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Abstract

This dissertation explores how nuns of the Order of the Immaculate Conception (Conceptionists) became some of the most important contributors to the soundscape of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Mexico City and Puebla. It examines the connections between convents and local musicians and the nuns' taste for liturgical polyphony and villancicos. The convent music sources are analyzed within their devotional and liturgical context, particularly with regard to the universal Catholic feasts of Corpus Christi and Holy Week.

I also consider convent-specific ceremonies such as nuns' initiations. These events could be linked to urban patronage, as demonstrated through my discussion of the recruitment and selection process of musically trained women that could serve the convents as performers for the liturgies. This dissertation is the first to address Novohispanic convent music sources from the Newberry Library, CENIDIM, and the *Museo del Carmen* in a study about the Conceptionist convents that owned these manuscripts. The Conceptionist nuns were the first and wealthiest order of women religious to arrive in the New World and the only order in New Spain whose convents left behind polyphonic music. This study thus contributes to our understanding of women's musical lives in broader Latin America, which have largely been marginalized in music history.

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Preface

The study of women's musical lives and music of the colonial New World are two under-addressed areas of research in musicology taken up in this dissertation on the music performed within Novohispanic convents of the Order of the Immaculate Conception (Conceptionist). The Conceptionists were the first mendicant order of nuns to arrive in the Americas by way of New Spain. By New Spain I am referring to colonial Mexico as it was known prior to independence, the Viceroyalty of New Spain; and therefore music and material culture from New Spain and its cultivators are referred to as "Novohispanic."

The Conceptionists established cloisters in every major city of the Viceroyalties: Mexico City, Puebla, Lima, Quito, Caracas, etc. I investigate how nuns in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Mexico City and Puebla established themselves as prominent contributors to the soundscape of these most musically and artistically important cities in New Spain.[1] I consider how they imitated the secular world's class and racial structures within the cloister, while negotiating several divergent musical duties and liturgical imperatives as they sought to honor God and convent patrons.

The music-making traditions practiced within the convents included chant and polyphony, as well as the instrumental accompaniment of the latter. I give special attention to the nuns' devotion toward the Eucharist and Christ's Passion. I also discuss the musical issues raised by convent specific services such as nuns' profession ceremonies.

[1] Gerard Béhague, "Music in the 'New World': The Baroque in Mexico and Brazil," *The World of Baroque Music, New Perspectives*, edited by George B. Stauffer (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006), 257–274.

The Impact of Convent Culture on Scholarship

Historians from diverse disciplines, including art, economics, education, and gender studies, have found female monasteries of the early modern period, especially in Italy, to be significant sources for scholarly inquiry. Musicologist Craig Monson, for example, has demonstrated the effort Bolognese nuns exerted in adorning their liturgical and devotional services with instrumental music and vocal polyphony despite resistance from male clergy.[2] Historian Sharon Strocchia has considered the implications of liturgical practice in economic terms: she has illustrated that while Florentine convents made significant contributions to the local textile industry, the nuns' obligation to pray the Office limited the quantity of goods they produced.[3]

The geographical purview of female monastic studies has expanded to include the artistic practices of monasteries in Spain and its dominions and other parts of Europe. An essay by Colleen Baade on the musical activities of nuns in various orders around Spain also suggests that convent sacred music provided enjoyment for the nuns and the public alike.[4] Jodi Bilinkoff's study on the relationships between Spanish nuns

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[2] Craig A. Monson, *Divas in the Convent: Nuns, Music, and Defiance in Seventeenth-Century Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), revised edition of *Disembodied* Voices*: Music and Culture in an Early Modern Italian Convent* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995). On convent musical culture in Milan see Robert L. Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens: Nuns and Their Music in Early Modern Milan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996). For Siena convent music see Colleen Reardon, *Holy Concord Within Sacred Walls: Nuns and Music in Siena, 1575–1700* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

[3] Sharon T. Strocchia, *Nuns and Nunneries in Renaissance Florence* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009), 114.

[4] Colleen Baade, "Music and Misgiving: Attitudes Towards Nuns' Music in Early Modern Spain," *Female Monasticism in Early Modern Europe: An Interdisciplinary View*, edited by Cordula van Wyhe (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008), 81-96. This essay stems from Baade's dissertation, "Music and Music-Making in Female Monasteries in Seventeenth-Century Castile" (PhD diss., Duke University, 2001). A similar situation is described by Soterraña Aguirre Rincón who claims the citizens of Ávila apparently could not wait to hear the nuns in the convent sing villancicos. See Soterraña Aguirre Rincón, *Un manuscrito para un convento: El libro de música, dedicato a Sor Luisa en 1633: Convento de Santa Clara de Carrión de los Condes* (Valladolid: Edades del Hombre, 1998), 102. Two other case studies on musical practices in specific convents of Spain are Janet Hathaway, "Cloister, Court and City: Musical Activity of the Monasterio De Las Descalzas Reales (Madrid), Ca. 1620-1700" (PhD diss., New York University, 2005) and María Gembero Ustárroz, "De Rosas Cercada: Music by Francisco De La Huerta for the Nuns of Santa Ana De Ávila (1767-78)," *Devotional Music in the Iberian World, 1450-1800: The Villancico and Related Genres*, edited by Tess Knighton and Álvaro Torrente (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2007), 321–362.

and their confessors provides some important context for the writings of Spanish convent mystics.[5] While some confessors wrote about the lives of nuns they encountered, others encouraged nuns to write their own accounts.[6] Works on the artistic expression of nuns from the Spanish speaking realms have indeed given much attention to the writing of famous mystics including Teresa of Ávila and the Conceptionist María de Ágreda.[7]

The Spanish religious and political influence in the New World also gave rise to important artistic issues stemming from Latin American women's monasteries, especially in New Spain. Interest in the general history of women, nuns in particular, and their contribution to art in New Spain stems from the pioneering works of Josefina Muriel.[8] Her studies provide an extensive historical and cultural context for convent life, spirituality, and devotion.

More recent scholars have focused on Novohispanic nuns' literary works. Hispanist Stephanie Kirk began her monograph on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Novohispanic convent literature by problematizing a Jesuit priest's insistence that

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[5] Jodi Bilinkoff, *Related Lives: Confessors and their Female Penitents, 1450–1750* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005).

[6] Sebastiana Villanueva Cervantes Espinosa de los Monteros and Beatriz Espejo, *En religiosos incendios* (México: UNAM, 1995), 9.

[7] On Teresa of Ávila see Antonio Pérez-Romero, *Subversion and Liberation in the Writings of St. Teresa of Avila* (New York: Rodopi, 1996) and Alison Weber, *Teresa of Avila and the Rhetoric of Femininity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996); on María de Ágreda see Clark A. Colahan, *The Visions of Sor María de Ágreda: Writing Knowledge and Power* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1994) and Marilyn Fedewa, *María of Ágreda: Mystical Lady in Blue* (Albuquerque, NM: UNM Press, 2011); on Sor Juana Inés see Pamela Kirk, *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz: Religion, Art, and Feminism* (New York: Continuum, 1998) and Frederick Luciani, *Literary Self-fashioning in Sor Juana Inés De La Cruz* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 2004).

[8] Josefina Muriel, *Conventos de monjas en la Nueva España* (México: Santiago, 1946); *La sociedad novohispana y sus colegios de niñas* (México: UNAM, 2004). The most recent historical overview of convent life in New Spain is Asunción Lavrin, *Brides of Christ: Conventual Life in Colonial Mexico* (Stanford University Press, 2008). On women's art in greater Latin America see Kellen Kee McIntyre and Richard E. Phillips, eds., *Woman and Art in Early Modern Latin America*, (Boston: Brill, 2007). Josefina Muriel's works are the following: *Las indias caciques de Corpus Christi* (México: UNAM, 1963); *Los recogimientos de mujeres* (México: UNAM, 1974); *Cultura femenina novohispana* (México: UNAM, 1994); *Conventos de monjas en la Nueva España* (México: UNAM, 1995); *La sociedad novohispana y sus colegios de niñas: fundación del siglo XVI* (México: UNAM, 1995); and with Luis Lledías, *La música en las instituciones femeninas novohispanas* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2009).

women lacked the intellectual capacity necessary to execute the Divine Office properly.[9] Her work confirms that ecclesiastical power imbalances, recalling those by Monson regarding music in Italian convents, made their way to the New World and often favored male clergy. And numerous scholars, such as Martha Lilia Tenorio, continue to investigate the meanings and implications of the writings left of Mexico City's enigmatic Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz.[10] These studies show that cloistered nuns while living a contemplative life of prayer, also forged important ties to urban societies at large.

This dissertation on the Conceptionists in New Spain springs from the domain of these studies of convent culture, yet it addresses an area that has previously been overlooked in studies of New Spain, especially those by musicologists. Scholars of the viceregal period (1519–1821) have focused principally on the music of cathedrals and missions. I have benefited from the work of Lorenzo Candelaria, Drew Edward Davies, Javier Marín, Geoffrey Baker, and others who have addressed Novohispanic liturgy formation, Spanish hegemony, and Creole identity formation in male-dominated religious institutions. But Baker in particular has called on Latin American music historians to determine the extent to which women contributed to music making in the New World. Not doing so would risk leaving voids in our analyses of urban soundscapes, which historians have long sought to integrate in their work on race, class, mobility, and urban professionalism.[11] While some scholars, such as Josefina Muriel and Luis Lledías, have laid the groundwork in discussions of pedagogy within eighteenth-

[9] Stephanie L. Kirk, *Convent Life in Colonial Mexico: A Tale of Two Communities* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2007), 34-35.
[10] Martha Lilia Tenorio, *Los villancicos de Sor Juana* (México: Colegio de México, 1999). Also see George Antony Thomas, *Women and Gender in the Early Modern World: Politics and Poetics of Sor Juana Inés de La Cruz* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2012).
[11] Geoffrey Baker, "The Resounding City," *Music and Urban Society in Colonial Latin America*, edited by Geoffrey Baker and Tess Knighton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 20.

century Novohispanic girls' music schools, my study more deeply probes issues related to the forms of artistic patronage and performance within convents.[12] Women's convents were mostly located within cities, and they had important ties to parish priests, cathedral musicians and canons, and elite citizens, a topic that has been traced by Monson, Robert Kendrick, Colleen Reardon, and Janet Page in European convents, but which has not yet been addressed within a Novohispanic context. This dissertation advances our understanding of the complex and neglected world of women musicians in the New World.

The issue of women's place within music historiography lies at the core of this project. Save for a handful of female composers, women were until very recently excluded from most major music history texts—"a historian's dilemma," as Richard Taruskin puts it.[13] Musicologists have begun to embrace the concept of the "female musician" and to investigate wider-ranging topics, such as gender, sexuality, patronage, power relations, and pedagogy, which have informed our understanding of the music female musicians performed within the communities they inhabited. The focus has nonetheless tended to be on star performers, such as those who made up the *concerto delle donne*, or on female composers such as Hildegard of Bingen, Cécile Chaminade, and Clara Schumann, who fit more comfortably into the mold of the male composer. Consequently, other forms of female musicality, such as communal religious performance, have remained largely unstudied.

Convents of the Conceptionist order provide an excellent locus for an exploration on the musical lives of Novohispanic monastic women, as they were the

[12] Josefina Muriel and Luis Lledías, *La música en las instituciones femeninas novohispanas*, (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2009).
[13] See Chapter two in Richard Taruskin, "Music in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *Oxford History of Western Music*, vol. 2 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005).

earliest order and left the richest collection of surviving documents. The order's monastic rule required the nuns to sing the Divine Office and Mass daily, and the archival record shows that throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the convents requested the local bishop's permission to initiate musicians into the convent without expensive entrance dowries in exchange for their musical performance in the liturgies. Thus, some women seeking the convent life were provided with music instruction—a pedagogical process that requires further research beyond this dissertation's scope.

The Conceptionist nuns of Mexico City's *Encarnación* and *Santa Inés* convents and Puebla's *Santísima Trinidad* convent left behind the bulk of extant Novohispanic convent music sources. The music consists of Latin- and vernacular-texted vocal polyphony in the form of villancicos. The music manuscripts have been treated philologically in Eliyahu Schleifer's dissertation on the *Encarnación* choirbooks, Jesús Bal y Gay's catalog of the *Santa Inés* choirbook, which he called the *Carmen Codex*, and most recently Aurelio Tello's catalog of the *Santísima Trinidad* music sources, which remains in press. These studies have provided valuable information regarding the dates, origins, composers, and liturgical functions of the music. I intend to expand on the discussion by analyzing the music and showing how pieces composed and/or copied specifically for female musicians interact with sacred texts that were sometimes written by the nuns themselves. Villancicos in particular, the most important form of sacred music in the early modern Hispanic Church, served didactic and devotional purposes through metaphorical language similar to the rhetoric in the biographies of noteworthy nuns and in nuns' personal prayer books. Consideration is also given to nuns' diaries, records of bishops' visits to cloisters, and liturgical books preserved in archives

throughout Mexico City and Puebla. Using these sources, I examine the devotional, ritual, institutional, social, artistic, and economic conditions that made the music possible.

I place the music within the wider context of Conceptionist devotion and artistic patronage, taking into account the convents' racialized admission policies, as they were open to women of European descent and closed to all others. Native American, Black, and mixed-race women, who were practically slaves, often donated to the convents by patrons, were not allowed to profess, but they worked as nuns' servants. I demonstrate that the non-European servant class was essential to Novohispanic musical culture: servants' menial labor freed the nuns to sing the Divine Office and Mass daily.

Patrons' monetary donations to the convents were also necessary for the purchase of music and instruments and for funding nuns' performances during special feasts. Wealthy nuns themselves could serve as patrons within their own cloisters, which raises questions about nuns' vows of poverty. The money that went to the convent coffers was later distributed to individual nun-musicians by the convent accountant. I examine the links between the convents, their patrons, and non-cloistered musicians. Male cathedral musicians were some of the most important urban citizens with whom the nuns interacted. Cathedral chapel masters composed the majority of the convents' music, though the manuscripts include copies of compositions by both European and Novohispanic composers. Questions of authorship and ownership are also taken into consideration, as the nuns often added new texts over old devotional texts to suit their liturgical needs.

This is the first study that considers music for parts of the Office and Mass performed in convents of New Spain after Eliyahu Schleifer's pioneering work. The

Novohispanic liturgy developed according to four provincial councils that took place in 1555, 1565, 1585, and 1771. These meetings of high-ranking ecclesiastics from throughout New Spain aimed to enforce Tridentine reforms, which called for more diocesan oversight of convent activities.[14] This had important implications for music making, since the local bishop had to approve all musical activities.

I examine historical sources from all Conceptionist convents in Mexico City and Puebla that treat the feast of Corpus Christi and Holy Week. The music manuscripts from the *Encarnación*, *Santa Inés*, and *Santísima Trinidad* allow me to study how polyphony enhanced these celebrations. Thus, I navigate between wide Novohispanic liturgical rituals, order-specific Conceptionist traditions, and distinctive institutional musical practices to give the most comprehensive narrative on this important aspect for early modern urban music making.

This project both enriches the literature and fills the gaps in our knowledge about female musicians in the New World. It also contributes significantly to various disciplines including the history of art, literature, architecture, women, and devotion, in addition to musicology. Novohispanic polyphony has much more to offer than its perceived exotic rhythms. The music raises questions about musician-poet networks, power relations, boundaries, the impact of marginalization and identities, and institutional uses of music.

Overview of Chapters

In chapters of Part I, I examine both the urban soundscape of early modern Mexico City and Puebla and the soundscape created within the convent walls. These

[14] The much later 1771 council focused on reforming male clergy and lay devotion, as well as trying to eradicate some Jesuit sympathies that still lingered after the order's expulsion in 1767. See María del Pilar Martínez López-Cano, et. al., *Concilios provinciales mexicanos*, 4 vols. (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas, 2004).

chapters introduce the environment to which the nuns' musical life of devotion contributes. In the first chapter, the history of the Conceptionist Order is considered through an examination of how its convents were established and how they became the wealthiest in Mexico City and Puebla. I argue that the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception made Conceptionist cloisters attractive to wealthy patrons, because it was a church teaching also supported by Spanish nobility and royalty. I also present the state of the musical and historical sources beginning with the analysis of an archival record that presented a legal battle between a local Mexico City composer and the nuns of the *Encarnación* convent.

Chapter two focuses on convent architecture, and particularly the structure of the *coro* (choir) where the nuns sang inside the church. The *coro* was physically blocked off with a grate from the church nave. It was a space midway between the private and the public: the nuns could be heard singing, but they were not visible to the laity attending services in the main body of the convent church. Its peculiar structure within Novohispanic convents has long confounded historians of art and architecture because it incorporated two choirs, a *coro alto* and a *coro bajo*, an upper and lower *coro*.

Contrary to previous what previous scholars suggest, I establish that the *coro alto* (henceforth *coro*) was the space where the nuns sang the Divine Office and attended Mass. Through an examination of the primary sources, I also confirm that he *coro bajo* was only used for profession ceremonies, funerals, and the election of abbesses. I also discuss the ordinances pertaining to the nuns' behavior while inside the *coro* during the liturgies. Some nuns' biographies reveal that not all nuns behaved properly. Rulebooks and vivid details of everyday convent life, found in the biographies of noteworthy Conceptionist nuns, provide new information suggesting that the *coro* was the most

important space within the cloister. It was the center for both musical activities and celestial interventions, where mystics received the majority of their visions—often enhanced by music. Resonating with Monson's iconic *Nuns Behaving Badly*, in which he discussed nuns' temptations associated with music making,[15] I argue that the architecture, the prayers, the visions, the metaphors, and the transgressions associated with the *coro* were an integral part of the nuns' musical and spiritual experiences. Without an understanding of the *coro*, it would be difficult to interpret early modern Novohispanic convent musical activities, since the extant liturgical sources do not convey the physical layout and allocation of space in the church where the nuns performed the music under consideration in Part II.

In Part II titled "A Musical Life in Christ," I outline the lifecycle of Conceptionist nuns. After discussing their initiation ceremonies, I focus on the two Christic devotions in the convent, the Eucharist and the Passion.

Chapter 3 addresses Conceptionist rites of passage. Early modern nuns' initiation ceremonies, or professions, drew a host of urban citizens to the convent churches to observe what sermonizers considered allegorically a human sacrifice. This sacrifice required the vows of perpetual obedience, poverty, chastity, and enclosure, which women professed after a yearlong novitiate. The solemn profession was also akin to a wedding, in which the nuns were spiritually married to Christ. In this chapter, I illustrate that profession was a process of both initiation and exclusion. Those women fortunate enough to enter the convent, either through personal wealth or music dowry waivers, were required to lead a life of devotion marked by sacrifice and a unique relationship to Christ.

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[15] Craig Monson, *Nuns Behaving Badly: Tales of Music, Magic, Art, and Arson in the Convents of Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010).

As in Europe, wealthy women's initiations into Novohispanic convents included lavish spending on dowries, clothing, food, flowers, fireworks, and music, which would enhance the prestige of the professing nun's family. I contend that profession villancicos that praised professing nuns by name were a musical equivalent to the famous crowned-nun paintings exhibited in Mexico's National Museum of the Viceroyalty. The texts for profession villancicos presented women as the main subject of the compositions, which adorned a spectacular ritual also centered on women.

The two chapters that follow address specific devotions and their principle liturgical celebrations and music. These case studies focus on Eucharistic devotion and the feast of Corpus Christi (Chapter 4) and devotion to Christ's Passion and Holy Week (Chapter 5). These chapters allow me to gauge how patronage extended to feasts outside the celebrations of Christmas and Easter, the two most important days in Christendom, let alone New Spain. The convent repertory is replete with music for these occasions, prompting me to suggest that it was through the performance of sacred music that the nuns managed to attract the laity to the offerings of the church.

