customs, artifactual medals, holy pictures, and fiestas rather than personal belief systems or pastoral teachings.⁴³ These foundations are in stark contrast to the unadorned Irish and German Catholicism established in the United States, and even contrasts the Black Catholic population who frequently converted out of strong conviction and belief in freedom. The dramatic differences between Catholic ethnic groups in the United States led to highly segregated dioceses, where each parish was frequently identified with a specific ethnic population.⁴⁴ While this segregation was a feature the Vatican II Council hoped to eliminate, it also allowed for the inculturation of Hispanic faith traditions into the United States Catholic Church.

While mariachi music began as lower-class practice, the transition of the music and the people to the United States altered the meaning of the music and became a cultural symbol for Mexican Americans of all social classes.⁴⁵ Incorporation of mariachi music into the Mass then became widely popular, socially recognized, and eventually symbolic of the Mexican American Catholics adapting their culture to their religion. Mariachi music and the Church both provide a sense of community, making them integral

⁴³ Abrahmson, 140.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 33.

⁴⁵ Sheehy, *Mariachi Music in America*, 40.

parts of the Hispanic population in Houston, Texas, particularly at St. Joseph's Catholic Church. Comparable to the plight of Black Catholics, many Mexican immigrants to Texas struggled during the mid-twentieth century with deep-rooted racism. When the Catholic Church allowed the incorporation of important cultural signifiers into the Mass, a permanent relationship was created between the Hispanic community and the Catholic Church.

Similar to Mary Lou Williams's belief that jazz is a healing music, mariachi performers and listeners perceive mariachi music to represent and express the heartbreak, pain, and eventual healing of the Mexican American immigrant population.⁴⁶ Both Juan Marco Leclerc and Mary Lou Williams utilized vernacular music genres that represented pain and healing, which is both an important facet of Catholicism and appealed to them and their cultural ethnic groups.⁴⁷

Mariachi also "counter reflects and channels emotions," which, within the context of spiritual beliefs, allows for a deepening of faith and understanding of an emotional relationship with God beyond the accepted practices in Hispanic culture.⁴⁸ Originally, this may have been started out of community tradition; now, however, as the culture continues to grow in faith, personal conviction has grown in Hispanic Catholics.⁴⁹ In the eyes of the Mariachi Norteño, the use of music that relates to both community and faith can create a deeper sense of faith. As the face of American Catholicism continues to

⁴⁶ Ibid., 50.

⁴⁷ The use of a music that expresses pain and healing is natural in the Church, found in examples such as Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's *Requiem* (1791) or Johannes Brahms's *German Requiem* (1865-68), which was in German rather than Latin, an unusual feature for the time.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 51.

⁴⁹ William V. D'Antonio, Michele Dillon, Mary L. Gautier, *American Catholics in Transition*, 44.

change, Hispanic Catholics have grown in devoutness, theological conservatism, and a strong deference towards church tradition, and it is likely that *La misa panamericana* will enjoy a home in American Catholicism for many years to come.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ Ibid., 54.

CHAPTER FOUR

Conclusion

Mary Lou's Mass and *La misa panamericana* are only two of the Masses to be written during the formative years of a new American Catholicism following the Second Vatican Council and yet they are representative of both the rules and the exceptions. A number of situational factors impacted the popularity of the new vernacular Masses and affected the staying power of the works individually. The mariachi Mass is considered to be the longest continually performed Mass in the United States, but it is only used regularly at a single parish in Houston. In contrast, *Mary Lou's Mass* has been performed throughout the United States but in concert, rather than liturgical settings, or presented as a worship service by denominations other than Catholicism. Weekly use of the Mass setting does not necessarily make *La misa panamericana* more successful than *Mary Lou's Mass* or vice versa; however, the treatment of the two works over the past four decades demonstrates the situational necessities for a new Mass setting to be used and remain relevant in post-Vatican II American Catholicism.

The first major factor in the continuous usage of *La misa panamericana* appears to be the age of the performers. Jesús and his fellow Mariachi Norteño members were in their early twenties during the founding years of *La misa panamericana* and they have been a voice for the Mass for the past 48 years. Over that length of time the Mass setting has become a major part of “ritualistic life in this parish in Houston” due to the exposure

to multiple generations who have grown up with and learned the music.¹ This static situation has engrained the musical genre as a special part of this specific congregation for nearly half a century. Currently, the Mariachi Norteño includes grandsons of founding members performing with the ensemble. In contrast, Mary Lou Williams composed her Mass in her late fifties, and passed away just over a decade later with no one to continue her tradition. Her manager, Father Peter O'Brien, was permitted special dispensation from his duties as a priest to manage her and promote her religious music. Upon Mary Lou's death he returned to serving as a parish priest in New Jersey, donated her music, letters, and manuscripts to the Institute for Jazz Studies at Rutgers University, and created the Mary Lou Williams Foundation to give permission for use of her music and materials.²

