

## **BAROQUE MASS: CHANGES FROM RENAISSANCE**

The Baroque Mass saw several differences to that of the Renaissance.

### **OLD VS. NEW STYLE**

There was a distinction between Masses written in the Renaissance to that of the Baroque. Those composers who continued to write in the traditional polyphonic manner began to use basso continuo and a wider harmonic vocabulary. In contrast, composers who wrote in Baroque style wrote for solo voices and instrumental obbligatos (music that is written down, rather than improvised). Other composers continued to compose plainsong settings, distinct from and more elaborate than the earlier Gregorian chants.

### **MASS SETTING**

Another difference was the distinction of when to perform the different settings of the Mass. The Missa Solemnis (Solemn Mass) was a longer and more elaborate setting; the Missa Brevis (Brief or Short Mass) was more compact. The Gloria and Credo sections of the Missa Solemnis were often divided into many movements. The setting of the Mass also depended on its purpose: concert masses or liturgical use.

### **INSTRUMENTATION AND VOICE**

Some Masses included orchestra, soloists, chorus and obbligato instruments, depending on their suitability and practicality in the Mass. These Masses used instruments for colour and created dialogues between solo voices and chorus which became a major characteristic of 18<sup>th</sup> century Viennese style. These Masses also influenced the Neapolitan or Cantata Mass style, which had a major influence on 18<sup>th</sup> century mass compositions, with its short sections set as self-contained solo arias and choruses in a variety of styles. The 18<sup>th</sup> century Viennese mass combines operatic elements from the cantata mass with a trend in the symphony and concerto to organize choral movements. Later masses, especially of Haydn, are of symphonic structure, with long sections divided into fewer movements, organized like a symphony, with soloists used as an ensemble rather than as individuals.