In Chapter 4, I bring to light Conceptionist Eucharistic devotional literature to argue that the nuns could experience the reception of communion—the Body of Christ—in various symbolic ways. Indeed, the doctrine that Christ resided invisibly within the consecrated communion host gave way to metaphorical texts and music about the Eucharist in order for nuns to be able to grasp its meaning faithfully. They could, for example, imagine communion as an intimate encounter with Christ, their spiritual spouse.

The communal celebration of the Eucharist was known as the Feast of Corpus Christi, whose music I analyze to demonstrate that communion meant different things

at different times to different people in early modern New Spain. To this end, I consider various Corpus Christi villancicos and their allegorical texts, one of which by José de Cáseda (ca. 1660–1725) shows that Eucharistic devotion was closely linked to Passion devotion. I demonstrate that the rhetoric in Cáseda's villancico resonates with Juana de la Cruz's mystic writing,[16] Pedro Calderón de la Barca's *Autos Sacramentales*, and Jesuit imagery in the 1640 *Imago primi saeculi Societatis Jesu*.

Chapter 5 treats the nuns' devotion to the Passion of Christ, which was engrained in the Conceptionists early on in the novitiate, and arguably the most important devotion in the convents. I bring to light some fascinating images and poetry preserved in nuns' devotional literature that demonstrate the rapture with which nuns could relate to the crucified Christ in their attempt to imitate his Passion. Convent spirituality was full of conceptual puzzles: at the same time that nuns could imagine themselves attached to Christ on the cross, they also took on the sentiment of his weeping mother, as shown by my analysis of villancicos for the Virgin of Sorrow, the Marian devotion associated with the Virgin Mary's compassion for Christ in his Passion. Convent singers could also take on the very voice of Christ in polyphonic Passion settings from the *Encarnación* and *Santa Inés* convents of Mexico City.

Chapter 5 ends by showing how moments of Christ's Passion were mirrored in the deaths of role-model sisters who lived the most righteous lives through perfect adherence to their four vows. The conclusion that follows then summarizes the link between liturgy, convent devotions, and nuns' vocations.

[16] See Chapter 3 in Ronald E. Surtz, *The Guitar of God: Gender, Power, and Authority in the Visionary World of Mother Juana de La Cruz (1481-1534)* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990).

Part I: Urban and Architectural Soundscapes in New Spain

Chapter 1. Introduction to the Order of the Immaculate Conception and its Music Sources in New Spain

The *Encarnación* Nuns and their (Missing) Villancicos

In mid-November 1610, a disruption arose in Mexico City. The nuns of the *Encarnación* convent alleged that the cathedral musician and priest (*presbítero*) Antonio Rodriguez de Mata had borrowed some five songbooks from the convent choir mistress, Sor Flor de Santa Clara, and failed to return them, despite the nuns' numerous pleas.[1] According to the nuns, the music consisted of motets and various other musical settings (*otras cosas de música*) used to celebrate and solemnize the Divine Office.[2] This situation unravels across two folios preserved in Mexico City's Archivo General de la Nación (AGN). Subsequently, by involving the diocesan vicar general and the attorney general (*fiscál*), the nuns demanded justice and insisted that Mata be thrown in jail if he did not return the music promptly.

Mata's affidavit, dated 3 December, corroborates the nuns' claims, though he attests that the books were not filled with motets, but rather with *chanzonetas*—villancicos essentially—which he had composed with his own hand (*puntadas…de su mano*) for various liturgical feasts.[3] According to record, on 24 December the vicar general, Juan de Salamanca, had the last word in the matter: he sided with the nuns and ordered Mata to return the books or face imprisonment. The historical record ends here.

Even after this legal dispute, it seems that Mata remained in good standing with church leaders in Mexico City: in 1614, he would become the chapel master of Mexico City's illustrious cathedral.[4] Whether or not Mata returned the books in time for *Encarnacion*'s Christmas

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[1] AGN/Indiferente Virreinal/Caja 2524/Expediente 16, folios 1–2.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Tess Knighton notes that *chanzonetas* and villancicos refer to the same type of musical genre in "Music and ritual in urban spaces: The case of Lima, c. 1600," *Music and Urban Society*, 26. Also see Tenorio, *Los villancicos de Sor Juana*, 40–41.
[4] He assumed all the responsibilities of chapel master in 1614, that is, while his elderly predecessor Juan Hernández held the title until his retirement in 1618. See Mark Brill, "Rodriguez Mata, Antonio," *Grove Music*

celebration remains a mystery, but part of the urgency in the nuns' initial complaint from November likely stemmed from their need for the music as part of their Christmas liturgies. It is also curious that the nuns confused villancicos for motets. Perhaps a concern with labeling musical forms had not yet taken hold in the convent.[5]

This account is fascinating on many other fronts as well. In the first instance, it speaks to the matter of musical ownership. Mata assumed the right to his scores precisely because he believed such music belonged permanently to its composer. That he was forced to return the music to the convent can instead be read as support for the idea that such music was property of the convent.[6] And indeed, the nuns likely paid for Mata's music themselves. As will be shown in this chapter, and in Chapter 5, convent expenses often included the purchase of music. The bishop, as the head administrator of all Conceptionist convents, could go so far as to overrule the purchase of music if he thought convent funds should be used for other resources.

The particular connection between the convent and urban society in this account should not be overlooked either. For how else would nuns receive music in the cloister if not via an active network of musical transfer and exchange between religious institutions throughout Mexico City? And this same network encompasses Mata's borrowing of the music from Sor Flor de Santa Clara. As Chapter 5 will show, the villancicos in question were not Mata's only musical contribution to this convent. Extant Holy Week music attests that one of his polyphonic Passion settings at some point also became property of the *Encarnación* nuns.

Online. Oxford Music Online. Oxford University Press, accessed March 6, 2015, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/41458.

[5] In any case, by the seventeenth century some villancicos functioned more like vernacular motets rather than other sacred vernacular songs such as English carols and French noels, according to Pablo-L. Rodríguez, "The villancico as music of state in 17th-century Spain," *Devotional Music in the Iberian World*, 189.

[6] Music in Novohispanic church settings was treated like a devotional object akin to furniture and statuary in need of purchasing, repairs, and, I would add, safe-keeping. See Andrew Cashner, "Faith, Hearing, and the Power of Music in Hispanic Villancicos, 1600–1700" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 2015), 237–238.

The musical network in which nuns and composers like Mata participated reached far beyond the borders of Mexico City as well. Below, I will show that the nuns of the *Encarnación* convent were known for recruiting women musicians from outside areas and cities—Puebla, for example. Indeed, convents, and particularly those of the Conceptionist order, were well connected with urban society's best musicians, including cathedral chapel masters, instrumentalists, and the like, who not only provided the nuns with music, but also with musical instruction. Cathedral musicians evaluated the competence of women seeking to profess with reduced dowries on account of their musical abilities. These women, it was thought, could be put to excellent use in the performance of music for the liturgies (see Chapter 3).

In their lawsuit against Mata, the nuns cleverly specified that they needed their music back in order to perform the Divine Office. Nothing would distress a high-ranking church leader, such as a vicar general, more than knowing that something was preventing local nuns under his jurisdiction from performing the Divine Office according to their custom. Praying and singing the Office after all was one of the primary reasons for nuns to live cloistered within urban convents. Performing music in the form of villancicos was likewise an important element in the Matins service, especially Christmas Matins, Vespers, and in Mass and private devotional services.[7] Though no villancicos remain from the *Encarnación*, Mata's case and other sources confirm that villancicos were indeed purchased for performance there, and likely at most other Conceptionist houses as well.

Moreover, the legal record shows that music was considered worth fighting for, and that nuns in the period felt passionately about their musical sources. Although less dramatic, this situation was not unlike some circumstances experienced by nuns in Italy.[8] It is clear, in

[7] Tess Knighton and Álvaro Torrente, "Introduction," *Devotional Music in the Iberian World*, 9.
[8] See especially Chapter 5 in Monson, *Divas in the Convent.*

any case, that these religious women did not sit quietly by allowing themselves to be taken advantage of—and not even by clergymen (recall, for instance, that Mata was a priest).

And who were these nuns whom Mata managed to anger over music books? This question will be addressed in this chapter via a broad overview of the Conceptionist Order, including its establishment in New Spain, its ties to urban society and patrons, and the wider musical activities of Conceptionist convents in early modern Mexico City and Puebla. This chapter also introduces important characters who reappear frequently in the chapters to follow, including Sor María de Jesús (1598–1637) and Sor Barbara Josepha de San Francisco (1662–1723), both active in Puebla's Conceptionist convents. The biographies of these nuns, and Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora's history of Mexico City's *Jesús María* convent (1684), provide a rich context for religious lives and the devotional culture surrounding the convents and their local areas. These texts also help situate the Conceptionists within a longer tradition of Christian mysticism. Lastly, the primary sources, both published and unpublished, that I present in this chapter reveal a critical need for musicological study framed around this order of nuns in New Spain.[9]

Conceptionist Histories and Immaculist Doctrines

Beatriz de Silva founded the Conceptionists in Toledo, Spain at the end of the fifteenth century with support from the Franciscan Archbishop Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros and Queen Isabel, "the Catholic." They both sent letters to Rome urging the Pope to establish the order. Beatriz, Cisneros, and Isabel's close relationship suggests that favoritism played a significant part in the order's founding. Cisneros was for all intents and purposes Isabel's confessor, and Beatriz was considered her good friend. In 1484, Isabel handed Beatriz the property on which the order's motherhouse in Toledo still stands. Not only did the foundation

[9] Colleen Baade also suggests the order-specific approach that I adopt as a means to study nuns' musical activities. See "Music and Music-Making in Female Monasteries in Seventeenth-Century Castile" (PhD diss., Duke University, 2001), 218.

of this new order serve as a public testament to the Queen's defense of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, it fulfilled Beatriz's divinely inspired purpose to establish an order of nuns under this particular Marian devotion (see Table 1.1).

The well-documented history of the Conceptionist order's foundation was even popularly dramatized through Blas Fernández de Mesa's comedy, *La Fundadora de la Santa Concepción*, written in 1664. The play presents a version of Beatriz's legendary vision, wherein the Virgin Mary appears dressed in blue and deems Beatriz defender and founder of the

Table 1.1 Timeline of Conceptionist Foundational Events

1424 Beatriz de Silva born in Cueta, Portugal
1447 Beatriz becomes a Lady in Waiting for Queen Isabel of Portugal
1453 Beatriz joins the Royal Santo Domingo Convent in Toledo, Spain after a vision of the Virgin Mary
1484 Isabel the Catholic gives Beatriz property to establish her order with twelve other women
1489 Order is established and given Cistercian rule by order of Innocent VIII's bull—*Inter universa*
1492 Beatriz dies and her niece, Felipa de Silva, continues as abbess
1494 *Ex supernae providentia* orders Conceptionists to follow Franciscan (Clarissan) rule
1508 Conceptionist breviary developed by Ambrosio Montesino
1511 *Ad statum prosperum* by Pope Julius II approves Conceptionist rule created by Fray Francisco Quiñones
1516 Conceptionist Ordinances appended to the rule

Conceptionist order: "You, Beatriz, will become the defender and first founder of my holy Conception."[10] Thus, the order was directly linked with Mary's Immaculate Conception.

[10] "Saldrás … a ser, Beatriz, defensora y primera fundadora de mi Santa Concepción," in Blas Fernández de Mesa, *La fundadora de la santa Concepción: comedia en dos partes* (New York: P. Lang, 1996), 161.

The Immaculate Conception of Mary, greatly admired and promoted in Spain and its dominions since its introduction in 1218, has roots in the concept of original sin, first appearing in the Book of Genesis.[11] Two separate theories arose concerning the Virgin Mary's association with original sin: Maculists believed that Mary was conceived with original sin, but was delivered from it—or sanctified—in her mother's womb. The Immaculist view took some time to develop. In the fifteenth century, some thought that Mary's parents, St. Joachim and St. Anne, conceived Mary chastely through divine intervention; this was represented with depictions of Mary's parents embracing at the Golden Gate of Jerusalem.[12] Through divine intervention, Mary thus avoided the taint of original sin as inherited by all offspring conceived through copulation.[13] By the sixteenth century, it was then established that Mary's body was conceived through ordinary human intercourse but that God kept Mary free from sin altogether at the instant when her soul was created.[14] The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception thus refers specifically to the Immaculate Conception of Mary's soul—and not her body.

The celebration of Mary's Immaculate Conception was not ubiquitous within the Catholic Church, and indeed it had its skeptics. Dominicans and Franciscans, for example, were on opposite sides of the Maculist-Immaculist conflict.[15] Even the Council of Trent, in its 1546 session, avoided defining how Mary's conception had taken place.[16] By the seventeenth century, impatient Immaculist supporters in Spain began to pressure the Church for official recognition of the Immaculate Conception.[17] Much like Isabel's strong support for Beatriz and her Order of

[11] Suzanne Stratton, *The Immaculate Conception in Spanish Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 5.
[12] Ibid., 21.
[13] Anne Walters Robertson, "The Savior, the Woman, and the Head of the Dragon in the Caput Masses and Motet," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 59, no. 3 (December 1, 2006), 557.
[14] Stratton, *The Immaculate Conception in Spanish Art*, 38-39
[15] Robertson, "The Savior, the Woman, and the Head of the Dragon," 558–559.
[16] Stratton, *The Immaculate Conception in Spanish Art*, 68.
[17] Ibid., 103.

the Immaculate Conception, strong lobbying for an Immaculist doctrine came from none other than King Philip IV. As a result, Pope Alexander VII finally conceded to the Immaculists in 1661 with his bull *Sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarum.*[18]

Support of Mary's Immaculate Conception was thus from its official inception a political stance, both in Spain and elsewhere in Europe.[19] Not surprisingly, Mesa wrote his play centering on Beatriz's founding of the Conceptionists was written shortly after the bull was released. 1664 was likewise the year in which Alexander VII granted Spain official permission to celebrate Immaculate Conception liturgies.[20] But Beatriz de Silva and her new order of Conceptionists had already received this devotional gesture 175 years earlier.[21]

The Spanish-speaking Catholic world would not soon forget Philip IV's intervention on behalf of the Immaculate Conception. Upon his death in 1665, New Spain honored him with the publication of a commemorative book of pictures and allegories entitled *Llanto del occidente en el ocaso del mas claro sol de las Españas: funebres demostraciones, que hizo, pyra real, que erigio, en las exequias del Rey N. Señor D. Felipe IV, El Grande,* ("Weeping in the West on the Setting of the Clearest Sun of Spain: Funerary Demonstrations Performed, Royal Pyre Erected, for the Exequies of the King, Our Lord Don Philip IV, the Great"). This work by Isidro Sariñana praised the King and his many accomplishments, which were also reenacted in elaborate memorial services across Mexico City.[22]

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[18] Ibid.

[19] One of the key elements of Habsburg piety under Ferdinand II and Ferdinand III was a devotion to the Immaculate Conception. See Steven Saunders, *Cross, Sword, and Lyre: Sacred Music at the Imperial Court of Ferdinand II of Habsburg (1619-1637)* (Oxford : Clarendon Press , 1995); Andrew H. Weaver, "Music in the Service of Counter-Reformation Politics: The Immaculate Conception at the Hapsburg Court of Ferdinand III (1637-1657)," *Music and Letters* 87, no. 3 (2006): 361–378.

[20] Stratton, *The Immaculate Conception in Spanish Art,* 104.

[21] María del Mar Graña Cid, *Mujeres, espiritualidad franciscana y feminismo en la Castilla renacentista* (Salamanca: Universidad Pontificia de Salamanca, 2003), 21.

[22] For more on Philip IV's funeral, see Steven N. Orso, *Art and Death at the Spanish Habsburg Court: The Royal Exequies for Philip IV* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 1989).

Among the book's many allegorical pictures, one depicts Philip IV singing to the Immaculate Conception (see Figure 1.1). Indeed, because of Philip's insistence on the Conception in his writings to the Pope, believers felt obliged to sing the Immaculate Conception's praises at Philip's death, as represented by the solfege syllables—*Sol Fax Mi Rex*—on a banner just below the image of the Immaculate Conception. The king, however, also holds his left hand to his lips, in a hushing gesture. This seems to signify that, thanks to Philip IV, all naysayers against the Virgin's Immaculate Conception, such as the Dominicans, for example, would henceforth be silenced.[23] Sariñana also portrays the King as himself a fine musician or composer, one who knows how to manipulate appropriate moments of sound and silence for musical effect.[24] Of course, the Conceptionists had already been singing—literally—the Immaculate Conception's praises and Office for over a hundred years early. As early as 1476, Pope Sixtus IV had approved a Feast for the Immaculate Conception with its own Office and Mass.[25] Chapters 2 and 5 will see how devotion to the Virgin Mary in convent texts gestures toward her role as a type of co-redeemer with Christ, principally because she was acknowledged daily in the convents with her own Office and because of her co-suffering during the Passion.

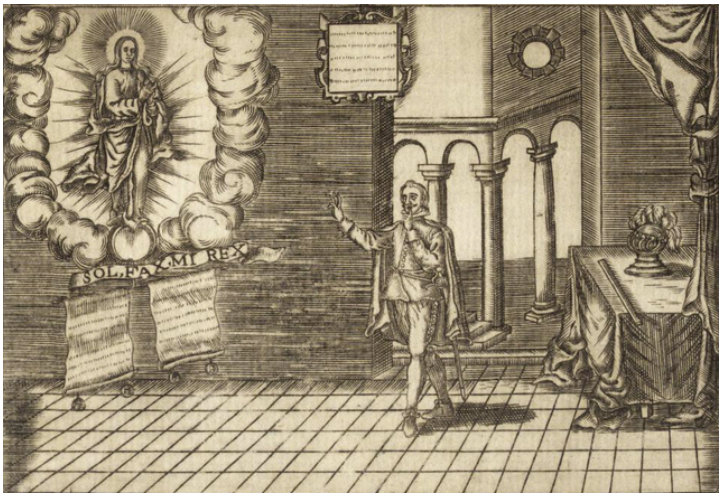
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[23] The Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary was a popular topic of debate among religious scholars. During his travels through Central America and New Spain in 1625–1637, Thomas Gage was invited to participate in a debate on the Immaculate Conception in a Guatemala university. He sided with the Maculist followers of St. Thomas Aquinas. See Thomas Gage, *Travels in the New World* (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), 106–107.

[24] Isidro Sariñana, *Llanto del occidente en el ocaso del mas claro sol de las Españas* (México: Viuda de Bernardo Calderón, 1666), folio 49v.

[25] María Maresanz del Barrio, "El breviario de la Inmaculada Concepción y Ambrosio Montesino. Una noticia bibliográfica," *Revista de Filología Románica*, n. 14, vol. II (1997), 279. Despite the numerous successes of the cause for the Immaculate Conception, it remained necessary for some men and women, lay and religious alike, to declare their explicit acceptance of the doctrine even into the late seventeenth century, as evidenced by a declaration made by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1651–1695) and published in 1700, known as *Docta explicación del misterio, y voto que hizo de defender La Purísima Concepción de Nuestra Señora, la Madre Juana Inés de la Cruz* (Erudite explanation of the mystery of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady and the vow that Mother Juana Inés de la Cruz made to defend it). See Tenorio, *Los villancicos*, 93.

