The Mass

began more important to witness the process of change. Writing the elevation and worshipping through prayer was often believed to make you a more devout Christian.41

For those worshipping in the Church of England, Mass was more focused on lessons from the New and Old Testament that would be read to them in an important part of their service was the Morning and Evening Prayer that occurred daily. The Protestant Mass also consisted of what is called the Divine Office which included Plain Chants throughout the service.

The Holiday Calendar

The Book of Common Prayer contains a schedule of all Protestant holidays in their order. During this time of reformation, holidays created disputes among reformers as they each shared opinion about the godliness of their worship. Many accused them as being purely superstitious, not holy. In some areas, law enforcement was put in place to maintain observation of these holidays. Others believed punishment for disobedience came from a heavenly manifestation.

One example was in 1589 when an ale wife, making no exception of days, would need brew upon St Mark’s day, but lo, the marvelous days, would demand her ale. Those who split from the Church of Rome. The Christian calendar consisted of over 100 Holy Days dedicated to the Saints and religious celebrations.173 In 1536, King Henry VIII decisively cut down the number of Holy Days to prevent men from becoming slothful and idle. Holy Days, Festivals, Feasts and Fasts were scheduled throughout the year, avoiding the days of labor necessary for the livelihoods of the community. July 1 through September 29 was strictly untouched by Holiday celebration because of the harvest.174

Many holidays came from Pagan holidays, which was of great concern to the Reformation movement. As they split from the Church of Rome. The Christian calendar consisted of over 100 Holy Days dedicated to the Saints and religious celebrations.173 In 1536, King Henry VIII decisively cut down the number of Holy Days to prevent men from becoming slothful and idle. Holy Days, Festivals, Feasts and Fasts were scheduled throughout the year, avoiding the days of labor necessary for the livelihoods of the community. July 1 through September 29 was strictly untouched by Holiday celebration because of the harvest.174

Plainchant in the worship services

The music of Mass, as found in both of these texts, was originally named Gregorian Chant, after Roman Catholic Pope Gregory I in 540-604. Its proper name is Plainchant or Plain-song, stemming from the Latin term, cantus planus. Chanting was not meant to comfort and reassure the listener and participant, it was highly demanding and physically challenging on the monks at that time. Chants were not seen as a musical performance for the congregation. It was an outreach to the Almighty for grace, forgiveness, hope, and help. They were sung memorized from the heart, and mostly out of the book of Psalms. When the Church of England broke off from the Roman Catholic church, they took a similar structure to their church worship, but changed most of the liturgy.

• Figures in written music, called NEUMES, were named after the Greek word neumes, meaning gesture or sign. Four lines were in place with lines “F” and “C” often noted with letters or colors. Some scripts placed letter-cliffs aside every staff line.

This was started by Guido of Arezzo around 1030AD. The first known book printed this way was in Rome 1071.

• “Neumes do not indicate pitch precisely, nor do they communicate measurable rhythmic values.” This is why psalms and prayers were able to be spoken and chanted together.16

• This musical notation has three degrees of complexity:

1. Neumatic - Small Phrases of notes (between 2-15) accompany each syllable

2. Melismatic - the melody expands into a layered phrase on a single syllable

3. Syllabic - each syllable has a corresponding note

During the near 100 year gap between these two books there is an obvious evolution of music and its notation. The five staff lines and neume shape, as found in the Book of Common Prayer, are some of these differences. Written in the margin of this book is the schedule of when songs would be sung throughout the day and during mass. (see image 3) A psalm, scripture, or greeting was sung by a Priest or congregation alone or in unison.

The official calendar began 27 holy days:

• Good Friday (March 25)
• Easter Sunday (April 21)
• Easter Monday (April 22)
• Feast of the Holy Cross (April 23)
• Ascension (May 1)
• Whit Sunday (May 8)
• Whit Tuesday (May 9)
• Whit Wednesday (May 10)
• Trinity Sunday (May 17)
• Pentecost (June 24)
• Holy Cross Day (June 28)
• Nativity of Our Lady (September 8)
• Feast of St. Martin (November 11)
• Christmas (December 25)
• Epiphany (January 6)
• St. John the Baptist (June 24, Midsummerday)
• St Peter the Apostle (June 29)
• St. James the Apostle (July 25)
• St Bartholomew the Apostle (August 24)
• St. Matthew the Apostle (September 21)
• St Michael the Archangel (September 29, Michaelmas)
• St Luke the Evangelist (October 18)
• SS Simon and Jude the Apostles (October 28)
• All Saints (November 1)
• St Andrew the Apostle (November 30)
• St Thomas the Apostle (December 21)
• Nativity of our Lord (December 25)
• St Stephen the Martyr (December 26)
• St John the Evangelist (December 27)
• Holy Innocents (December 28, Christmasday)

Access to Holy Texts

In the Early Modern Period, few people had access to a bible. Only select men with clerical authority were given access to the Latin text of the Roman Missal. Books were very expensive, restricting it’s availability; a complete bible could cost over a month of wages for a typical artisan. Education was also expensive, and only offered to the elite, meaning primarily wealthy people could read and write.16 In the Anglican church, the Bible was seen as the ultimate source of truth, where all Christians could have access to its words.18 In the Catholic Church, oral and visual modes of communication were implemented: including preaching, confession, music, images, and rites. Catholic lay members used the bible as a way to retain information that had already been learned through other sources.19

People and Worship

For the people of this time, worship was a daily and common occurrence to represent how devout one was. Everyone in the community was involved in Mass which occurred several times throughout the day.20 Now, however, a person attending mass showed how devout one was. Some community members even went to Mass several times a day. Those that were involved with the Mass and daily worship were those of wealth, power, influence, and standing. This could be an “individual, family, or large group” such as the gilds.21 Individuals with these qualities could influence what prayers were said, how many candles were lit, the type and amount of artwork, and who could get buried in the church/parish.

Conclusion

Through a study of the Roman Missal and the Book of Common Prayer, we see the liturgical contrast brought by the Reformation in 16th and 17th century Europe. This time brought change in who had access to these holy books of scripture. The Catholic clergy continued to preach in Latin, while the Anglican clergy were worshiped in the vernacular of the lay membership. The Christian calendar had made its way into the daily routines of all participants in the church. There is no concrete evidence of how this reformation influenced ceremonial worship, singing, prayer, and holidays in the Anglican and Catholic faiths.