Mary Lou struggled with a point of stability in developing permanence for her jazz liturgy – a consistent parish or congregation. Catholicism, while supportive of the Civil Rights movement, is not the primary Christian denomination for Black Americans. Following the abolition of slavery, groups of former slaves and sharecroppers migrated to major cities across the United States, and as Black Catholics usually converted out of personal conviction, it was, and still is, uncommon to find fully Black Catholic parishes. Black Catholics, such as Mary Lou Williams, joined local parishes out of religious conviction resulting in integrated congregations. By contrast, early American Catholics immigrated due to their Catholicism and each ethnicity tended to settle in large numbers in a single city or region; for example, British Catholics in Maryland, Irish Catholics in

¹ Conversations with Dr. Tammy Kernodle, April 19th, 2015.

² Several other scholars who had worked with Father O'Brien and myself reached out to him during my research, unfortunately we were unaware that he was very ill over the past 8 months. He passed away in May of 2015.

Boston, Polish Catholics in Chicago, and much later, Mexican Catholics in Texas. These settlement patterns created segregated ethnic congregations, regionalized across the United States and even divided by town or city within a single diocese. Most Black Catholics however, found themselves as members of these previously established parishes rather than establishing their own. Mary Lou herself was a member of several different parishes during her later years in life and had no consistent parish to support her music and continue her tradition.

In contrast, the mariachi Mass had a home in a specific church, St. Joseph, in a city, Houston, where Hispanic Catholics were a predominant ethnic group. The importance of mariachi music to this ethnic group created an audience and need, in a sense, for the Mass to relate the Church to popular culture, a common tradition in Latin American communities and cultures. As a result, for the past forty-eight years there was a support system established in a single parish for the continuation and preservation of the mariachi Mass.

Similarities between these Masses also exist and apply to many of the early culturally influenced vernacular settings. Both Mary Lou and the Mariachi Norteño received initial negative responses to their music as parts of liturgical worship. Association with popular culture rather than simply embracing the vernacular language was a step too far for many pre-Vatican II Catholics. Mary Lou was initially invited to perform an earlier composed Mass, *Mass for a Lenten Season*, in Rome as a liturgy in February 1969; however, when Angelo Cardinal Del'Acqua, an assistant secretary of state in Vatican City, heard that drums were involved, the liturgy was canceled. As a

result, Mary Lou instead performed her *Mass for a Lenten Season* as a concert in Rome.³ Across the Atlantic Ocean, in the United States, José and Mauricio, members of Mariachi Norteño, also experienced difficulties playing *La misa panamericana* in a liturgy. Discussing the experience they indicated that, “There was some resistance in the Catholic Church, some of them didn’t want this music in their church... They thought it was folksy, not proper... There’s [sic] people who say it’s not sacred music.”⁴

Although the American Catholic Church wanted change, it was not intended to be immediate and most parishes approached the adjustments to worship gradually. As late as 1983, the Bishops’ Committee on the Liturgy suggested that the problem of diversity could be “mitigated by supplementing the parish Sunday celebration with special celebrations or smaller homogenous groups.”⁵ The Catholic Church expressed through the Second Vatican Council a need for accepting culture within the Church; in reality, the Church desired to maintain the image of a single homogenous Catholic tradition and experienced difficulty incorporating other cultures. *La misa panamericana* and *Mary Lou’s Mass* both challenged this desire. Through established protocol and an official rejection of inculturation the Catholic Church had remained steeped in the Council of Trent and the concepts of quiet worship for four hundred years, particularly in the United States; therefore the instant introduction of trumpets, guitars, and drums drastically contrasted the silence and subtlety of pre-Vatican II worship.⁶

³ Tammy Kernodle, *Soul on Soul*, 228-229. The Mass was originally planned to be a liturgy in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. The concert performance was held in a public venue in March of 1969.

⁴ Personal Interview with Mariachi Norteño, by John Barnett, December 2012.

⁵ *Music in Catholic Worship*, 12.

⁶ Day, *Why Catholics Can’t Sing*, 13.