Figure 1.1 Philip IV Serenades the Immaculate Conception with Praises[26]



The Conceptionist Breviary and Ties to the Franciscans

The Conceptionists possessed their own breviary for the Office and Mass of the Immaculate Conception, compiled in Toledo around 1508. This breviary was attributed to the Franciscan Ambrosio Montesino, the famed preacher of Isabel's court.[27] Because prior to receiving their own rule in 1511 the Conceptionists were under the Franciscan rule (of St. Clare), a proper breviary would have given the order a greater sense of independence as Beatriz de Silva desired. No copy of this earliest edition survives, although María Maresanz del Barrio suggests that a breviary preserved in Madrid's Biblioteca Nacional (BN) called *Breviariurn secundum ordinem Sancte atque Inmaculate Concepcionis Beatissime Virginis Marie* (1551) from Alcalá de Henares functions as an "updated" version.[28] This edition indicates that the breviary was to be used for the Office of the Immaculate Conception on simple days and non-primary feast Sundays: "*Todos los dias simples y dominicas que no son primo ponendas: dirán el oficio de la Concepción: según la forma de su breviario….*"[29] In all other cases and feasts, the Roman breviary

[26] Reproduced from Sariñana, un-numbered page before folio 49r.
[27] María Maresanz del Barrio, "El breviario de la Inmaculada Concepción," 273.
[28] Ibid., 277.
[29] *Breviariurn secundum ordinem Sancte atque Inmaculate Concepcionis Beatissime Virginis Marie* (Alcalá de Henares por Juan Brocar, 1551), folio 146.

was to be used, in accordance with the Franciscan tradition.[30] The Conceptionist rule of 1511 in fact specifically stipulated the use of the Roman breviary, but whether the Roman breviary was used together with the Conceptionist breviary between 1508–1511 remains unknown.

Even after receiving their own rule in 1511, some honorary and even formal links to the Franciscan order forever remained. All editions of the rule, including an excerpt located at the end of the of the 1551 Conceptionist breviary, stated that the nuns were to pray the Divine Office, according to the Roman Breviary, as performed by the Friars Minor, including the Octave of St. Francis, but no other specific feasts of the order.[31] Nevertheless, the feast of the founder was the only major Franciscan feast that carried into Conceptionist tradition. Otherwise, Franciscan friars retained no administrative control over Conceptionist nuns. Since their establishment, the Conceptionists remained under the supervision of a local bishop and not male regulars. Still, their relationship with Franciscans could on occasion be politicized and used to the convent's advantage, as will be shown in Chapter 5.

But regardless of Conceptionists' irregular claims to independence from the Franciscans, early modern Franciscan literature on the order's history always considered the Conceptionists a branch of their order.[32] For example, on the founding of the first Conceptionist convent in Mexico City, the *Purísima Concepción* convent, the famous chronicler Augustín de Vetancurt (1620–1700) writes that this cloister was the first established by the

[30] *Breviariurn secundum ordinem*, folio 146.

[31] "Las monjas de velo recen el Oficio Divino, conforme al Breviario Romano, con puntualidad, como los Frailes Menores, con la Octava de San Francisco: pero ninguna otra de su Orden." Juan de Palafox y Mendoza, *Regla y constituciones que han de guardar las religiosas de los conventos de Nuestra Señora de al Concepción y la Santísima Trinidad de la Ciudad de los Ángeles*, (Puebla: 1641), 10r.

[32] A collection of all branches of the Franciscan order and their respective rules includes the Conceptionists. See *Constituciones generales para todas las monjas y religiosas, sujetas à la obediencia de la orden de nuestro Padre San Francisco en toda la familia Cismontana: De nuevo recopiladas de las antiguas, y añadidas con acuerdo, consentimiento y aprobación del capitulo general, celebrado en Roma à II de Junio de 1639: ponerse al principio las reglas de Santa Clara, primera, y segunda; la de las monjas de la Purísima Concepción, y la de las terceras de penitencia* (Madrid: Imprenta Real, 1642).

religion of St. Francis in New Spain.[33] Similarly, in a book cataloguing Mexico City indulgences, Fray José de Ávila lumps Conceptionist convent churches together with Franciscan churches in a list of places to visit to gain plenary indulgence on the feast of the Franciscan protomartyrs.[34] Not coincidentally, Mexico City's Confraternity of St. Francis was based in the Conceptionist convent of *Regina Coeli* where the confraternity sponsored a lavish Mass with a sermon, whose publication was sponsored by Conceptionist nuns.[35] The initial arrival of the Conceptionist order in the Americas is also attributed to the bequest of an influential Franciscan—the first Bishop of Mexico City (capital of the Viceroyalty), Fray Juan de Zumárraga. He is most remembered for having received the miraculous image of the Virgin of Guadalupe, an Immaculist devotion, from the garment of an indigenous peasant Juan Diego, subsequently canonized.[36]

The Need for Cloistered Women: Conceptionist Arrival in New Spain

The Conceptionists were established in New Spain by twelve of Beatriz's protégées from the Toledo motherhouse. Together, they founded Mexico City's *Purísima Concepción* convent in 1540.[37] As the first Conceptionist convent, the nuns signed most of their documents with the addendum that they belonged to New Spain's oldest convent (*el más antiguo*). As Chapter 4 will show, being the first convent earned the *Purísima Concepción* significant favor

[33] Augustín de Vetancurt, *Teatro mexicano: descripción breve de los sucesos ejemplares, históricos, políticos, militares y religiosos del nuevo mundo occidental de las indias, 1698*, Tomo II (México: Impr. de I. Escalante, 1871), 344.
[34] José de Ávila, *Colección de noticias de muchas de las indulgencias plenarias y perpetuas : que pueden ganar todos los fieles de Cristo, que con la debida disposición, visitaren en sus respectivos días las iglesias que se irán nombrando en ellos en esta corte de México* (México: Felipe de Zúñiga y Ontiveros, 1787), 7.
[35] Esteban de Aguilar, *Sermón del seráfico padre San Francisco : en la fiesta que le celebra su ilustre, y devota cofradía fundada en el religioso convento de religiosas de Regina Coeli a cuyas expensas se imprime* (México: Viuda de Bernardo Calderón, 1668), v–vi.
[36] Drew Edward Davies, "Villancicos from Mexico City for the Virgin of Guadalupe," *Early Music* 29, no. 2 (2011), 230.
[37] Other orders came later: Franciscans (1570), Company of Mary (1573), Dominicans (first in Oaxaca, 1576), Hieronymites (1585), Discalced Carmelites (first in Puebla, 1604). See Muriel, *Conventos de monjas en la Nueva España*, 138.

with the cathedral music chapel. Indeed, Bishop Zumárraga's request for Conceptionists to flock to New Spain credited the order with a deep commitment to discipline and enclosure. Earlier, the *Periculoso* decree of Boniface VIII had established strict enclosure of nuns in 1298.[38] But this decree was only loosely enforced throughout Europe until 1566, when Pius V compelled observation of enclosure (*clausura*) through his *Circa pastoralis* decree.[39] There was, however, a precedent for reestablishing this type of obedience in Spanish monasteries, particularly in convents notorious for their laxness: Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros' reforms of ca. 1495–1516.[40] The founding of the Conceptionist order thus took place as a product of a desire for monastic reform in Spain. [41] From their inception, therefore, Conceptionist convents were to serve as reliable ideals for New Spain's young women.

Zumárraga also sought to continue the European tradition of live-in education for women. He encouraged Mexico City's citizens to allow their daughters to live with their secular teachers from the age of five. But laywomen proved to be problematic. Records show that Mexico City's bishop constantly received complaints about instructors who neglected their students by leaving schoolhouses at their convenience.[42] Cloistered nuns, on the other hand, who had a successful record as teachers in Europe, were not a flight risk.[43] At the same time, they could also instill solid moral character among the female youth of the New World, even encouraging them to remain in the convent for life.

Indeed, Zumárraga might also have emphasized the need for teachers in Mexico City as a way to hasten the general establishment of female convents in the New World. Craig Monson

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[38] On *Periculoso* see Elizabeth Makowski, *Canon Law and Cloistered Women: Periculoso and its Commentators, 1298-1545* (CUA Press, 1999).
[39] Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, 61.
[40] Graña Cid, *Mujeres, espiritualidad franciscana y feminismo en la Castilla renacentista*, 28. Also see José García Oro, *Cisneros: Un cardenal reformista en el trono de España (1436-1517)*, 1st ed. (Madrid: La Esfera de los Libros, 2005), 15.
[41] Ibid.
[42] Muriel, *Conventos de monjas en la Nueva España*, 24.
[43] Ulrike Strasser, *State of Virginity: Gender, Religion, and Politics in an Early Modern Catholic State* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2004), *153*.

recalls that in early modern Italy, as in Spain and its dominions, "A woman should have a husband or a wall."[44] Convents were thus places where adult women could live respectable lives outside wedlock.[45]

In New Spain, the Conceptionists followed manuscripts of the 1511 rule which circulated around different houses, and were often read aloud to the whole community.[46] Printed editions of the rule did not come to light until the seventeenth century. For Mexico City's Conceptionists in particular, Archbishop Francisco de Manso Zuñiga y Sola (1587–1656) provided the *Regla y ordenaciones de las religiosas de la Límpia e Inmaculada Concepción* (1635); subsequent editions were published in 1758, 1779, and 1815.[47] In Puebla, Bishop Juan de Palafox y Mendoza (1600–1659) provided *Regla y constituciones que han de guardar las religiosas de los conventos de Nuestra Señora de la Concepción y la Santísima Trinidad de la Ciudad de los Angeles*, published in 1641, with subsequent editions in 1744 and 1795 containing the same material. [48]

All three editions of the rules, from the original in Spain to the modified version of the Novohispanic bishops, laid out broad but informative stipulations regarding music and musicians. One can infer a deep appreciation for well-performed music from the 1511 Conceptionist rule. Its ordinances state, accordingly, that the choir vicar (*vicaria de coro*) was to ensure that the "best" voices be selected to execute liturgical music accurately and in this way

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[44] Monson, *Nuns Behaving Badly*, 8.

[45] The rule of the order does not specify how nuns were to oversee their students. This aspect of convent life remains to be further researched, though Josefina Muriel attests to the lack of documentation regarding the teaching curriculums in convents. Furthermore, separate "secular" schools run by lay teachers also continued to run along with the convents where teaching took place. Teaching in convents ceased in 1775-1817 by order of King Carlos III for fear that it was causing leniency within the monastic life. See Muriel, *La sociedad novohispana y sus colegios de niñas*, 42-45.

[46] Manso Zuñiga, *Llave de oro, para abrir las puertas del cielo. La regla y ordenaciones de las monjas de la Inmaculada Concepcion de Nuestra Señor, la Madre de Dios* (Reimpreso en México: Imprenta de María Fernández y Jáuregui, 1815), 6.

[47] BNAH, Colección General, XXIV, 2,26 and VI, 2, 30 (1758 edition). The 1815 edition was renamed *Llave de oro, para abrir las puertas del cielo.* Its front matter provides a detailed history of the order and previous editions of the rule.

[48] BNMFR has Palafox's rule catalogued as RSM 1641 M4CON.

to increase listeners' devotion during services.[49] Bishop Palafox, for example, encouraged practicing the music for the liturgies ahead of time:

> To avoid defects and errors, principally ⌈by⌋ the one who performs the Office, and those who say or sing the lessons, ⌈they should⌋ go over them before entering the *coro*.[50]

Similarly, but with a bit more detail, Archbishop Manso Zuñiga notes:

> The Divine Office must always be said in a tone with the appropriate pause that is indicated in the middle of each verse, except on principle feasts, in which it will be sung, allowing all vanities, and multiplicity of notes (*puntos*) in the song…. And so that there are no defects in the pronunciation, and accents, principally by the one who performs the Office, practice, before entering the *coro*, the Antiphons, *Capitulas*, Lections, and prayers to be said or sung. The same goes for the singers….[51]

Elsewhere, Manso Zuñiga even hints at polyphonic practice on feast days and the use of chant on regular days by suggesting that the multiplicity of notes was a luxury—specifically, a vanity (*vanidades*). Indeed, this language coincides with Rodríguez Mata's description of the villancicos which he had "composed" (*puntados*). In any case, both bishops clearly emphasized the importance of well-articulated prayers and songs during liturgy, presumably so that their meanings might be contemplated and inspire devotion.

The printing of the Conceptionist rulebook enabled each novice to have her own text to study during her novitiate year. It also allowed for the bishops to stipulate local customs for the Conceptionists in New Spain. By the time Archbishop Zuñiga y Sola's rule came into print,

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[49] "La vicaria por evitar fastidio a los oyentes y por aumentarles la devoción vaya mudando las cantoras y poniendo siempre las de mejores voces y que mas bien saben decir conforme a las solemnidades de las fiestas…." *Regla de la Orden de la Concepción*, Biblioteca Nacional (BN), Madrid, Ms. 1111, folios 29–31.

[50] "Porque no haya defectos, ni yerros, principalmente, la que hace el Oficio, y los que han de decir, o cantar las lecciones, ásenlas antes de ir al coro." Juan de Palafox y Mendoza, *Regla y constituciones que han de guardar las religiosas de los conventos de Nuestra Señora de al Concepción y la Santísima Trinidad de la Ciudad de los Ángeles*, 1641, folio 28v.

[51] "El Oficio Divino siempre se diga en tono con la pausa debida, que está señalada en medio de cada verso, salvo en las fiestas principales, que se dirá cantado, escusando ⌈sic⌋ toda vanidad, y multiplicidad de puntos en el canto….Y porque no haya defectos en la pronunciación, y acentos, principalmente, en la que hace el Oficio, prevenga antes de entrar en el *coro* las antífonas, capitulas, lecciones, y oraciones, que ha de decir o cantar. Lo mismo hagan las cantoras…." Manso Zuñiga, *Regla y ordenaciones de las religiosas de la Limpia e Inmaculada Concepción*, 1758, 38–39.

seven of the eight Conceptionist houses in Mexico had been established. And by the time of Palafox's rule, both Puebla convents were already founded (see Table 1.2).

Table 1.2 Foundation of Conceptionist Convents in Mexico City and Puebla[52]

1540 *Purísima Concepción*
1573 *Regina Coeli*
1581 *Jesús María*
1593 *Nuestra Señora de la Encarnación*
1597 *Purísima Concepción* (Puebla)
1699 *Santa Inés*
1610 *San José de la Gracia*
1619 *Santísima Trinidad* (Puebla)
1634 *Nuestra Señora de Balvanera*
1636 *San Bernardo*

Elite families who sent their daughters there for education and profession seemed to prefer Conceptionist convents because they were the oldest order in New Spain. They were also only open to white women of Spanish descent, a topic which I will analyze more thoroughly in Chapter 3. This tradition of accepting elites was also enhanced by the common, nepotistic practice of sending women to convents with a family member already present. Thus multiple generations of wealthy families would often be tied to Conceptionist convents.[53] Not the least of these was *Purísima Concepción*, which was under royal patronage and would remain the only

[52] The principle monograph that addresses a brief history of each convent remains Muriel, *Conventos de monjas en la Nueva España.*

[53] Asunción Lavrin, "Vida conventual: rasgos históricos," *Sor Juana y su mundo*, edited by Sara Poot Herrera (México: Universidad del Claustro de Sor Juana, 1995), 39–40.

female cloister in New Spain for the first thirty years of its existence, until the Franciscans established the *Santa Clara* convent in Mexico City in 1570.[54]

The fact that the *Jesús María* convent was also designated a royal convent, must also have attracted elite inhabitants. Its establishment was specifically sponsored by the King of Spain, Philip II, who was even rumored to have sent his illegitimate daughter there.[55] Given such a prestigious sponsor, the earliest of two illuminated profession books from the *Jesús María* convent includes a painting of the Spanish Habsburg coat of arms attributed to the famed artist Nicolás de Texada (see Figure 1.2).[56] Texada also drew an illumination of the founding sisters of the *Jesús María* convent kneeling before a statue of the Immaculate Conception; the founders' names are listed in the middle of the folio (see Figure 1.3). Elsewhere, the *Jesús María* convent was said to have housed the interpreter of Hernán Cortez in the late sixteenth century.[57] Due to a host of such prestigious residents, in the late seventeenth century, the nuns of the *Jesús María* convent hired the acclaimed scholar Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora to write a comprehensive history of the convent as it stood in 1684.[58]

All Conceptionist convents were founded by original inhabitants of the *Purísima Concepción* convent in Mexico City.[59] There were only two exceptions to this: firstly, the *San Bernardo* convent's founding sisters came from *Regina Coeli*, and secondly, in Puebla, the

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[54] Muriel, *Conventos de monjas en la Nueva España*, 138.
[55] Kathleen Ross, *The Baroque Narrative of Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora: A New World Paradise* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 102.
[56] María Concepción Amerlinck, "La pintura en los libros de profesiones de las Concepcionistas Novohispanas," in *La Orden Concepcionista*, Vol. 2, 165.
[57] Ross, *The Baroque Narrative*, 102.
[58] Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora did not, however, limit himself to commenting only on the lives of particularly meritorious nuns, but he also included some commentary on notable servants—indigenous and black women—who were not allowed to profess, but who led pious lives modelled after the nuns. Thus, the convents were supposedly beneficial to all women in society even if some women were not allowed to take vows. In one instance, he notes that Alfonso de Ecija, a cathedral canon, donated his slave to the convent in order for her to become a saint ("*lo bueno que alli viese se hiziese santa*"). See *Paraíso occidental: plantado y cultivado por la liberal benéfica mano de los muy católicos y poderosos Reyes de España, nuestros Señores, en su magnifico Real Convento De Jesús María de México: facsímile de la primera edición (México, 1684)* (México : Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México : Centro de Estudios de Historia de México Condumex, 1995), folios 175v–176r..
[59] Muriel, *Conventos De Monjas*, 138.

Santísima Trinidad convent was founded by sisters from the *Purísima Concepción* convent in Puebla.[60] The *Santísima Trinidad* convent's establishment in 1619 was also commemorated with visual art (see Figure 1.4).

Figure 1.2 Nicolás de Texada, Spanish Habsburg Coat of Arms, *Jesús María* Convent Profession Book, ca. 1583[61]



[60] Ibid.
[61] Reproduced with permission from the Royal *Jesús María* Convent nuns.

Figure 1.3 Nicolás de Texada, Founders of the *Jesús María* Convent, ca. 1583[62]



[62] Reproduced with permission from the Royal *Jesús María* Convent nuns.

Figure 1.4 Anonymous, *Foundation of the Santísima Trinidad Convent by Nuns from the Purísima Concepción Convent*, 17th century[63]



Religiosity, Convent Music, and City Networks

Two important accounts provide broad overviews of urban piety and convent music in seventeenth-century Mexico City and Puebla. The first is by Thomas Gage, a renegade English priest, who travelled throughout the New World from 1625 to 1637 and published his travel account in 1648 after his bitter disavowal of Catholicism. The second is Augustiín de Vetancurt's well-known four-volume encyclopedic *Teatro mexicano* (1698).

[63] The original oil on canvas hangs in the sacristy of Puebla's *Llagas de San Francisco* Church, and this image was reproduced from the jacket cover of Aurelio Tello, Bárbara Pérez Ruiz, and Omar Morales' *Villancicos de la Colección Sánchez Garza*, Bona Fe Ensemble de música Antigua, 2014, Macchina Tempo Gestión Cultural, Compact Disc. The inscription below the image of the nuns receiving Bishop Alonso de la Mota's blessing reads "Nuns of the Convent of the *Concepción* come out to establish the Convent of the *Santísima Trinidad* during the tenure of Abbess Mencia de la Concepción who will be the administrator [of the new convent]. Mencia's sister Sor Constancia de San Miguel, [will be] the novice teacher, and Catarina de la Concepción [will be] the door keeper. 21 October 1619. The current bishop is the Illustrious Alonso de la Mota."

Gage, by far the more cynical of the two writers, described church-patron relations specifically in Mexico City as follows:

> It seems that religion teacheth that all wickedness is allowable, so long as the churches and clergy flourish, nay, while the purse is open to lasciviousness, if it be likewise opened to enrich the temple walls and roofs, that is well. Sin and wickedness abound in Mexico, yet there are no more devout people in the world toward the Church and clergy. In their lifetime they strive to exceed one another in their gifts to the cloisters of nuns and friars. Some erect altars to their best devoted saints, worth many thousand ducats; others present crowns of gold to the pictures of Mary, others, lamps; others, golden chains; others build cloisters at their own charge; others repair them; others at their death leave to them two or three thousand ducats for an annual stipend.[64]

Gage belonged to the Dominican order, but became a staunch Protestant shortly after his return to England. He published his diary in London in a period when Puritans were newly in control of the government. Thus, his severe portrayal of Catholic society placed him in a politically advantageous—and safe—position.[65]

Gage's perception of the corruption endemic throughout convents of New Spain did not spare the performing arts as well. In another account, he writes:

> It is ordinary for the friars to visit the devoted nuns, and spend whole days with them, hearing their music, feeding on their sweet meats, and for this purpose they have many chambers which they call *locutorios*, to talk in, with wooden bars between the nuns and them, and in these chambers are tables for the friars to dine at, and while they dine the nuns recreate them with their voices. Gentlemen and citizens give their daughters to be brought up in these nunneries, where they are taught to make all sorts of conserves and preserves, all sorts of needlework, all sorts of music, which is so exquisite in that city that I dare be bold to say that the people are drawn to their churches more for the delight of the music than for any delight in the service of God. More, they teach these young children to act like players; and to entice the people to their churches, they make these children act short dialogues in their choirs, richly attiring them with men's and women's apparel, especially upon Midsummer Day, and the eight days before their Christmas. These are so gallantly performed that there have been many factitious strifes and single combats…for defending which of these nunneries most excelled in music and in the training up of children. No delights

[64] Thomas Gage, *Travels in the New World*, edited by J. Eric S. Thompson (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1958), 70.
[65] Gage, *Travels in the New World*, xv–xvi.

> are wanting in that city abroad in the world, nor in their churches, which should be the house of God, and the soul's, not the senses' delight.[66]

Laced within Gage's description of the interactions in the communication parlors (*locutorios*) is blatant, anti-papist, Puritan propaganda, in which he criticizes New World convents as driven by spectacle, wealth, and prestige. However, he also recalls nuns' service as successful teachers of music and theater in particular.[67] These efforts, he notes, fostered music which drew people from across the city, lay and ordained alike, seeking the pleasure of listening to the convent choir. While he does not specify that it was sacred liturgical music that attracted the laity, it can be inferred that this was the case. He mentions in fact that laity were drawn into the convent churches themselves, where only sacred music was allowed for performance. Gage's account gives a sense that music-making was popular in the convents while simultaneously mounting an attack on these monastic institutions—a favorite Puritan target. He does not mention, for example, mention the activities at the cathedral—arguably the most important center for music, ceremony, and liturgy.[68] He does not appear to have visited Puebla either.

Meanwhile, the devoutly Catholic Vetancurt characterizes Mexico City and Puebla as both very pious and charitable cities, but he leaves aside all evidence of Catholic malfeasance, which Gage so fixated upon.[69] Instead, he boasts of Mexico City's numerous convents as a feature that made it a prosperous metropolis in 1698:

> O blessed city where in convents the prayers of prudent virgins and brides of Jesus are like armies of angels arranged by choirs, [who are] appalling to hell and beautiful to heaven; in nuns' convents God has established his presidios and in them forms armies who, opposed to the rigors of God, with their prayers sooth and pay homage to Divine Justice obliging Him to distribute His mercy;

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[66] Ibid., 72.
[67] It was also common to put on plays in the convents during the Octave of Corpus Christi, as will be discussed in Chapter 4. It was a moveable feast. Therefore, a late June celebration could have coincided with Midsummer, typically celebrated on the Feast of St. John the Baptist, 23 June, in the Spanish speaking world. See John A. Marino, "The Zodiac in the Streets: Inscribing 'Buon Governo' in Baroque Naples," *Embodiments of Power: Building Baroque Cities in Europe*, edited by Gary B. Cohen and Franz A. J. Szabo (New York: Berghan Books, 2008), 207.
[68] Similar travel accounts of tourists in seventeenth-century Milan made mention of convent music and none regarding cathedral music. See Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, 415.
[69] Vetancurt, *Teatro mexicano*, 228.

> they are an affront to the infernal enemies, dishonor of deceitfulness because it is divine worth's blessing to conquer with lilies, triumph with roses, subjecting elephant demons with women doves! There are no words with which to ponder the majesty that in them is celebrated the Divine Cult, music, fragrances, the greatness of their temples, cleanliness of the altars, and participation in their *coros.*[70]

Mexico City was indeed blessed with seventeen convents by this time—and ten of them Conceptionist. This would increase by four cloisters before the close of the eighteenth century. Vetancurt of course wrote with equal enthusiasm and symbolism of the eight convents in Puebla (known as the City of Angels, *Puebla de los Ángeles*), remarking on the angelic virginity of the nuns that inhabit them: "It is obligatory that the City of Angels would have virgins, of whom St. Ambrose said their victory is greater than the victory and merit of the angels, because the angels live without flesh and virgins battle and triumph over themselves…."[71]

Vetancurt's first account evinces an inability to write down words to describe the splendor of the convent liturgies, which he can only note were enhanced by their music. Elsewhere, he accurately describes the artistic and architectural features of the metropolitan cathedrals of Mexico City and Puebla, but he nevertheless neglects to describe their music.[72]

Generally, Gage and Vetancurt both indicate that there was something extraordinarily evil or good about music performed in nuns' convents, since they are both writing religio-political propaganda. Neither of them specifies particular convent names or musical genres.

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[70] "¡Dichosa ciudad, donde las oraciones de vírgenes prudentes y esposas de Jesús repartidas en conventos son ejércitos de ángeles bien ordenados de coros terribles para el infierno y hermosos para el cielo, que en los conventos de monjas ha puesto Dios sus presidios y en ellos forma ejércitos que se oponen á los rigores de Dios, aplacan con sus ruegos y rinden á la divina justicia con sus oraciones, obligándole á repartir misericordias; son afrenta á los enemigos infernales y ignominia de sus astucias, porque es donaire del valor divino vencer con azucenas y triunfar con rosas, sujetando á elefantes demonios con mujeres palomas! No hay palabras con que ponderar la majestad con que en ellos se celebra el divino culto, la música, los olores, la grandeza de sus templos, limpieza de altares y asistencia en sus coros." Ibid., 342. Also quoted and translated in James M. Córdova, *The Art of Professing in Bourbon Mexico: Crowned-Nun Portraits and Reform in the Convent* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2014), 189–190.

[71] "En la ciudad de los Ángeles era forzoso que hubiese vírgenes, de quienes dijo San Ambrosio que es mayor la Victoria de las vírgenes que la Victoria y mérito de los ángeles, porque estos viven sin carne y las vírgenes pelean y triunfan de sí mismas…." Vetancurt, *Teatro mexicano*, 388.

[72] For Mexico City cathedral, see Vetancurt, *Teatro mexicano*, 350–354; for Puebla cathedral, see Ibid., 365–367.

They seem to suggest that convents of all orders had musical activities that attracted lay people to the convents. However, the extant music sources indicate that three Conceptionist convents stand out owing to their cultivation of polyphonic music. This includes Mexico City's *Encarnación* and *Santa Inés*, and Puebla's *Santísima Trinidad*.

The *Encarnación* repertory is preserved in six choirbooks at the Newberry Library, catalogued as the *Mexican Choirbooks* (VAULT MS 5148). They consist of ninety-two polyphonic—and some polychoral—compositions for Mass and Office. These choirbooks are rich in music for Holy Week, including Lamentations and Passions. Eliyahu Schleifer suggests in particular that the compositions copied in these books date from the first half of the seventeenth century to the middle of the eighteenth century.[73] He confirmed the origin of the manuscripts by applying an ultraviolet light to the binding of vol. 1 and recovering an inscription that reads: "This book of Masses is from this convent of Our Lady of the *Encarnación*" (*Este libro de misas es de este convento de Nuestra Señora de la Encarnación*).[74] The frequent lack of text underlay for the lower vocal parts—the bass and tenor parts specifically—is also consistent with music copied for women musicians. In Italian convents, for example, the low vocal parts were often performed instrumentally.[75] As will be shown shortly, this practice also existed in New Spain.

While the choirbooks contain a number of anonymous compositions, they also preserve copies of the works of well-known Spanish masters, such as Victoria and Guerrero, as well as pieces by local composers.[76] Among the most distinguished composers active in New Spain and represented in the manuscripts include chapel masters of the cathedral such as Hernando

[73] Eliyahu Schleifer, "The Mexican Choirbooks at the Newberry Library (Case Ms VM 2147 C36)" (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1979), 7–14.
[74] Ibid., 5.
[75] Monson, *Disembodied Voices*, 54; Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, 203.
[76] Schleifer mentions that it is remarkable to observe the old Spanish masters of polyphony copied in some of the choirbooks that date from the eighteenth century. See Schleifer, "The Mexican Choirbooks," 64.

Franco (1532–1585), Antonio Rodriguez Mata (d. 1643), and Fabián Pérez Ximeno (1591–1654).[77] Although the presence of their compositions indicates a musical connection between convent and cathedral, the music itself does not explain how these ties came about. Other archival evidence, however, indicates that familial ties might have facilitated these musical exchanges. Ximeno's last will and testament (1651), for example, reveals that all three of his daughters professed at Conceptionist convents: Josepha de la Concepción was cloistered at the *Encarnación* and Úrsula del Sacramento and Catalina de Jesús lived in the *Jesús María* convent.[78] Ximeno was also one of New Spain's finest organists, and, given the value that the Novohispanic church placed on organ music in the liturgies, it would not be unusual for him to have trained his daughters as organists in order to facilitate their acceptance into a convent.[79]

The *Encarnación* choirbooks also contain several compositions by Juan de Lienas, a Novohispanic composer who left behind no biographical history. His works are only present here and in the *Santa Inés* choirbook, a music manuscript of thirty-one polyphonic pieces which share common features with the repertory of the *Encarnación* choirbooks. In fact, Schleifer goes so far as to suggest that the *Santa Inés* choirbook originated in the *Encarnación* owing to concordances present in both sources, as well as similar treatment of *cantus firmi* and similar deviations in Latin spelling.[80] The *Santa Inés* repertory also lacks bass and tenor text underlay for a number of pieces. Schleifer notes that these sources complement each other, particularly in

[77] María Gembero Ustárroz, "Migraciones de músicos entre España y América (siglos XIV–XVIII): estudio prelimina," *La música y el atlántico: relaciones musicales entre España y Latinoamérica*, edited by María Gembero Ustárroz and Emilio Ros-Fábregas (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 2007), 28.

[78] Ed Pepe, ed. "Testamento de Fabián Pérez Ximeno," *Heterofonía: Revista De Investigación Musical* XXXVI, no. 130–131 (December, 2004): 141–143. The last will and testament of yet another Mexico City cathedral chapel master, Francisco López Capillas (d. 1673), also indicates strong affiliations with convents, including the *Jesús María*. For example, it states that he owed the *Jesús María* convent 1,000 pesos. In addition, a nun from the *San José de Gracia* convent, one Sor María de San José, was reported to be his executor. See Lester D. Brothers, "Francisco López Capillas, First Great Native New-World Composer: Reflections on the Discovery of His Will," *Inter-American Music Review* 10, no. 2 (1988), 103.

[79] Matthew Grey Brothers notes that Ximeno was so talented at the organ that he was paid more than the usual organist salary at Mexico City cathedral and that he often travelled to Puebla to inspect the cathedral organs there. See Brothers, "The Polyphonic Passions in Seventeenth-Century Mexico," (PhD diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 2001), 7–8.

[80] Schleifer, "The Mexican Choirbooks," 17–19.

their presentation of the Passion settings for Holy Week. Indeed, while the *Santa Inés* choirbook contains the St. Matthew and St. John Passions, the St. Mark and St. Luke Passions are found in the *Encarnación* choirbooks.[81] Later, however, Schleifer signals that the absence of the St. Matthew and St. John Passions from the *Encarnación* choirbooks is also unusual, since these were the gospels used for the major liturgies on Palm Sunday and Good Friday, respectively.[82]

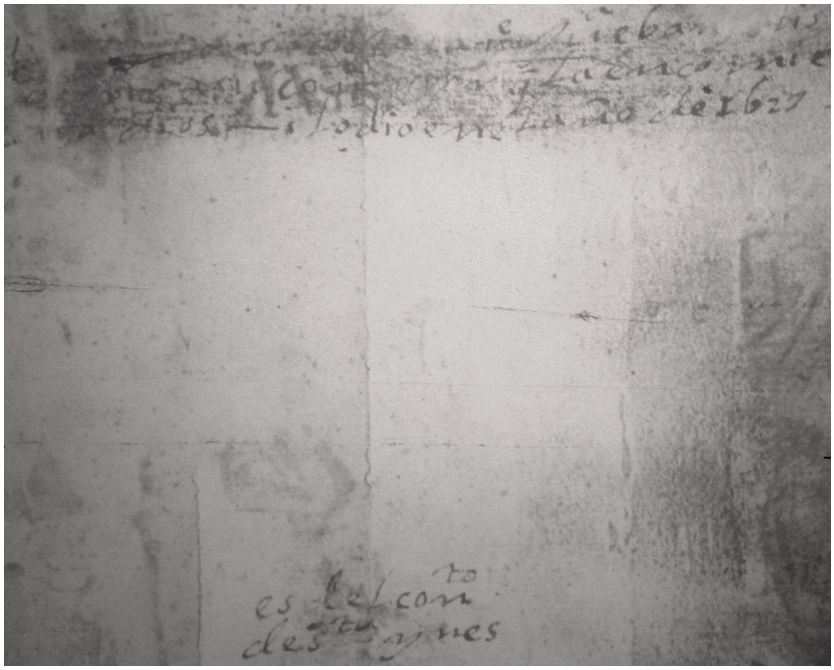
Schleifer, for his part, never refers to the *Santa Inés* convent choirbook by that name, but rather, calls it the *Carmen Codex*, following the title given to the manuscript's critical edition by Jesús Bal y Gay in 1952.[83] Nevertheless, Schleifer rightly refutes Bal y Gay's claim that the *Codex* originated and was used by the Discalced Carmelites of the *Carmen* convent. Schleifer notes instead that the music in the choirbook would have been antithetical to the austere way of life practiced by these Carmelites who entirely opposed polyphonic music as part of their rules.[84]

Oddly, it seems that neither scholar was aware of an inscription located on the front page of the choirbook which reads that "it belongs to the *Santa Inés* convent" (*es del conto de sta ynes* [sic]), a salient detail that is missing from both their publications. And the same page also includes an obscure inscription at the top where one can make out the date 1627—a date that would indeed coincide with the copying of some of the *Encarnación* books, according to Schleifer (see Figure 1.5).[85] The microfilm of the choirbook in question (the so-called *Carmen Codex*) is catalogued as *Choirbook from the Convento de Santa Inés* (Microfilm 1314) and dated 1627 at the Newberry Library.

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[81] Ibid, 18.
[82] Ibid., 53.
[83] Jesús Bal y Gay, ed., *El códice del Convento del Carmen* (México: Instituto Nacional de Bellas Artes), 1952.
[84] Schleifer, "The Mexican Choirbooks,"17. The Carmelite convent where the *Santa Inés* choirbook is preserved is now a museum.
[85] Ibid., 13.

Figure 1.5 Front Page, *Santa Inés* Convent Choirbook[86]



A number of documents preserved in the AGN attest to the musical and music-related expenditures at a number of Mexico City convents under the bishop's administrative care, and specifically at Conceptionist and Hieronymite cloisters. The accounts of Archbishop Payo Enríquez's visits to various convents between 1672 and 1675, as edited and transcribed by Leticia Pérez Puente, provide the invaluable perspective on the convents themselves, these milieus where musical activity was both approved and closely monitored. Table 1.3 includes all references to music therein, save for musical activities that took place in Holy Week, which are discussed in Chapter 5.

[86] Photographed with permission from the Museo del Carmen, Mexico City.

Table 1.3 Music References in Archbishop Payo Enríquez's Visits to Mexico City Convents, 1672–1675[87]

***Regina Coeli* Convent**
1672
Similarly, the choir vicar is given thirty-five pesos every year for the [male] teacher who composes the villancicos and music for the *coro* year-around. (*Asimismo, se le da a la madre vicaria de coro treintaicinco pesos cada año para el maestro que hace los villancicos y música para el coro todo el ano.*)

1675
For the music expenses year-around, thirty-five pesos. (*Para la música de todo el año treintaicinco pesos.*)

***Jesús María* Convent**
1672
And because it is a logical custom to give the choir vicar eight pesos yearly for strings and paper, we order that [this tradition] be followed and continue. (*Y por cuanto ha sido costumbre justa que se dan a la madre vicaria de coro para cuerdas y papel ocho pesos cada año, mandamos se observe y continúe.*)

Similarly, give twelve pesos a year to the teacher of music and another twelve pesos to the nuns who sing for Christmas eve [and] Christmas Vespers, or the equivalent in compensation for their work during the Christmas Masses. (*Asimismo, se den doce pesos cada año por la música al maestro de ella y otros doce pesos a las religiosas cantoras la noche buena, víspera de pascua de navidad, por igual a como les cupiere para alivio de le trabajo que han tenido en las misas de aguinaldo.*)

***San Jerónimo* Convent (Hieronymite)**
1673

And the choir vicar is given twenty pesos yearly, as is customary, for the gift to the teacher who composes the music, and six pesos for strings and reeds. (*Ytem, se ordena a la madre vicaria de coro cada año veinte pesos como ha sido costumbre para el regalo del maestro que compone la música, y seis pesos para cuerdas y cañuelas.*)

***Encarnación* Convent**

1673
And [the archbishop] orders and commands that choir vicar be given forty pesos yearly, twenty for strings and other things that pertain to music and its instruments, and the other twenty to be disbursed equally among the convent singers on Christmas Eve to compensate them for their work during the celebration of the Christmas Masses. And we completely prohibit the spending that has taken place up to now on villancicos, since the old ones that they have can be repeated, and because it is believed that there is no shortage of pious poets whose charity can fulfill the need [for villancicos] of this convent. (*Ytem, ordena y manda que a la madre*

[87] Leticia Pérez Puente, *Autos de las visitas del Arzobispo Fray Payo Enríquez a los conventos de monjas de la Ciudad de México (1672–1675)*, (México: UNAM, 2005), 57, 94, 120, 149, 205.

Table 1.3, continued

vicaria de coro se le den en cada un año cuarenta pesos, los veinte para cuerdas y demás cosas que pertenecen a la música y sus instrumentos, y los otros veinte para que la víspera de navidad se repartan entre las religiosas músicas de dicho convento con igualdad, para alivio del especial trabajo que han tenido en la celebración de las misas de aguinaldo. Y, totalmente, prohibimos el gasto que se ha hecho hasta aquí en la paga de villancicos, pues, además que se podrán repetir los más antiguos con que se hallaren, se debe creer que nunca les faltarán poetas piadosos que por caridad se ejerciten en este ministerio constándoles la necesidad de este convento.)

***San José de Gracia* Convent**
1673
Similarly, [give] another six pesos [to the choir vicar] for the strings and reeds for the instruments in her care. (*Y así mismo, otros seis pesos para cuerdas y cañuelas de los instrumentos de su cargo.*)

And it is ordered that they continue the custom of giving eight pesos to the said [choir] vicar on the feast of Christmas and Easter to be distributed equally among the musician nuns who served on said solemnities. (*Ytem se ordena se guarde la costumbre que se ha tenido de que se den ocho pesos la pascua de navidad y otros ocho la de resurrección a dicha madre vicaria para que los reparta entre las religiosas músicas que hubieren servido en dichas dos solemnidades a quienes les dará lo que les tocaré por iguales partes.)*

These accounts provide a brief sense of what was musically indispensable for the liturgies, including well-maintained instruments, properly compensated nun musicians, and music scores themselves. Regarding the last, one can observe that the records for the *Regina Coeli*, *Jesús María*, and *San Jerónimo* convents all include yearly stipends for composers. Moreover, the *Regina Coeli* and *Encarnación* convent records specifically mention villancicos.