Thomas Day's texts, particularly *Why Catholics Can't Sing* (1990), give a clear account of the transitional time surrounding the Second Vatican Council. Day focuses on anecdotes, which clearly prove that American Catholic music is deficient in enthusiasm, quality, and even amount. He acknowledges the positive and negative qualities of the Vatican II changes, but points out where American Catholic clergy and congregants have failed to understand what he sees as the true meaning and function of these changes. Day is not an unbiased reporter; rather he is a persuasive figure, hoping to convince Catholics to return to high quality art forms once sponsored by the Catholic faith. He is supportive of the use of cultural traditions and the vernacular in the Mass. However, he is concerned by the chic terminology of "inculturation" resulting in "appropriation" rather than appreciation.⁷ His concerns may be valid, but the existence of Masses such as *La misa panamericana* and *Mary Lou's Mass* show that inculturation can result in appreciation with proper care and introduction into worship.

Mariachi music, once associated with low-class farmers, and jazz, a descendent of brothel and bar music, were art forms that many considered unsuitable for the Church, a place of morals, commandments, and spirituality. Particularly challenging was relating music identified with specific ethnic groups to other communities, despite the Church encouraging the use of cultural traditions within the liturgy in hope of creating a richer heritage.⁸ Even though the bishops and cardinals in Rome had decided the new direction of the Catholic Church, they could not force millions of Catholics worldwide to embrace this change immediately. American Catholics, while entrenched in a predominantly Irish

⁷ Day, *Where Have You Gone Michaelangelo*, 184.

⁸ Cenker, *Multicultural Church*, 117.

tradition, were an ideal group to expand the cultures in Catholicism and create a more diverse Church. Other American immigrant communities within the Catholic Church were finally receiving the opportunity to overcome the “Immense Irish Silence.”⁹

Eventually, American Catholic parishes developed their own worship traditions, whether it was a Hispanic parish with a mariachi liturgy or a Caucasian parish with a folk Mass.¹⁰

The group that struggled the most with this musical incorporation, however, was Black Catholics. As discussed earlier, Black Catholics rarely had their own independent parishes and were a small minority in American Catholicism. The lack of black parishes meant there were few places to begin the combination of worship traditions. As a response to these difficulties the aforementioned National Office for Black Catholics and National Black Lay Congress were created. While inspiring Black Catholics, these groups and their conventions also created a sense of independence, specifically from the authority of the European Roman Catholic hierarchy. This independence was relatable to the Black-Nationalist rhetoric that was concurrent during the 1960s. Unfortunately, Mary Lou Williams expressed a universalism in her Mass settings that did not align with the separatist Black National rhetoric, thus keeping her apart from the Black Catholic movement, which shared views with the Black National rhetoric.¹¹ Mary Lou’s

⁹ Day, *Why Catholics Can’t Sing*, 22.

¹⁰ Thomas Day, *Why Catholics Can’t Sing*, 58. Thomas Day describes folk Masses, and their later resurgence, as such “I remember the attending those first parish ‘folk Masses’ back in the 1960s, when the liturgy was partly in Latin and partly in English...At the Offertory there was *Kumbaya*...Hands clapped. Guitars twanged.” And when folk made its comeback he says, “The composers of reformed folk music have created a large repertory of songs with mild harmonies, comforting words, and a sort of ‘easy listening’ sound; it is all so very undisturbed and appealing, the musical equivalent of the warm bubble bath.”

¹¹ Conversation with Dr. Kernodle. The Black National rhetoric discussed here refers to the rhetoric initiated by Malcolm X and continued by his followers after his assassination. In 1973, Karen Borden described the nationalism as such, “[t]he new nationalism drew its ideology and methods from the struggles of colonized people in Asia and Africa. The movement was to be led by blacks, and goals were to

prominence in the Black Catholic movement may also have been hindered due to gender. While nuns and female laypersons were invited to attend the Second Vatican Council and played minor roles in the Church, they were still not involved in making liturgical decisions about music and other features of the Mass. As the dominant gender of the Catholic faith, men (specifically bishops, priests, and deacons) were the primary promoters, commissioners, and composers of liturgical music. Father Clarence Rivers had a pulpit from which to promote his music, as a priest he had a congregation he could require to sing his music, and even after his death this congregation continued to honor his legacy by the performance of his works. Mary Lou challenged gender roles in her desire to be a female disseminator of the gospel and evangelize through jazz music. She had neither a pulpit from which to preach nor a captive audience to perform and promote her music.

In contrast to Mary Lou's difficulties as a woman promoting liturgical music, many new vernacular Masses were promoted by parish priests, commissioned by bishops, or even composed by men of the cloth. These men, of all ethnicities, had the power in the church to promote their music. One of these works that received much support from the pulpit and beyond was *La misa panamericana*. The work, originally commissioned by a Mexican Bishop, composed by a Canadian priest, and brought to the United States by a Mexican American priest and the Mariachi Norteño was popular with both the clergy and the congregation.

be those decided upon by blacks.” This movement was associated with growing violence from the government as well as protestors. Mary Lou Williams was an advocate for cooperation, growth between races, and peace, which she displays in her two compositions “I Have a Dream” and “Tell Them Not to Talk Too Long.”