The *Encarnación*—some sixty years after its legal run-in with Mata—was again caught in a scandal regarding this musical genre. In this instance, the nuns were reportedly spending too much money on villancicos, and the bishop instructed them to reuse their old ones or to obtain them as donations. There are of course no villancicos present in the *Encarnación* convent choirbooks, which points to a lacuna in the sources.

Fortunately, we do have an idea of what the villancicos composed or copied for Novohispanic nuns were like thanks to the Jesús Sánchez Garza collection in the Centro

Nacional de Investigación, Documentación e Información Musical "Carlos Chávez" (CENIDIM) in Mexico City. This archive preserves 276 compositions, most of which are villancicos, and there are also some Latin-texted polyphonic works. All of the pieces come from Puebla's *Santísima Trinidad* convent.[88] They have been conserved in loose-leaf manuscripts, typically containing one voice part per page. Like all Novohispanic church music, the collection includes composers from both the Old and New World, most notably Puebla cathedral chapel masters such as Juan Gutierrez de Padilla (ca. 1590–1664) and Antonio de Salazar (ca. 1650–1715), who later went on to become Mexico City's cathedral chapel master. As Aurelio Tello notes, the music spans the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and many of the parts include the names of the nuns who performed them. As a result, Tello has constructed putative convent choir ensembles for the *Santísima Trinidad* spanning the two centuries in question, including the instruments indicated in the scores, such as organ, harp, violin, *violón*, and *bajón*.[89] The variety of instruments present in the convent *coros* would explain the need to buy strings and reeds, for example. The *bajón*, or dulcian, an early modern predecessor to the bassoon was also described in the archbishop's visits above.

Nevertheless, following the first Provincial Council in New Spain (1555), church officials designated the organ as the instrument par excellence for accompanying liturgies.[90] Sources from both Puebla and Mexico City give evidence of organ lessons taking place in the convents, such as in 1639, when the Puebla cathedral organist Juan Ocampo received permission "to enter…the *Santísima Trinidad* convent to give keyboard lessons to the nuns and

[88] Aurelio Tello, "La capilla musical del Convento de la Santísima Trinidad de Puebla en los siglos XVII y XVIII," *Mujeres, negros, y niños en la música y sociedad cultural iberoamericana*, edited by Víctor Rondón (Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia: Asociación Pro Arte y Cultura, 2002), 55.

[89] Aurelio Tello, "Musicos ruiseñores, vicisitudes de un villancico de supuesta autoría, fallida transcripción y arbitraria interpretación," *Heterofonía: Revista De Investigación Musical* XXXVI, no. 130–131 (December 2004): 29–30.

[90] Once independent from the archdiocese of Seville, New Spain's liturgy developed according to four Provincial Councils (1555, 1565, 1585, and 1771) each of which aimed at putting into practice the Tridentate reforms (1545–1563) in New Spain. See Martínez López-Cano, *Concilios provinciales mexicanos*, vol. 1 , 78

girls so that through his hand they could perfect the skills they already have."[91] By "girls," this account refers to the girls being educated by the nuns. Many a convent abbess hoped that musically trained girls would continue on to profess as nuns in order to serve in liturgies. Typically, this would earn the musician nun a discounted dowry upon profession into the convent—if she lacked financial means to pay for the dowry. However, once a woman became a convent musician with a waived dowry, she was legally bound to perform, and to perform specifically on the instrument on which she was declared competent. In 1747, for example, Sor María Rosa de San José, admitted to Mexico City's *Purísima Concepción* convent as a *bajón* player, requested the vicar general's permission to stop playing the *bajón*, which was causing terrible, infected sores on her tongue, provoking much personal pain and distress.[92] She assured the vicar that she had already started learning to play the *violón* "to supply the basses with it," since she could no longer execute her parts on the *bajón*.[93] She goes on to explain that the choir vicar and musicians she accompanied were likewise satisfied with her separate lessons on the *violón*.[94]

As observed above, musician nuns could make extra money on special feasts. And what might said nuns do with their earnings? They could theoretically purchase more music, as presumably one Sor Isabel del Santísimo Sacramento, of the *Santísima Trinidad*, did in 1690. The Sánchez Garza collection preserves a Litany of Loreto for tiple voice and accompaniment by Antonio de Salazar with an unusually long dedication page unique to the collection (see

[91] "*Que al señor…Juan de Ocampo se le da y concede licencia para que entre todas las veces que fuere necesario a los conventos de monjas de…la Santísima Trinidad a dar lección de tecla a las madres y niñas que lo aprended, atento a que consta haber necesidad que por su mano se perfeccionen en los principios que hoy tienen.*" Archivo del Cabildo de la Catedral de Puebla (AVCCP) LAC 10, f. 346, 12 December 1639. I am grateful to Aurelio Tello for passing this information to me, cited in the forthcoming *Catalogo de la Colección Sánchez Garza* (México: INBA).

[92] AGN, Bienes Nacionales (014), Vol. 85 Ex. 5 folio 1r.

[93] "*me he aplicado…aprender…el violón para suplir con el los bajos que no puedo ejecutar en el bajón.*" Ibid.

[94] "*Y para tenerlo por necesario para el coro la madre vicaria de coro y las músicas en que acompaño, a satisfacción de dichas madres para lo que he pagado y pago ocho pesos cada mes a un maestro…*" Ibid.

Figure 1.6). Tello has noted her name on tiple, alto, and tenor parts in the collection.[95] There is no further indication, however, as to how these musicians knew each other. Salazar might have known Sor Isabel from when he was the Puebla cathedral chapel master, a post he held from 1679–1688. Still, musical connections between Mexico City and Puebla flowed with ease, it would seem. Salazar, in fact, was still in Puebla when he composed villancicos to texts by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz—cloistered at *San Jerónimo* in Mexico City.[96]

The musical connections between Mexico City and Puebla continued well into the late eighteenth century. In fact, they not only included the exchange of music scores and villancico poetry, but also the transfer of personnel. Chapel masters, for instance, transferred from one cathedral to another and even the movement of women musicians is recorded. For example, in 1782, the abbess of the *Balvanera* convent referred to the fact that the Mexico City cathedral organist Juan Bautista del Aguila had spent considerable time giving organ lessons to one of the nuns, and that he had introduced one of his pupils, Antonietta Vaquero, from the girls' school in Puebla ("*vino del Colegio de la Puebla Antonietta Vaquero, su disipula* [sic]") into the convent. Later, she notes, Vaquero successfully professed as a musician too.[97] Curiously, these circumstances were considered not only beneficial to the convents, but to the musicians themselves. In the same year, Aguila presented a list of accomplishments to the cathedral chapter, wherein he outlined his qualifications for promotion to chapel master. Among these were the following:

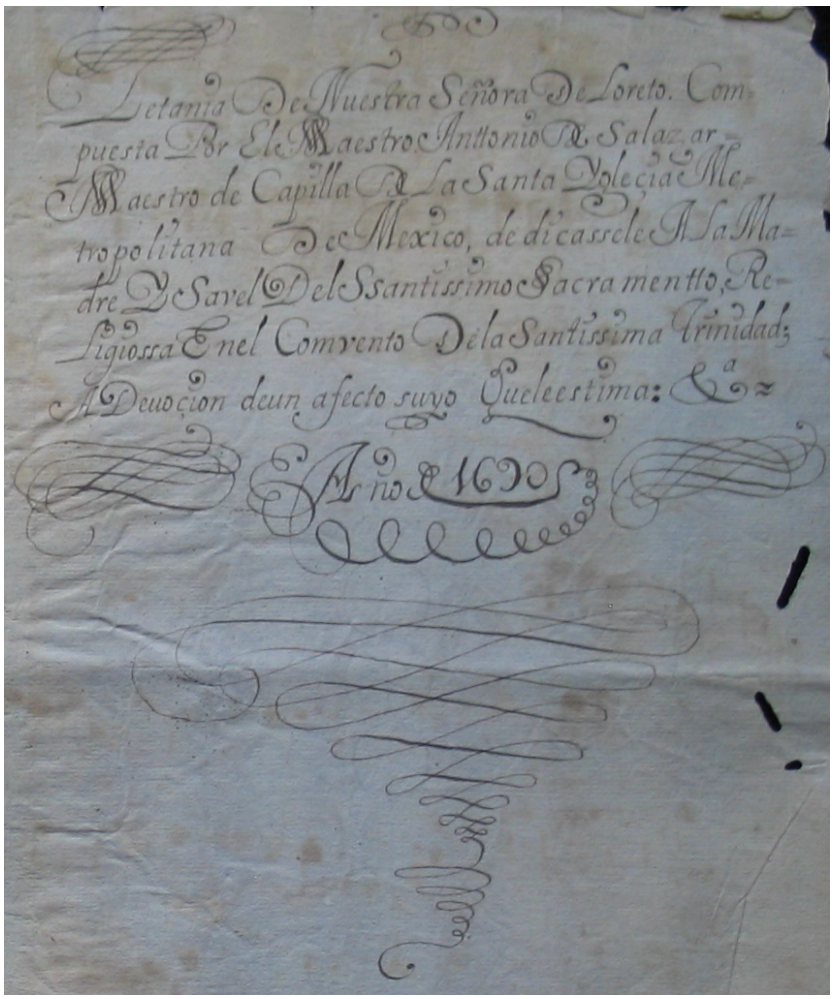
> Up until now, he has been dedicated to tenaciously helping
> poor girls who want to become nuns as titled musicians, managing to
> to have had—and to be able to name—sixteen currently professed nuns as titled

[95] Tello, "Músicos ruiseñores," 29.
[96] Tello, "Sor Juana, la música y los musicos," *Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz y el pensamiento novohispano. Memorias del Coloquio Internacional* (Toluca, Instituto Mexiquense de Cultura, 1995), 474. Sor Juan was also said to have written a music theory treatise, *El caracol*, in response to Cerone's *El melopeo y maestro*. See Pamela Kirk, *Sor Juana Inés de La Cruz: Religión, Art, and Feminism* (New York: Peter Lang, 1998), 18–20.
[97] CEHM, Documento 254, foja 1, rollo 4, fol. 1.

musicians and instrumentalists in various convents of the city whom he has taught.[98]

Nevertheless, Aguila does not appear to have been promoted.

Figure 1.6 "Litany of Our Lady of Loreto. Composed by the master Antonio de Salazar, Chapel Master of the holy Metropolitan Church of Mexico City, who has dedicated it to Sor Isabel del Santísimo Sacramento, religious in the convent of the *Santísima Trinidad*; a devotion of her affection that he esteems, in the year 1690" (CSG.262)[99]



[98] "Hasta el presente se ha dedicado con tesón al aprovechamiento de las niñas pobres que desean entrarse religiosas a título de músicas, logrando tener y poder numerar dieciséis que en la actualidad existen y son religiosas profesas en distintos conventos de la ciudad a título de la música e instrumentos que les ha enseñado." ACCMM, Correspondencia, Caja 24, Expediente 2. Transcribed in Javier Marín López, "Música y músicos entre dos mundos la catedral de México y sus libros de polifonía (siglos XVI-XVIII)," vol. 3 (PhD diss., University of Granada, 2007), 143–145.

[99] Reproduced with permission from CENIDIM.

In Chapter 3, I will discuss at length the profession process and the process by which women became titled convent musicians. However, I introduce some aspects of the system here in order to make the point that musical networks crossed both institutional and civic boundaries. They provided a foundation for musical practices—such as the performance of polyphony in particular—to flourish in the convents. In addition, further examples of nuns' musical activities in the convents emerge from the biographies of role-model nuns from New Spain.

Sor María de Jesús, Sor Barbara, and Mysticism

James Córdova interprets Vetancurt's text above as evidence of the supernatural powers that were believed to emanate from cloistered nuns' activities.[100] Vetancurt's rhetoric was of course fueled by the presence of famous mystics in New Spain, two of the most prominent being the Conceptionists Sor María de Jesús (Tomelín) of Puebla's *Purísima Concepción* convent and Sor Barbara of the *Santísima Trinidad*. Sor María's life prompted three biographies, including one each by Francisco Pardo (1676), Diego de Lemus (1683), and Felix de Jesús María (1756).[101] Miguel de Torres, meanwhile, was the author of a 1725 biography of Sor Barbara.[102]

Like Góngora's history of the *Jesús María* convent, these rarely-studied biographies help us to understand what convent culture was like in early modern New Spain. The authors—often priests—included alleged first-hand accounts by confessors and nuns who lived concurrently with Sor María and Sor Barbara in the *Purísima Concepción* and *Santísima*

[100] Córdova, *The Art of Professing in Bourbon Mexico*, 189–190.
[101] Francisco Pardo, *Vida y virtudes heroicas de la Madre María de Jesús Tomelín, religiosa profesa en el Convento de la Limpia Concepción de la Virgen María N. Señora de la Ciudad de los Ángeles* (México: Viuda de Bernardo Calderón en la Calle de San Agustín, 1676); Diego de Lemus, *Vida, virtudes, trabajos, favores y milagros de la Ven. M. Sor María de Jesús religiosa en el insigne Convento de la Limpia Concepción de la Ciudad de los Ángeles en la Nueva España y natural de ella* (León: Acosta de Anssion y Posuel, 1683); Félix de Jesús María, *Vida, virtudes y dones sobrenaturales de la venerable sierva de Dios Sor María de Jesús religiosa profesa en el V. Monasterio de la Inmaculada Concepción de la Puebla de los Ángeles en las Indias Occidentales* (Roma: Imprenta de Joseph y Phelippe de Rossi, 1756).
[102] Miguel de Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara Josepha de San Francisco, religiosa de velo, y coro del Convento de La Santísima Trinidad, de la Puebla de los Ángeles* (México: Por los Herederos de la Viuda de Francisco Rodriguez Lupercio, 1725).

Trinidad. Their stories testify to the mystical events they believed had occurred throughout the lives of these imitable women. Together with the pious hyperbole, metaphor, and symbolism as elaborated by the authors, the confessors and nuns' stories invoke a rhetorical style similar to what Kathleen Ross described as "Baroque narrative." This type of narrative, often politically motivated, produces a history rich with allegory and florid language.[103] Indeed, Góngora's history was a major salute to the monarch made most apparent through the lengthy title. Within the text, the convent is allegorized as the Garden of Eden in the West (*Occidental Paradise*), planted by and cultivated by the Spanish monarchs (*plantado y cultivado por la liberal benefica mano de los muy catholicos y poderosos Reyes de España*).

Meanwhile, Sor María and Sor Barbara's biographies praised these women as role-models for other nuns to observe how it was possible to live the four vows perfectly and imitate Christ's suffering. And these biographies circulated widely. One particular edition of Sor Barbara's biography, for example, indicates that it belonged to the nuns of the *Regina Coeli* convent in Mexico City.[104] As such, the book was meant to instruct nuns on how to live their lives in perfect adherence to the vows of obedience, poverty, chastity, and enclosure. Rather than straightforward descriptions of a transparent reality, viewing these stories as constructed narratives allows me to put their devotional and historical content in dialogue with villancico texts, which, I would argue, were similarly constructed. In both genres metaphorical language thus served didactic and devotional purposes.

These biographies also place women from early modern New Spain within a rich tradition of female mysticism dating back to the late twelfth century. Studies on Christian

[103] Ross, *The Baroque Narrative of Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora*, 56.
[104] A handwritten inscription behind the title page reads, "This book was given to me by Sor Juana de San Pedro (may she rest in peace), for the community of religious women of Our Lady and Mother of the Conception, *Regina Coeli* ("Este libro se me entregó de la Madre Juana de San Pedro, que de Dios goce, para la comunidad de señoras religiosas de nuestra Madre y Señora de la Concepción Regina Coeli"). Torres, *Vida ejemplar*, folio 1v. This edition is in the Newberry Library, catalogued VAULT Ayer 247.B284 T69 1725.

mysticism, most notably the work of Caroline Walker Bynum, Patricia Dailey, and Amy Hollywood, insist that transcendent experiences arose from the environments within which monastics lived.[105] Throughout the chapters below, I outline how musical moments inspired the transcendent experiences of Sor María de Jesus, Sor Barbara, as well as other nuns mentioned in Góngora's history. I also discuss how music was a part of the mystical visions themselves. In this regard, two types of music were present, the first being an internal metaphorical music, and the second an external music as performed from the music manuscripts mentioned above. These biographies suggest that both were essential to convent life.

The same symbolic language found in nuns' devotional literature read by nuns also made its way into musical texts, particularly vernacular villancicos. The villancico manuscripts also show that the texts could be changed or written over to adapt to particular devotional needs. In this study, I work through the possible meanings that these musical texts might have held for nuns who sang and listened to them. After all, bishops in New Spain placed great emphasis on the texts or words in the liturgy, and many of these works could be used in the liturgies and other convent devotions. One can even observe in early modern New Spain a continued adherence to the early monastic concern for words "cultivating a presence of God," as Douglas Burton-Christie suggests.[106] Dailey, for her part, takes this further, suggesting a concern for the Word of words—or Christ.[107] Drawing from Bernard of Clairvaux's interpretation of the Song of Songs, Dailey suggests that the spirit of religious women could unite with Christ through text. [108] Villancicos had the same affective quality.

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[105] Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast: The Religious Significance of Food to Medieval Women* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1987); Patricia Dailey, *Promised Bodies: Time, Language, & Corporeality in Medieval Women's Mystical Texts, Gender, Theory, & Religion* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013); Amy Hollywood and Patricia Z. Beckman, eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Mysticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).
[106] Douglas Burton-Christie, "Early Monasticism," *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Mysticism*, 53.
[107] Dailey, *Promised Bodies*, 48.
[108] Ibid., 84–85.

Words were clearly powerful, and perhaps this is why bishops of the period insisted on convent musicians practicing in order to avoid textual error. This may also be why the purchase of their music required approval, or why the *Encarnación* nuns demanded their music back from Mata. These nuns' music was made to inspire them, as their biographies suggest. But, as a result, it would also inevitably draw into the convent churches the local lay citizens, who, according to Gage and Vetancurt, were present for a complicated merging of enjoyment and spiritual enrichment. This began at the stroke of the convent church bells, announcing the start of the liturgies.

Bells and Bell Ringers

On the back of the second choir alto voice part of the anonymous *Campanitas alegres sonoras* (CSG.021), from the *Santísima Trinidad* repertory, appears the inscription: "For any feast, for three choirs," (*Para cualquier festividad A3 choros* [sic]). The *estribillo* text itself reads as follows:

Campanitas alegres sonoras	Little bells, cheerful, sonorous,
ay como llaman repican y tocan	oh how they call, peal, and play,
toquense todas con lenguas de plata	play them all with silver clappers
cuando salga la estrella del alba	when the morning star comes out
al principio del día.	at the start of day.

This text, catalogued as an eighteenth-century work, is distributed, as the inscription rightfully points out, across an enormous triple-choir ensemble of twelve voices. The third choir consists of solo tiple accompanied by either organ or harp as indicated, although none of the other choirs indicates instrumental accompaniment. In general, the inclusion of text underlay for the bass and tenor parts sets this piece apart from the many villancicos in the collection, which normally lack such texts, and we might therefore predict that the piece may have once belonged to the cathedral. In style, the villancico mimics the tolling of bells through its consistent use of

homophonic and homorhythmic texture, as well as through note repetition, particularly in the alto, tenor, and bass ranges (see Musical Example 1.1).

Setting these sounds across three choirs simulates the gestures of call and response generated by the vast choirs of bells across the city's soundscape, pealing at all hours of the day to announce the liturgies and all at once on various festive occasions, as the villancico's *estribillo* suggests. One example of a festive occasion on which all of Mexico City's church bells were

Musical Example 1.1 Anonymous, *Campanitas alegres sonoras* (CSG.021)



Example 1.1, continued



rung included the 1620 procession from the cathedral to the *Santa Inés* convent, including a Mass dedicated to Philip III's recovery from illness.[109] Similarly, when Alonso de Cuevas

[109] MUSICAT, MX 6000276, AACCMM, Libro 07, folios 39v–40r.

Dávalos was named Archbishop of Mexico City in 1664, all the convents were required to ring their bells at midday and three in the afternoon concurrently with the cathedral's. There was likewise a procession and singing of the *Te deum* at this latter time in order to celebrate and give thanks.[110] Elsewhere, the deaths of royalty and major clergy would also be heralded with city-wide tolling of bells.

This villancico thus attempts to contain such types of sonic outdoor gestures within the nuns' *coro*, since they could not leave the cloister to experience the urban soundscape for themselves. And bells were indeed the chief sonic projection that convents could contribute directly to a city's soundscape.[111] Their maintenance was under the care of the choir vicar, as the visits of the Archbishop indicate. The vicar of the *Jesús María* convent, for example, was expressly told to watch over the convent bell ropes and warn the grounds keeper (*mayordomo*) if they needed replacement.[112] In his account at the *Regina Coeli* convent, the servant in charge of the bell ringing was to be paid four *reales* a week.[113] And it is indeed very likely that servants were employed in the majority of the convents to ring the bells, as it would have been beneath the status of professed nuns to do so.

For their part, the servant women who could not afford to become nuns or who were prohibited from professing because of their race were responsible for the outdoor sound of the convents in the cities. Though the history of their own music traditions has largely been silenced through time, the symbiotic relationship they had with the nuns in the convents allowed for them to directly draw parishioners into the convents to hear the nuns sing for the rituals considered in Part II below. First, however, we must consider the interior soundscape of

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[110] MUSICAT, MX 6000740, AACCMM, Libro 16, folios 63r–63v.
[111] The sound of bells was a quintessential element of the soundscape of early modern cities. See Alexander J. Fisher, *Music, Piety, & Propaganda: The Soundscapes of Counter-Reformation Bavaria* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 192–193. On bell ringing in Renaissance Florence, see Niall Atkinson, "Sonic Armatures," *The Senses and Society* 7 no. 1 (2012), 39–57.
[112] Puente, *Autos de las visitas del Arzobispo Fray Payo Enríquez*, 94.
[113] Ibid., 67.

the convents by means of discussing the *coro*, the most important space in a convent where sacred music was performed.

Chapter 2. A Sacred Space for Music: The Early Modern Novohispanic Convent *Coro*

What is a *Coro*?

When pealing convent bells signaled urban citizens to gather in convent churches for the liturgies, the people would enter through a side door on the church nave and stand physically separated from the nuns. They would never actually have a chance to see the nuns performing; they would only hear them. As Craig Monson notes, cloistered nuns attended their liturgies in a type of interior church connected to the public church.[1] In Spanish, the space was referred to as a *coro*, or choir, and it was blocked off from the nave with a grate. It was the most important place within a cloistered convent, because it was there that the nuns fulfilled their vocation of attending Mass and the Divine Office. Of these two, the latter was itself the more prominent liturgy, as the early-eighteenth-century confessor, Martin de Vallarta, suggested to the nuns of Puebla: "And among all your duties, let the Divine Office always be the foremost…do not pray it outside the *coro*, I beg you…the *coro* must be your center."[2] Vallarta essentially conflates the *coro* with the Office, and, elsewhere in his guidebook for nuns, he emphasizes the need to "sing" the prayers of the Office: "And words should not come out simply to make a noise on the outside, let the heart sing them, and let the lips be the instrument."[3] Thus, the *coro* existed as a space for metaphorical song, an undertaking only accomplished by nuns praying the Office in a state of grace.

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[1] Monson, *Disembodied Voices*, 53.

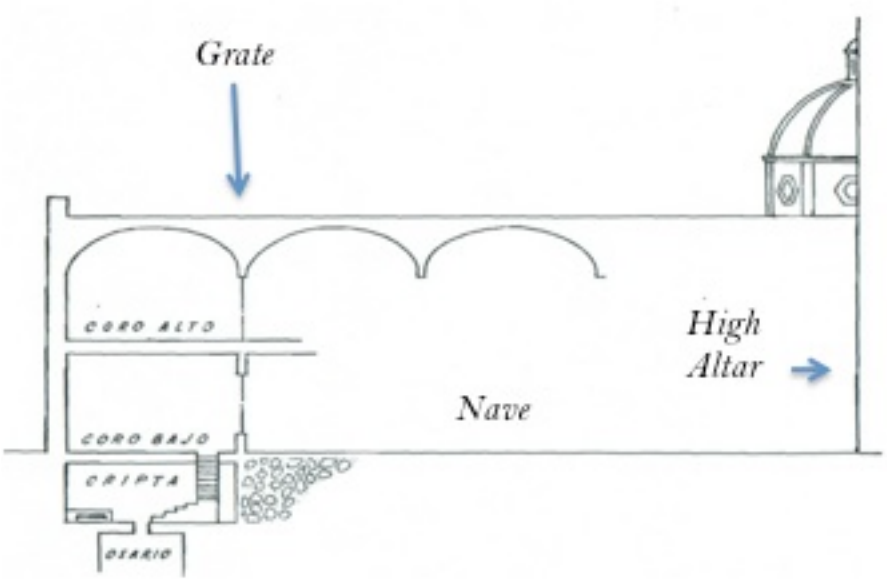
[2] "Y entre todos los oficios, sea siempre en todo el primero el divino oficio…no lo reces fuera del coro te ruego. …el coro ha de ser tu centro." Martin de Vallarta, *Luz que guía al camino de la verdad y dirección de religiosas: para que muera la monja contenta y sosegada en su retiro y tenga por paraíso a su convento. Por un confesor de las comunidades de las señoras religiosas sujetas al ordinario de la Ciudad de los Angeles*, 1728, folio 168r (BNMFR, Archivos y Manuscritos, MM MS.622). This source is peculiar because it is in a metered dialogue (i.e., in verse rather than prose) between a professed nun called Clori and a laywoman named Casandra. Clori explains what it is like to be a cloistered nun to the Casandra, who is considering a religious life. In the end, Casandra chooses not to profess.

[3] "Y no salgan palabras solo a hacer ruido en lo externo, cántelas el corazón, y sea el labio el instrumento." Vallarta, *Luz que guia al camino*, folio 164r.

Beyond its function as a metaphor, the *coro* was also a space where *real* singing took place. This dissertation, therefore, is concerned with the music sung from the *coro*. For its part, the *coro* deserves a thorough explanation in terms of its structure within Novohispanic convents, and within Conceptionist convents specifically. There were, in fact, two *coros* in every convent church, a *coro alto* and a *coro bajo*—an upper and lower choir (see Figure 2.1). The function of the two *coros* in convents of New Spain has perplexed scholars of Novohispanic architecture. I will attempt to specify the rituals that took place in each.

The *coro alto* and the *coro bajo* created a space midway between the church's private and the public spheres. The nuns could be heard performing, but they were not visible to the laity attending services in the main body of the church. Convent musicians were linked to angel choirs, both because they were hidden from view and because of their virginal status, which the *coro* symbolically guarded. Vallarta suggests that the nuns' full participation in the Office was directly accompanied by the angel choirs of heaven. In the *coro*, he notes, nuns' voices

Figure 2.1 Side Elevation of a Novohispanic Convent Church with *Coros* on Left



"alternate with the seraphim."[4] Other metaphors likened the *coro* to a beehive.[5] Below, I discuss these metaphors as well as the ordinances written in the Conceptionist Rule of 1511, guiding nuns' behavior while in the *coros*. Under specific consideration here are also the ordinances conceived for Conceptionist convents in seventeenth-century Puebla and Mexico City. These rules, along with vivid details of everyday life in the convent, found in the prose of noteworthy nuns' biographies, suggest that the *coros* were the quintessential location where nuns negotiated between their desires to please God, themselves, and their convent patrons by means of music and other arts. Furthermore, they suggest that nuns had agency in the convent *coros*, through the liberty to behave and misbehave during the liturgies yielded spiritual and musical consequences.

Defining the *Coros* in the Conceptionist Rule

> They should have in the church *coro* two large windows, or one depending on the arrangement of the *coro*, with iron grates both on the interior and exterior of the ledge. On the interior side, these will have a black canvas in such a way that they [the nuns] will not be able to see those who might be in the church…and the cloth of the canvas will only be raised to see the Blessed Sacrament.[6]

This excerpt from chapter 8 of the Conceptionist rule, entitled "Specific Enclosures for this Order" (*De las clausuras particulares desta orden*), is the very first mention of the *coro*. But the chapter also treats other specific enclosures—or perhaps more directly stated, places for potential contact with the outside world. These include the parlor, another grated window for communication with non-cloistered visitors to the convent, and the *cratícula*, a small window

[4] Vallarta, *Luz que guia al camino*, folio 164r.

[5] "Es el coro de las divinas alabanzas como una celestial colmena" ("The *coro* of the divine praises is like a celestial beehive"). Antonio Aribol, O.F.M., *Ejemplar de religiosas, en la penitente, virtuosa, y maravillosa vida de la venerable madre Sor Jacinta De Atondo, religiosa de nuestra seráfica Madre Santa Clara, y abadesa que fue del Real Convento de Santa Catalina de Zaragoza* (Zaragoza: Herederos de Manvel Roman, 1716), 333 (BNMFR, Monografías 922.246 ATO.ar. 1716).

[6] "Tengan en el coro de la iglesia dos ventanas grandes, o una según la disposición del coro con sus rejas de hierro, de dentro y de fuera, las cuales tendrán de parte de dentro un lienzo negro de manera que no puedan ver a los que estuvieren en la iglesia…y el paño de lienzo se alzara, solamente para ver el santísimo sacramento." This quotation comes from a seventeenth-century Spanish translation of the Conceptionist rule, *Regla de la Orden de la Concepción de Nuestra Señora*, fol. 6.

between the *coro bajo* and the church for the nuns to receive communion. Chapter 8 of the rule follows the "Enclosure" chapter (*De la clausura*), which takes its title from the nuns' vow of enclosure. Broadly, it reminds the nuns that they are to remain in the convent at all times unless threatened by a dangerous situation such as a fire, or in the event that "people of war" penetrate the cloister.[7] The entire rule consists of twelve chapters followed by thirty-eight ordinances which are mostly meticulous in their description of the features of the cloistered life—meticulous, yet in some instances, open-ended. There are, for example, no specifications as to how or where in the church the *coro* should be built.

Variations on choir screens for restricting nuns' contact with laity during liturgical services abounded in the Catholic world. Enclosure rules date from the late thirteenth century, and they were strictly reinforced by the Council of Trent, not least in Italy with the reforms of Carlo Borromeo in 1577.[8] While Novohispanic church architecture was generally of Spanish design, Francisco de la Maza claims that the second-story *coro alto* in female convents was itself uncommon in Spain.[9] Maza's *Arquitectura de los coros de monjas en México* is in fact the only monograph dedicated solely to discussing convent *coro* structures surviving in mid-twentieth-century Mexico. In it, Maza implies that most *coros* in Spanish convents were built at ground level. A more thorough study of Spanish convent architecture would be necessary to confirm just how uncommon the *coro alto* structure was in Spain; for instance, Colleen Baade's work on Castilian convent music directly refutes Maza's claim. Baade contends that most musicians in Spanish convents were located in a west end *coro alto*. She cites a mid-seventeenth-century

[7] *"Entrada de gente de guerra,"* in Ibid., fol. 5. Similarly, war, pestilence, and fire were grounds for nuns to leave Italian convent cloisters. See Monson, *Nuns Behaving Badly*, 73.

[8] See Evelyn Carole Voelker, "Charles Borromeo's 'Instructiones Fabricae Et Supellectilis Ecclesiasticae,' 1577. A Translation with Commentary and Analysis" (PhD diss., Syracuse University, 1977). Helen Hills notes that some Neapolitan convents had as many as three *coros* located in different parts of the church. The *chiesa interiore* (inner church), as the choir was called, in Bolognese and Milanese convents were typically behind the high altar. On Bolognese convents, see Monson, *Divas in the Convent*, 251. Regarding convent churches in Milan, see Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, 29.

[9] Francisco de la Maza, *Arquitectura de los coros de monjas en México* (México: Universidad Autónoma de México, 1956), 8.

instruction book from the Franciscan *Monasterio de Santa María de Jesús*, which states that singing upstairs was acoustically better than singing in the *coro bajo*.[10] By referring to the cardinal location of the Spanish *coro alto*, Baade suggests that the church nave in Spain was built in a traditional east-west configuration that was not often followed in the New World, a configuration in which the high altar was positioned on the east wall of the church.

As a matter of fact, the Conceptionist motherhouse in Toledo was designed just as Baade describes: its *coro alto* and a *coro bajo* still exist to this day. There, the *coro bajo* is located immediately to the left of the high altar with the grated window on the nave (north) wall. Meanwhile, the *coro alto* lies across the nave from the high altar, above the main entrance of the church, like most contemporary choir lofts.

In seventeenth-century New Spain, by contrast, both the *coro alto* and the *coro bajo* were built at the west end of the church, directly across the nave from the high altar. The *coro alto* was immediately above the *coro bajo*. The earliest Conceptionist convent churches, dating from around the sixteenth century, no longer stand in Mexico. Thus there is no record of the earliest *coro* structures built in New Spain. These churches were recorded as small and temporary structures, later replaced by the lavish Baroque churches of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—when nuns received enough funding from convent patrons to build larger structures.[11] Many of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century *coros* were themselves modified or destroyed in the twentieth century for modern liturgical purposes. However, Puebla's *Purísima Concepción* convent church, built in 1617, is one of the few that still preserved the *coro alto* and *coro bajo* intact, and they exist in their high-low configuration.

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[10] "Y se advierte que fuera de ser conveniencia manifiesta para lo sonoro de la música que se cante en el coro alto, es punto de gravedad y religión hacerse así porque no es justo que lo que es reprehensible y no parece bien en otros conventos como es cantar en coro bajo y con pública manifestación se permite…." Archivo del Convento de las Gordillas, Libro de caja (Becerro) 1656, fols. 33v–43v. Quoted in Baade, "Music and Music-Making," 210.

[11] Manuel Toussaint, *Arte colonial en México*, 2. ed. (México: Imprenta Universitaria, 1962), 98.

The tightly knit gold-colored screen covering the rectangular window of the *coro bajo* at *Purísima Concepción*, illustrated in Figure 2.2, was removed from the *coro alto*, exposing its organ and gilded altars. The large portal on the right, perpendicular to the *coros* with latticed windows, leads to the street. Because the *coros*, which linked the cloister to the church, took up the entire back wall of the building, the laity could not enter the church from the end of the nave as in more traditional designs. For the laity, the entrance to the church was therefore constructed on the sidewall—or the nave wall. Consequently, the outside of the building had an unusually long façade, which encompassed the entire length of the nave, and it was parallel to the street. The three other walls of the convent church were integrated into the cloister buildings. These convent cloisters themselves took up an entire city block.

Puebla's second Conceptionist convent church, the *Santísima Trinidad*, built in 1673, no longer has a *coro bajo*. Contemporary worship needs rendered the space useless once the nuns were expelled from the convent in the nineteenth century. The wall that separated the *coro bajo* from the church nave, with its grilled window, was removed to expand the nave and to provide more space to place pews for lay worshipers. The *Santísima Trinidad*, however, preserves one of the only seventeenth-century semi-circular ornate grills in its place above the *coro alto*. This grill is called an *abanico* (fan), which completes the arch of the *coro* beneath the vaulted ceiling (Figure 2.3).[12] According to Maza, such an ornate *abanico* above the *coro alto* was only found in convent churches in New Spain.[13]

[12] Maza, *Arquitectura de los coros de monjas en México*, 62.
[13] Ibid., 8.

Figure 2.2 *Coro Alto* and *Coro Bajo* in *Purísima Concepción* Convent Church, Puebla



Figure 2.3 Detail of Ornate Grill Work (*Abanico*) above *Coro Alto*



The Clarissan (Franciscan) convent church *coros* of *Santa Catalina* in Zaragoza offer a precedent for the exact configuration of the Novohispanic double *coro* arrangement. This begs the question of the function of the two *coros*: would one not suffice for all the liturgical purposes of a convent? As a matter of fact, the biography of Sor Jacinta de Atondo (1645–1716) confirms that the two structures served distinct purposes at *Santa Catalina*. In the hot summer, the nuns used the *coro bajo* (known as the *Coro de Maytines* [sic] *de verano*, "summer Matins choir"), and in the winter they used the *coro alto*—where the heat would rise to warm them.[14] However, Sor Jacinta does not specify whether the rest of the Divine Office hours also took place downstairs, in the summer *coro*. No such practical reason exists for the two structures in Novohispanic convents, although it is evident that the *coro alto* and *coro bajo* were used for different services, as discussed below.

The few historians who have encountered the *coros* in their work have gone on to explain their function in various ways. Carlos Salas Contreras makes it clear that the *coro bajo* was the most important space in the church, because it was used by the nuns for all liturgical and devotional services.[15] His extensive archeological study focuses on the fourth Conceptionist convent built in New Spain, Mexico City's *Encarnación*, whose church was built in 1648. Salas Contreras further contends that the *coro alto* was reserved for the sick and/or elderly nuns who could not walk downstairs to the *coro bajo* for Mass.[16] If the sick nuns were able to attend the *coro alto* for Mass, then presumably they could have come to the *coro alto* to participate in some of the Office Hours as well. Salas Contreras's statements maintaining that the *coro bajo* was the prime location for the nuns to sing and worship, which lack the support of primary sources, are furthermore at odds with the travel log of Fanny Calderón de la Barca.

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[14] Aribol, *Exemplar de religiosas*, 169–175.
[15] Carlos Salas Contreras, *Arqueología del Ex-convento de la encarnación de la Ciudad de México: edificio sede de la Secretaría de Educación Pública* (México: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 2006), 92.
[16] Ibid., 165.

Calderón was the Scottish-American wife of the nineteenth-century Spanish ambassador to Mexico, who visited the *Encarnación* convent in Mexico City in1840 with the permission of the archbishop. Among other things, she noted a particularly memorable experience involving the *coro alto*:

> After supper we proceeded upstairs to the choir (where the nuns attend public worship, and which looks down upon the handsome convent church) to try the organ. I was set down to a Sonata of Mozart's, the servants blowing the bellows. It seems to me that I made more noise than music, for the organ is very old, perhaps as old as the convent, which dates three centuries back. However, the nuns were pleased, and after they had sung a hymn, we returned below.[17]

Calderón's journal entry, although from the nineteenth century, provides an incomparable glimpse into the wealthy convent's musical and liturgical traditions, which had clear roots in the seventeenth century. As Calderón mentions, the organ may not have been as old as the convent, which was founded in 1593.[18] Although the organ was in poor conditions, it appears that the nuns were proud enough of its state to show it off to Calderón, and even let her play it. Her visit also confirms that secular music was likely rehearsed on the church organ and that convent servants were allowed into the *coro alto* to perform the menial task of pumping the bellows. As a practicing musician, Calderón was naturally inclined to visit churches where, according to her, some of the best music-making could be heard. In her journal, she does not hesitate to comment on the various organs' qualities and idiosyncrasies of particular musicians. That same level of detail appeared in her description of the peculiar *coro alto* of the convent church. Calderón's experience on her visit to the *Encarnación* thus renders Contreras's claims about the functions of the *coro alto* and *coro bajo* questionable.