Impact of Mary Lou's Mass and La misa panamericana on American Catholicism

The impact of Vatican II and the resulting changes were assumed by many Catholics around the world to be “easy fixes” and “unchallenging transformations.” Without the strict enforcement of Western European, Roman forms of worship indigenous cultural traditions would be able to intertwine with the Catholic Mass and Catholic theology.¹² This incorporation occurred more easily in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, and even South America, where populations were less heterogeneous than the United States. While most countries around the world are heterogeneous, the colonization of the United States by the English, French, Dutch, and Spanish, as well as immigration in the nineteenth century, resulted in a lack of a dominant American culture. Even indigenous Native American communities, some of which are now predominantly Catholic populations due to missionary work, carry a variety of folk traditions. Without a unified or dominant culture, it was a test for United States Catholics to embrace this opportunity for inculturation.

Nearly half a century later, American Catholics are still challenged by the amalgamation of culture and Church. Vatican II has produced great changes and positive improvements in unification through diversity in the Catholic Church. For example, in 2013, for the first time in history, a pope from the western hemisphere was elected. Another example is priests serving internationally, which has created a sense of

¹² Day, *Why Catholics Can't Sing*, 121.

worldwide unity through understanding that the Catholic faith is alive and well around the globe.¹³

However, the United States has had difficulty with acceptance and incorporation of all of its ethnic groups into a single unified church. Thomas Day suggests that the Roman Catholic Church has divided itself into hundreds of smaller “liturgical boutiques” that cater to distinct and select clientele.¹⁴ Undoubtedly, the foundations of Catholic theology and the structure of the Mass, despite being a living and growing organism within the greater context of worship and faith, will keep Catholics around the world dedicated to the Roman Catholic belief and foundation.

As discussed previously, mariachi music and jazz were musical genres developed in North America, originating as music associated with the lower classes and eventually rising to prominence. Christianity during its founding years was preached and nurtured primarily by ostracized, lower-class citizens. For over three centuries United States Catholics were an isolated and frequently shunned part of society; as a result American Catholics frequently reconciled their plight with that of early Christians. The foundation of these musical genres reflects the rise of the congregation to equal status and Protestant acceptance of American Catholics as a recognized and equal community within American society.

Despite an ongoing challenge to find a united front, numerous composers, clergy, congregations, and ethnic groups in the United States have incorporated their cultural traditions into the Mass. These cultural incorporations, while descended from ancestors

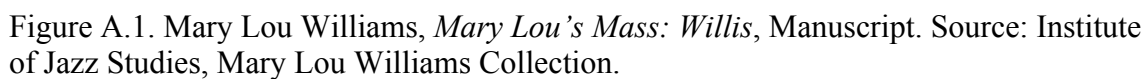
¹³ Pope Francis, born Jorge Mario Bergoglio on December 17, 1936, was Archbishop of Buenos Aires in Argentina prior to his election as Pope. He is also the third consecutive non-Italian pontificate, showing the College of Cardinals’ acknowledgment of the international aspects of Roman Catholicism.

¹⁴ Day, *Why Catholics Can’t Sing*, 106.

and traditions around the world, are often uniquely American and have strengthened the cultural influence on the Catholic Church in the United States. While Americans may be identified as members of specific ethnic groups, the cultural diversity within them has been embraced in the overarching American culture in areas such as food, music, entertainment, and even language. The American ability to embrace ethnic traditions and cultures could be seen as the key to creating and promoting a distinct American Catholicism. Through uniquely American art forms, both *Mary Lou's Mass* and *La misa panamericana* have contributed to the development of musically mature and culturally distinct Mass settings that can be used throughout the United States.

APPENDIX

Mary Lou Williams Musical Examples



Handwritten musical score for "Lord, Have Mercy" by Mary Lou Williams. The score is written on four systems of staves, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "MER-CY ON OUR SOULS - HAVE MER-CY", "LORD HAVE MER-CY ON MY SOUL - LORD HAVE MER-CY HAVE MERCY - LORD", "LORD HAVE MER-CY ON MY SOUL EE", and "LORD HAVE MER-CY HAVE MERCY, ETC.". The piano part includes chords such as Fmi, Bb, C7, and Fmi7. The score is numbered 29 through 44. A "SOLO SOLO" marking is present above measure 32. The page number 9 is at the bottom.

Figure A.2. Mary Lou Williams, *Mary Lou's Mass: Kyrie Eleison (Lord, Have Mercy)*. Source: Institute of Jazz Studies, Mary Lou Williams Collection.

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