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[17] Fanny Calderón de la Barca, *Life in Mexico: The Letters of Fanny Calderón de la Barca*, Howard T. and Marion Hall Fisher, eds. (New York: Doubleday, 1970), 207–208.

[18] Gregorio Casela is credited to have built an organ at the *Encarnación* in 1747. However, because many religious institutions had more than one organ, it is difficult to ascertain whether the instrument Fanny played was Casela's organ. On Casela, see María Teresa Suárez, *La caja de órgano en Nueva España durante el barroco* (México: CENIDIM, 1991), 128.

Maza does not articulate the function of each individual *coro*. He simply states that the nuns' daily routine began in the *coros* (plural). In the *coro alto*, the nuns initiated the Office then they listened to Mass in the *coro bajo*. After Mass concluded, they ate breakfast and then returned to the *coro* (singular) for Terce, Sext, None, etc.[19] But whether the nuns went back to the *coro bajo* or upstairs to the *coro alto* for the remainder of the canonical hours is not clear. Maza continues by conflating the two *coros* into one, and simply concludes by saying that the nuns spent the majority of their time in the *coro*. Elsewhere, Maza's account does however coincide with Contreras' regarding the *coro bajo* as a space for nuns' profession services and funerals. Contreras states that all liturgical events that the (healthy) nuns participated in took place in the *coro bajo*. When a funeral occurred, Contreras relays, it was followed by the dead nun's interment under the floor of the *coro bajo*, which served as a crypt.

In essence, the *coro bajo*—although sacred—was an earthly place. It was literally located on the ground floor and associated with ties to laity and with men (male clergy, to be exact). It was even associated with death, both natural and metaphorical. Natural death occurred when a nun expired, and, as explained before, her body was blessed and buried beneath the *coro bajo*. Further emphasizing the *coro bajo* as a space for natural death, nuns in Puebla's Conceptionist convents were required to process to the *coro bajo* every day at noon, chanting Psalm 50, *Miserere Mei Deus* (Have mercy on Me, O God), to pray for the repose of the souls of convent priests and patrons.[20]

Metaphorical death occurred at the profession ceremony, discussed in more detail in Chapter 3 below, when a woman bound to profess into the cloistered life would walk into the *coro bajo* to take her vows, and therefore never to return to secular society. That is, through her birth into the consecrated life, a nun instantly "died" to the outside world: "She would never

[19] Maza, *Arquitectura de los coros de monjas en México*, 11.
[20] Palafox, *Regla y constituciones*, folio 29v.

return to her home and would be considered dead and entombed in her convent," as Asunción Lavrin describes.[21] Despite this gloomy depiction, the convent was also frequently considered a paradise. Vallarta wrote his guidebook so that Novohispanic nuns could be at peace within their earthly "paradise."[22]

Regarding a male presence in the *coro bajo*, the ceremonies discussed above which occupied the space required the assistance of priests, and sometimes the presence of the bishop, outside the *coro bajo* for professions and inside for funerals. These rituals also attracted many curious lay people to the convent, as they were occasions upon which the nuns could lift the curtain to the *coro bajo* window for patrons and parishioners to peek inside. The periodical election of an abbess also took place in the *coro bajo*, with the assistance of a priest from outside the grate.

The founding of a new convent, one of the most spectacular civic events in early modern New Spain, was furthermore initiated at the *coro bajo*. There, the convent church alongside their new cloister was presented at its completion to the founding sisters. For example, in 1616, the *Jesús María* convent of Mexico City provided the founding sisters for the newly built *San José* Discalced Carmelite convent. During its inception, the founding sisters gathered in the *coro bajo* of *Jesús María* where they received their new habits. Later, a plethora of clergy, confraternities, patrons, female sponsors (*madrinas*), and various onlookers and parishioners gathered in the *Jesús María* church for solemn Vespers led by the archbishop, the cathedral chapter, and the cathedral musicians in tandem with the nuns' choir. This festivity was heralded by pealing church bells and bands of indigenous musicians. The next day, bright and early, a carriage

[21] Lavrin, *Brides of Christ*, 59. This parallels the allegory of nuns as relics and convents as reliquaries presented by Hellen Hills, in "Nuns and Relics: Spiritual Authority in Post-Tridentine Naples," *Female Monasticism in Early Modern Europe*, edited by Cordula Van Wyhe (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2008), 32–35.

[22] "Para que muera la monja contenta y sosegada en su retiro y tenga por paraíso a su convento." ("So that the nun dies happily and in piece within her retirement and so that she considers her convent a paradise.") Vallarta, *Luz que guia al camino*, folio 127 r.

escorted the founding sisters to a service at the cathedral and then to their new convent.[23] This is how Francisco Bramón y Vallejo, chaplain of the *Regina Coeli* convent of Mexico City, described the celebration sequence, which centered specifically around the *coro bajo*.[24]

Visionaries and More Rules

On the matter of attendance, Fanny Cálderon indicates that the nuns were present in the *coro alto* during the Divine Office and Mass, and on special occasions they were present in the *coro bajo*. The three biographies of Sor María de Jesús, active in Puebla's *Purísima Concepción* convent, all describe her going up to the *coro* for the Office or to attend Mass if the *coro alto* was not specified. A similar situation can be teased out of the biography of Sor Barbara Josepha de San Francisco of the *Santísima Trinidad* convent in Puebla.[25] These accounts indicate that the *coro alto* may have been built to enhance the acoustics of nuns' liturgies, as it typically had a higher ceiling than the *coro bajo*.

Otherwise, there seems to be no major structural reason for having the *coro bajo* ceiling lower than the *coro alto* ceiling; both *coros* were just as wide and long. Luz del Carmen Jimarez Caro's architectural analysis of the *Santísima Trinidad* convent church *coros*, reports that the

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[23] *Relación de las solemnísimas fiestas que a la dedicación y fundación del convento de San José de religiosas carmelitas descalzas se hicieron en esta muy noble y muy leal ciudad de México. Escrita por el licenciado Francisco Bramón y Vallejo, capellán del muy ilustre y religioso convento de Nuestra Señora de Regina Coeli de esta ciudad*, Manuscript in private collection from Archivo Histórico del Convento de San José de Carmelitas Descalzas transcribed in Manuel Ramos Medina, *Imagen de santidad en un mundo profano: historia de una fundación* (México: Universidad Iberoamericana, Departamento de História, 1990), 194–238.

[24] "Acompañaron al son armónico de las campanas la dulce melodía de las trompetas (sin número), chirimías, clarines y atabales, que en menos días que éste tan célebre se juntan a indecibles tropas de todo género de músicos, instrumentos a que son los naturales (los indios muy inclinados). Prosiguió el repique muy largo el convento real de Jesús María, como quien tenía mejor que Salomón dos hermosísimas columnas qué ofrecer a Teresa de Jesús para el primer pasto de su temple. Serían poco más de las tres de la tarde cuando en este convento real se juntó todo el brillante esplendor de la nobleza de esta gran ciudad que es mucha….El señor ilustrísimo arzobispo, revestido de pontifical con la asistencia de todo su cabildo, cantó las solemnísimas vísperas, que oficiaron divinos orfeones a toda música y a toda imitación del cielo los cantores de la catedral y alternando versos las señoras religiosas, celebradas con toda majestuosa ostentación…." Quoted in Ibid, 194–195.

[25] "…hasta que tocaban a rezar las cuarto horas canónicas del oficio divino en el coro íbase a el a rezarlas; y después tenia el tiempo de la oración mental, que la comunidad acostumbra; luego baja a comulgar…" ("…until they rang for prayer of the fourth canonical hours of the divine office [to take place] in the *coro* where she would go, and then she had time for meditation, which the community was accustomed [to doing]; then she went down to take communion…." Torres, 169. Going down to take communion after meditation—preceded by the office in the *coro*—suggests Sor Barbara Josepha was upstairs the entire time, and thus the office took place in the *coro alto*.

coro bajo and *alto* measured 63.3 ft. long x 35.10 ft. wide, more than half the size of the church nave (105.32 ft. long); the *coro bajo* ceiling was 18.86 ft. high; and the *coro alto* had an enormous 44.29 ft. barrel vaulted ceiling where the nuns voices reverberated God's praises.[26]

Because the *coro bajo* was on the ground level of the church, where the laity could easily come to converse with a nun through the grate, nuns were generally to avoid it at all times except for special services. In the biography of Sor Barbara, some of her merits included "never walking idly through the ambulatories, nor in places that are forbidden by rule, such as the convent main entrance, *coro bajo*, and similar places…."[27] (Henceforth I will use the term *coro* to refer to the *coro alto*, and the ground-level *coro bajo* will be labeled as such.)

The rule expressly required nuns' participation in liturgical services in the *coro*, but it had to be done with genuine will and piety. The Divine Office was the most important liturgy for nuns. In fact, in many cases the term *coro* was practically synonymous with the Divine Office: the third chapter of the Conceptionist rule ordinances is titled "Attending *Coro*," for example. Generally speaking, nuns' praying of the Office was supposed to have good effects on everyone's soul, according to the Conceptionist rule:

> With effortless [and] great care, the nuns must desire, above all, to observe the spirit of the Lord and his holy work with purity of heart, and with devout prayer having cleansed their consciences of the desires of the earth and vanities of the world, [they] become one spirit with their husband Jesus Christ through a bond of love, through which the deepest desires of the virtues are reached, and which perpetuates enmity toward the vices that contaminate souls and separate us from the Lord. This prayer is what makes us love our enemies, and makes us pray for those who persecute us and slander us as the Lord says. And through this most excellent task, enclosure, work, and the rigors of the order are turned into great

[26] Luz del Carmen Jimarez Caro, *Tipología de los Templos Conventuales Poblanos: Análisis Arquitectónico Comparativo* (Puebla: Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, 2008), 99. It would be impossible to estimate the acoustical qualities and technicalities of early modern convent *coros* given that we do not have information about what materials covered the walls, where the nuns stood to perform, and the sizes of the ensembles. However, considering that lay people in the church reportedly enjoyed the nuns' music, the *coro alto* must have projected their singing sufficiently enough. Upon visiting the *coro alto* in its present state, I noticed that the space seemed very reverberant.

[27] "Nunca tuvo lugar para discurrir ociosa por los ambulatorios, ni estar en lugares, que son por constitución, o especiales mandatos prohibidos, cuales suelen ser las porterías, coros bajos, y otros semejantes…." Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 168.

> ease. Because this work that is so necessary to save us is best performed in this holy order, [let] those who are of the *coro* say the Divine Office during solemn feasts, convent feasts, and their octaves, and greater Sundays and minor Sundays and ferial days according to the Roman Breviary….[28]

The nuns "of the *coro*" were those who had paid an entrance dowry at the time of their profession, or those who were given dowry waivers for their musical abilities (see Chapter 3). Those who could not afford to fully profess were not required to sing the Office and typically engaged in chores around the convent. Thus, the term *coro* also marked a difference of status—a remnant from the secular world—among the nuns.[29] The final segment of the rule reminds the Conceptionists of their roots within the Franciscan order (see Chapter 1). Hence, their prayers joined a wider network of the religious.

What stands out in this section, however, is the way the author—the Franciscan Cardinal Francisco de Quiñones (ca. 1482–1540)—switched cases in the middle of the text. By using the nominative "they," he commanded the nuns to pray the Office. But by changing to the dative "us," he explicitly made the point that the purpose of praying the Office, in the *coro*, was for the salvation of the world outside the cloister.

As an order named for a Marian devotion, one can observe how the Virgin Mary fit in as a co-redeemer through her own Office interspersed with the monastic Office in Conceptionist convents. Archbishop Manso Zuñiga y Sola prescribed that Matins and Vespers for the Marian Office should take place before Matins and Vespers of the monastic Office; Sext, None, and

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[28] "Paren mientes las monjas con gran cuidado, que sobre todas las cosas deben desear, de haber el espíritu del Señor y su sancta obra, con pureza del corazón y con oración devota limpiando sus consciencias de los deseos terrenales y vanidades de este siglo y hacer se un espíritu con su esposo Jesucristo, por vínculo de amor, por el cual se alcanza el deseo entrañal de las virtudes, y perpetua enemistad con los vicios que contaminan las animas y nos apartan del señor. Esta oración es la que nos hace amar a los enemigos, y orar por los que nos persiguen, y calumnian como lo dice el señor. Y por esta tan excelente margarita se convierten en grande y suave dulzor el encerramiento trabajos y asperezas de la Religión. Pues por que esta obra tan necesaria para salvarnos, mejor se ejercita en esta sancta orden, las que fueren del coro digan el oficio divino, cuanto a las fiestas solemnes, y fiestas de guardar, y sus octavas y Dominicas primo ponendas, y Dominicas forzadas, y ferias según el Breviario Romano…." *Regla de la orden De la Concepción*, fol. 7.

[29] According to Elissa Weaver, "Another feature of the convent in the early modern period is the way in which the class system of the outside world was reproduced inside." *Convent Theatre in Early Modern Italy: Spiritual Fun and Learning for Women*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 24.

Compline for the Marian Office would take place after the respective hours of the monastic Office.[30] As expected, the nuns had to say this Office of the Virgin in the *coro*, but unlike during the regular Office, the Virgin's prayers had to be recited kneeling (*diga este Oficio de rodillas*) in what appears to be a heightened penitential gesture.[31]

It was no small task for the nuns to be mentally and spiritually prepared for the Office several times a day in addition to the other activities of convent daily living. This was especially the case on important convent feast days. Antonio Aribol, Sor Jacinta's biographer, describes the *coro* as a dynamic place on Corpus Christi when the consecrated host was traditionally exposed on the church's high altar throughout the day for all the faithful to come and adore. He writes, "when the Blessed Sacrament is exposed, the *coro* is like a celestial beehive, where the ingenious and laborious rational bees enter and exit; and they attend successively all day with fervor…."[32] Though not specifically referring to the nuns entering the *coro* for the Divine Office, Aribol nonetheless characterizes the *coro* as an area where intense work was carried out.[33] And in fact, Sor Jacinta never let her failing health keep her from her duties in the *coro*. On two separate occasions, Sor Jacinta mentions that working in the *coro*, that is to say, praying the Divine Office, was refreshing for her:

> Though poor health had fatigued my body, arriving in the *coro* to be with my Lord was restful…. Matins began, and I persevered to not lose sight of my Lord by removing an impertinent image that attempted to distract me. Once I collected myself, I felt my body being consumed into my heart as my attention focused on my Lord. My ears remained to listen, and my mouth to speak, but even my vision was interiorizing. The affects grew with the sound of the organ as my soul melted in the Divine praises. … When I went to the *coro*, my body felt relieved, with great calm; I could stay for many hours without growing tired. The Lord makes it worth my time. When the Divine Office began, I felt a strong

[30] Manso y Zuñiga, *Regla y ordenaciones de las religiosas de la Límpia e Inmaculada Concepción*, 40.
[31] Ibid.
[32] "Siempre que se expone el Santísimo Sacramento, es el coro de las divinas alabanzas como una celestial colmena, donde las ingeniosas, y laboriosas abejas racionales entran, y salen; y sucesivamente todo el día asisten fervorosas…." Aribol, *Exemplar de religiosas*, 333–334.
[33] For a musical precedent that uses bees allegorically, also attributed to Franciscan sources, see Peter Loewen, *Music in Early Franciscan Thought* (Boston: Brill, 2013), 204–205.

> desire to love my Lord. And being in this state of mind, I sometimes became so absorbed with the affects I felt for my Lord that I could not hear singing, nor did I realize where I was; I did not even recognize myself; the longing I felt kept me occupied. This lasted very little, because I would come back to my normal self and continue singing with the sisters, but without knowing how I had come back to normal and how to stay that way.[34]

The irony that hard work would be refreshing yielded to a mystical union with Jesus Christ experienced by Sor Jacinta and other mystic nuns. This was precisely what the Conceptionist rule called on the nuns to attempt. Nevertheless, Sor Jacinta's transcendence seems to exceed the ordinary demeanor required by nuns in the *coro*, and it was the music—and particularly the instrumental music—that exacerbated her transcendent experience. Meanwhile, the opposite was reported in early modern Sienese convents: it was Suor Vannini, a lute player, who went into ecstasy when she performed, rather than her on-looking audience and sisters.[35]

Similarly, Sor María de Jesús heard the *Purísima Concepción* church bell announcing the Divine Office hours in an extraordinary manner, describing it as the literal voice of God calling her to the *coro*, rather than as a clanging instrument.[36] Rumored to have a "sixth sense," Sor María once instructed a novice to ring the call for Vespers because she claimed that the convent bell ringer had fallen asleep. And when the novice arrived at the bell tower, she was amazed that Sor María had correctly foretold that the bell ringer had been sleeping. So the novice did

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[34] "Aunque por la indisposición de salud que he tenido, estaba mi cuerpo un poco fatigado, en llegando á estar con mi Señor en el coro, descansaba. Empezaron Maitines, y yo con el cuidado de no perder al Señor de vista persevere, quitando alguna imaginación impertinente, que se cruzaba para embarazarme. Acabé de recogerme de modo, que parece toda me iba al corazón, y á la atención en mi Señor. Los oídos sentía se quedaban para oír, y la boca también para poder decir; pero hasta la vista corporal se inclinaba hacia el interior. Los afectos se aumentaban con el órgano, deshaciéndose mi alma en las divinas alabanzas….Cuando me fui al coro, me sentía con el cuerpo aligerado, con gran quietud, que me estaría muchas horas sin cansarme. El Señor hace toda la costa. Cuando empezaron el Oficio Divino, ya me sentía con los deseos grandes de amar á mi Señor. Y estando en esta disposición, me quedaba algunas veces tan absorta con los afectos que sentía á mi Señor, que ni oía cantar, ni sabia donde estaba, y ni de mi misma me acordaba; sino que las ansias que tenia, me tenían toda ocupada. Duraba poco este olvido, porque volvía en mi, y cantaba con las Religiosas, pero sin saber como, me volvía á quedar." Aribol, *Exemplar de religiosas*, 336–338.

[35] See Reardon, *Holy Concord Within Sacred Walls*, 106–107.

[36] "Llamaba a la campana, 'la voz de Dios,' y no le parecía, que oía el sonido de un metal inanimado; sino que eran palabras del mismo Dios, que la llamavan a su obligación.…" Lemus, *Vida, virtudes, trabajos, favores y milagros de la Ven. M. Sor María de Jesús*, 69.

as she was told.[37] Sor María incorporated the sound of her convent church bell as a vital part of her spiritual, and aural, experience pertaining to the Divine Office. Her biographers further claim that she was never once late to the *coro*, even at the most burdensome hours of Matins at midnight or Prime at dawn.[38] On the contrary, she always arrived early to the *coro*, because the first bell stroke of the Office brought her a vision of the Virgin Mary surrounded by angels. Thus, Sor María would arrive at the *coro* early in order to welcome her Lady.[39]

Sor María received most of her divine revelations specifically within the *coro*.[40] To emphasize her supernatural virtue, her biography by Diego de Lemus (1683) included a frontispiece with a sketch of Sor María with her eyes partially shut, signifying that she was having a mystical vision (see Figure 2.4). To her left, what appears to be an early modern thought cloud shows her being received into heaven by the Virgin Mary and saints.

Sor María even received information about her convent sisters' state of grace through divine revelation. Once during her tenure as abbess, the Lord demonstrated to her which nuns were behaving most devoutly during the Office:

> She frequently saw in the middle of the *coro* a baptismal font, filled with the purest crystalline water, and the baby Jesus pulling out streams of water to bathe the hearts of the nuns participating in the Canonical hours. The distribution [of water] was well measured, some received more water than others depending on each nun's merits, thus making it known to his spouse [Sor María de Jesús] that the water represented divine grace….Similarly, he offered varying degrees of affection [to each]: to some he gave hugs with great tenderness, and to others a mere stroke with his hand, kindly touching their habit and nothing else.[41]

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[37] Ibid., 245.
[38] Ibid., 70.
[39] "Que el entrar en el coro antes de que viniesen las de mas veía nacido, de que al primer golpe de la campana, que se tocaba para aquel efecto: veía que entraba en el la Reyna de los Ángeles María Santísima, acompañada de espíritus celestiales: y que por aquel motive, y ejemplo, se anticipaba a ir a el coro por esperar allí a su Señora." Ibid.
[40] Ibid., 407.
[41] "Vio muchas veces en el medio del coro una pila, que recogía limpísimas, y cristalinas aguas, y al niño Jesús su único bien que sacando aquellos puros raudales, los vertía bañando con ellos, los corazones de las religiosas que asistían a las horas canónicas; si bien con tan ajustada distribución, que a unas era mas abundante el agua que las participaba que a otras, según los merecimientos de cada una, dándole a entender a su esposa; que aquellas aguas eran representación de la divina gracia…y guardando la misma diferencia en el cariño: a unas las abrazaba con grande ternura, y a otras con alguna caricia, llegándoles con agasajo la mano al hábito solamente." Ibid., 407–408.

The vision of the tender but discerning Christ child in the *coro* indicates that some nuns must have found the Office particularly challenging. Hence, there was a need to include stipulations with regards to breaking the rules, and provide a model to follow closely.

Figure 2.4 Sor María de Jesús Pictured in the Frontispiece of Her Biography[42]



The Conceptionist rule's third chapter informed nuns about the penalties for failing to attend *coro* without good reason: "anyone who is absent from *coro* without permission shall carry out a penance of bread and water, and if she keeps it up, she must be disciplined, and give the same penance to those who arrive late to the *coro*…."[43] The penance of bread and water mentioned here is a some form of dietary restriction, sentencing the truant Conceptionists to a

[42] Reproduced from Lemus, *Vida, virtudes, trabajos, favores y milagros de la Ven. M. Sor María*, front cover.

[43] "La que dejare el coro sin licencia por cada vez haga penitencia de pan y agua y si lo tomare en costumbre denla una disciplina, y la misma penitencia se de a la que acostumbrare ir tarde al coro…." Ibid., fol. 16.

regimen of abstention from more wholesome meals. Otherwise, the severity of the "discipline" was likely left to the abbess's discretion.

Elsewhere, Miguel de Torres, the author of Sor Barbara's biography, considered the nuns' purposeful failure to attend *coro* a mortal sin.[44] Thankfully, for the sisters of the late-seventeenth- and early-eighteenth-century *Santísima Trinidad* convent of Puebla, Sor Barbara was the perfect model of attendance. Like Sor María, she was the first to arrive in the *coro*. Likewise, she was also the last to leave, because, according to Torres, the action demonstrated that she was present for love of Jesus, and not merely to satisfy the minimum requirement.[45] This account presupposes that Sor Barbara partook in pre- and post-Office meditation as well. According to Torres, the sight of Sor Barbara praying devoutly in the *coro* was enough to inflame the other nuns' hearts.[46] Sor María had a reportedly similar effect on the nuns surrounding her in the *coro*. Her composure served as edification.[47] The nuns at *Purísima Concepción* literally observed "tenderness" pour out of Sor María's eyes as she sang the psalms: "the *coro* was her heaven because when she was in it, she offered the Lord the divine praises, just like the angels in glory, and because this sacred site was for repose from all her interior and exterior labors and a paradise for her lovely delights."[48]

Angels, Flowers, and the *Coro*

Angeles del cielo cantad con regocijo,	Angels of heaven sing with delight,
bendito sea Dios.	blessed be God.

The anonymous—and very short—villancico, *Angeles del cielo* (see Musical Example 2.1), could have been a favorite to sing in Puebla's *Santísima Trinidad* convent *coro* where it was

[44] Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 206.
[45] "Porque es máxima de aquellas personas religiosas, que no van a los actos de su obligación por mero cumplimiento, sino por amor a Jesucristo: ser siempre para entrar en el coro los primeros, y para salir de los últimos." Ibid., 201.
[46] Ibid.
[47] Jesús María, *Vida, virtudes y dones sobrenaturales de la venerable sierva de Dios Sor María de Jesús*, 131.
[48] "El coro era su cielo, ya, porque cuando estaba de su parte, solicitaba ofrecer al Señor las divinas alabanzas, como los ángeles en la gloria, y ya porque este sagrado sitio era el reposo de todos sus interiores, y exteriores trabajos, y el paraíso de sus amables delicias." Ibid.

Musical Example 2.1 Anonymous, *Angeles del cielo* (CSG.013)[49]



originally sung. It is now preserved in CENIDIM's Jesús Sánchez Garza Collection (CSG.013). The two phrases of text are composed for two high voices (*tiples*) and continuo accompaniment. The piece consists of a homophonic texture with several parallel major sixths and major thirds and only the slightest hint of imitation around the word *cantad* (sing). It is tonally centered around C major with the briefest sounding of the relative minor, A, at the word *regocijo* (delight), creating its own harmonic delight at the end of a textual line. Even the least musical nuns might have joined in with the singers on this relatively simple hymn, perhaps musically

[49] Reproduced with permission from Centro Nacional de Investigación, Documentación e Información Musical Carlos Chávez (CENIDIM).

punctuating the end of a prayer. After all, the villancico invokes the angels to sing and join in the nuns' praises in the *coro*.

For the intense prayer and song taking place in the *coro* united the nuns' souls not only with Jesus, but also with the heavenly choirs, as Sor María's biographer suggests.[50] Like Sor María, Sor Barbara imagined herself to be in heaven, explicitly singing with the angels whenever she was in the *coro* during the Divine Office.[51] Nevertheless, she remained humble about her privileged position as a choir nun, considering herself "utterly unworthy."[52] The architectural structure of the Novohispanic convent church *coro* high above ground made the nuns' connection to angel choirs in heaven easy to imagine.[53] Yet explicitly comparing the *coro* to heaven was complicated by other variables. One of these was the configuration of the sisters *within* the *coro*, intended to make manifest the goodness of exceptionally pious nuns such as Sor Mará, in comparison to the rest of her sisters. Perhaps this dynamic is best illustrated by an occasion that took place in the *Purísima Concepción* convent during the feast of the Ascension, when Sor María played a trick involving both *coros*.

As previously noted, the *coro bajo* was, for all intents and purposes, to be avoided by the nuns at the *Santísima Trinidad* convent, according to Sor Barbara's biography. Perhaps the *Purísima Concepción* convent was generally more lenient about this rule. But for whatever reason, on one Ascension Day, while Sor María was in the *coro bajo* speaking with Sor Geronima de la Concepción, the two began to head upstairs to the higher *coro* for Vespers.[54] Given their location, there was only one way to access the *coro* upstairs, through the staircase

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[50] Milanese nuns also identified with angels when they sang polyphony. See Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, 162 and 428. For Spanish sources, see Baade, "Music and Misgiving: Attitudes Towards Nuns' Music in Early Modern Spain," *Female Monasticism in Early Modern Europe*, 91–92.
[51] Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 202.
[52] "*Juzgándose indignísima*," in Ibid.
[53] Hidden choir lofts in Bolognese convents were akin to heaven because they rendered the singing nuns invisible, just like angels. See Monson, *Divas in the Convent*, 58.
[54] Pardo, *Vida y virtudes heroicas de la Madre María de Jesús*, 168v–169v.

connecting the *coros*. Sor Geronima proceeded, expecting Sor María to follow right behind her.[55] However, when she arrived upstairs, Sor Geronima was amazed to find that Sor María de Jesús was already there. When she inquired of the other nuns, they responded that Sor María had been up in *coro* the whole time Sor Geronima was downstairs—all day in fact.[56] Francisco Pardo later read the miracle as a sign that Sor María had been elevated from the *"coro bajo*, belonging to the angels in heaven, to the *coro* (*alto*) of the cherubim, who enjoy God's glory with greater proximity."[57]

Even though cherubim do not sing (that being the task of the seraphim), Pardo depicted Sor María de Jesús as an omnipresent spirit, capable of being as close to God as possible while standing in the *coro*. Like the cherubim, she is thus capable of simultaneously participating in the broader choir of angels in heaven and in the convent *coro* of other nuns. Sor María de Jesús finally ascended on Ascension Day, in commemoration of Jesus's own ascension into heaven. Pardo's biography thus consistently functions as the ideal model for convent life. In fact, all three biographies about Sor María served this purpose. But it is specifically the space of the *coro* that figures prominently in this panegyrical endeavor. Its physical disposition in the church lent itself to clear ties with heaven, and Sor María with the celestial choir.

There remain, however, depictions of non-feast days, when the *coro* and Sor María return to a more typical state of affairs. But even then, according to one of Sor María's other biographers, Diego de Lemus, angels could make their appearance in the *coro* among the nuns if they were singing according to how their rule prescribed. Lemus notes the following:

> Once during Vespers, the venerable mother [Sor María] was assisted by her guardian angel, and as the sisters were singing, seated in their usual spots, she noticed that in between every two nuns, there were angels holding green and beautiful saplings in their hands. She also noticed the Empress of Heaven [the

[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.
[57] "El coro bajo, que es de los ángeles en el cielo, al coro alto de querubines, que con mas cercanía gozan de Dios en la gloria," in Ibid.

> Virgin Mary] presiding over the celestial choir and the monastic choir. Vespers continued as such, and in the time that elapsed, those green saplings…had blossomed with attractive and fragrant flowers, and at the end, the angels collected the nuns' zeal and affections, and they offered them to the Lord as sweet aromas. She also noticed that at the time when the nuns intoned the *Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto*, standing and bowing their heads, so too the Angels stood to perform the same humble veneration: a worthy correspondence between angelic and human nature…[58]

This charming image of the angels mimicking the nuns' bodily gestures of reverence during the doxology is a remarkable moment of role reversal in the *coro*; the angels identify with the nuns here, and not the inverse. In this vision, the angels are found to be following the nuns example, as the Virgin Mary (Queen of the Angels being one of her many titles) guides the nuns in prayer and song. Furthermore, the saplings held by the angels serve as a measure of the nuns' piety and full participation in the *coro*. With the Virgin Mary—the quintessential female role model for all nuns, and especially the Conceptionists—leading them, the nuns prayed and sang these Vespers in a state of grace, which yields symbolic flowers.[59]

Though natural and artificial flowers were often used to decorate the altars and retablos of the *coros* (see Figure 2.5), the best way to adorn the *coro*, according to the literature, was with

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[58] "Asistía la venerable Madre un día del ángel de la guarda, a las vísperas, y estándolas cantando las religiosas, sentadas por su orden en lugar que les tocaba: vio que entre cada dos religiosas estaba un ángel con un pimpollo verde, y hermoso en las manos. Descubrió también a la emperatriz de los cielos que presidia a uno, y otro coro celestial, y monástico. En esta forma se fueron prosiguiendo las vísperas, y en el espacio que duraron noto que aquellos verdes pimpollos…habían ya coronados de vistosas, y fragrantes flores, y que al acabarse, recogían los ángeles los fervores, y afectos de las religiosas, y los ofrecían como suaves aromas al Señor. Advirtió también la sierva del Señor que al tiempo que las religiosas entonaban el 'Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto' y se ponían en pie, inclinando las cabezas, también se levantaban los ángeles, y hacían la misma humilde veneración: digna correspondencia de las naturalezas angélica, y humana…." Lemus, *Vida, virtudes, trabajos, favores y milagros de la Ven. M. Sor María de Jesús*, 410–411.

[59] Flowers' color, beauty, and sweet redolence, made them the perfect allegory for which to describe all that was natural, colorful, and good: the consecrated host could be as white as a jasmine; the precious blood of Christ could be as red as a carnation; Mary was the purest lily, etc. On the presence, use, and meaning of flowers in Novohispanic convents see especially Jorge Alberto Manrique, et al., *Monjas coronadas: vida conventual femenina en Hispanoamérica*, 1a. ed (Mexico City: Museo Nacional del Virreinato, 2003), 134–151. As the title of Carlos de Góngora's history on the Conceptionist *Jesús María* convent suggests, it was a paradise, a true garden of Eden where God cultiviated the most perfect flowers, the nuns, In *Paraíso occidental*. Critical commentaries on *Parayso Occidental* also extend the paradise metaphor. See Ross, *The Baroque Narrative of Carlos de Sigüenza Y Góngora: A New World Paradise*. Kendrick traces Milanese convent motet texts that deal with flowers to the Song of Songs in *Celestial Sirens*, 255.

Figure 2.5 Central Retablo of *Purísima Concepción* Convent Church *Coro*, Puebla[60]



sincere devotion, represented by a more metaphorically blooming flower. For instance, it was said that a convent singer in the perfect state of grace could readily generate flowers out of her mouth when singing the Divine Office in the *coro*. As Sor María once claimed to have observed, her assistant, Sor Agustina de Santa Theresa, was singing the lessons during solemn Matins for Christmas and at every cadence an angel removed flowers of various shades and colors from her mouth.[61] Félix de Jesús María elaborates on this episode and claims, "the angel gathered the flowers into a bouquet, which he presented to Baby Jesus, born on that night like a wild flower,

[60] Reproduced from Eduardo Merlo Juárez and José Antonio Quintana Fernández, *Las iglesias de la Puebla de Los Ángeles* (Puebla: Secretaría de Cultura de Puebla, 2001), 198.

[61] "Y en apoyo infalible de esta verdad sucedió, que una noche de la Pascua de Navidad, vio la misma Madre María de Jesús, que al tiempo que su asistente la Madre Augustina de S. Theresa, cantaba una de las lecciones; de aquellos solemnes Maitines, al paso, o compas, que iba entonando sus clausulas, iba también cogiendo un Ángel de la boca de esta Religiosa unas tan hermosas flores, y de matices tan varios…." Pardo, *Vida y virtudes heroicas de la Madre María de Jesús*, 114r–114v.

among the frost and ice."[62] Intrigued, Sor María proceeded to ask Sor Agustina what the singer thought and felt while she was performing the lessons that Christmas night, to which she replied:

> I began to sing so that my voice would be heard most sonorously in heaven, in the name of our holy mother church: all my breaths and all the words I pronounced were acts of contrition, of humility, of love and appreciation that I offered from the bottom of my heart to our newborn savior. They were also pleas for abundant grace on behalf of the faithful, for the conversion of sinners, the return of heretics to our holy faith, and other graces, and favors to benefit particular people.[63]

Sor Agustina's answer to Sor María's inquiry provides a glimpse into the possible thought process of a Novohispanic convent musician in the act of singing, although heavily mediated by a male author. It provides a florid example of rhetoric, literally, outlining church leaders' expectations of convent singers, in addition to the plain ordinances in the Conceptionist rule, emphasizing nuns' role in advocating for world redemption through prayerful music. But so too are Sor Agustina's own requests for forgiveness evident here, specifically at the beginning of her meditation. This then raises the question of nuns' repentance—or, more specifically, the question of what types of transgressions might cloistered nuns commit.

Breaking the Rules and Displaying Status in the *Coro*

Sins that took place in the *coro* were considered particularly abominable. In the same way that nuns might please the angels and God in the *coro*, so too could they offend. On one occasion during the Office, writes Lemus, Sor María observed the painfully sad faces of the guardian angels of two nuns who were chatting with each other distractedly in the *coro*.[64] But

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[62] "Un ángel…las recogía en su mano, y agregando unas a otras…formó un peregrino ramillete, que presentó al Niño Jesús, nacido aquella noche como flor del campo axada [sic] a las escarchas, y hielos." Jesús María, *Vida, virtudes y dones sobrenaturales de la venerable sierva de Dios Sor María de Jesús*, 266.

[63] "Yo…me puse á cantar, para que mi voz fuese oída del cielo mas sonora, en el nombre de nuestra santa madre la iglesia: cuantas eran mis respiraciones, cuantas las letras, que pronunciaba, eran tantos actos de contrición, de humildad, de amor, y de agradecimiento, que yo ofrecía con mi corazón al soberano recién nacido; eran también tantos ruegos, con que le pedía abundancias de gracia para los fieles, la conversión de los pecadores, la reducción a nuestra santa fe de los herejes, y otras gracias, y favores en beneficio de personas particulares." Ibid., 266–267.

[64] Lemus, *Vida, virtudes, trabajos, favores y milagros de la Ven. M. Sor María de Jesús*, 411.

there were even graver sins than talking—ones that were said not only to upset angels, but even attract demons. In this way, the *coro* was a liminal space where supernatural good or bad could intervene in the world.

Considering that the Conceptionists were the wealthiest nuns in New Spain, it is likely that greed and pride played some kind of role in their daily lives and transgressions. Reportedly, the situation was so sinful at the *Jesús María* convent in Mexico City, for example, that Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora tells of a time when a demon took possession of the organ in the *coro* and made it play the most "heinous noise."[65] The nuns in the *coro* were later humbled to observe how María de San Francisco, a Black servant and the meekest inhabitant of the convent, commanded the "spirit of pride" to leave the convent.[66]

The Conceptionists' wealth also secured them access to polyphony. The *Santísima Trinidad* convent nuns were particularly proud of their musical resources. Even the solemn Sor Barbara praised the harmonious music which accompanied texts written by artistic nuns in her convent insofar as the music complemented her prayers on Corpus Christi (see Chapter 4).[67] But sacred music could also be misused, which constituted yet another grave sin. Torres recounts that, through divine revelation, Sor Barbara received a message from Jesus in the *coro* during the Office, which informed her that some convent musicians were abusing sacred music by performing it to please secular people at their request. In fact, it was the singers' relatives who had requested their favorite villancicos to be performed by the nuns.[68] As such, the *coro* and its music provided an intense meeting point between the nuns and general urban society. Sor Barbara was enjoying the music and its text, when Jesus intervened with an admonishment:

> Child, that music is not for me; stop enjoying it. Weep over these offenses that they cause me; the secular people come to amuse themselves with the musicians;

[65] "Espiritu de soberbia," in Góngora, *Parayso occidental*, fol. 177r.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 320–321.
[68] Ibid., 193

> and your sisters sing to amuse them without any reverence to my blessed body in the Sacrament.[69]

Torres, the theologian author of Sor Barbara's biography, states that he could write an entirely separate book listing this and similar accounts occurring in the convent, which Thomas Gage also complained about during his sojourn in New Spain (see Chapter 1). This included, he notes, plays (*coloquios*) which were performed for the entertainment of the laity in the *coro bajo* as well.[70] As for punishment, these types of abuses of sacred music and sacred space would earn nuns a heavy dose of torment on their death. Sor Barbara, Torres writes, once had a vision of nuns being cleansed by the fires of purgatory for repenting their misbehavior in the *coro*, and she even witnessed others scorching in hell for never having repented them.[71] Seeking to prevent the nuns under their care from such a dreadful afterlife, Novohispanic bishops prescribed clear rules for behavior in the *coro*.

Regarding the performing arts, Bishop Palafox y Mendoza's rule for nuns in Puebla is very specific about what things should be avoided in the *coros*:

> In no feast or occasion shall there be balls or dances in either *coro*, and no plays, even if they are performed by the [school] girls or servants; and the villancicos, and all else that is sung, shall not contain secular words….Therefore we prohibit guitars,[72] rattles, drums, tambourines, and other instruments that contradict the modesty and the seriousness of the divine cult and religious profession.[73]

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[69] "Hija esa música no es a mi; no te alegres tanto…llora a las ofensas, que se me hacen; pues vienen los seglares a divertirse, con las músicas; y tus hermanas los hacen por divertirlos sin reverencia de mi cuerpo santísimo en el sacramento." Ibid.

[70] Ibid., 194. Elissa Weaver indicates that plays also took place within the choirs of some Italian convents, in "The Wise and Foolish Virgins in Tuscan Convent Theater," *Female Monasticism in Early Modern Europe*, 140.

[71] Ibid., 195.

[72] Guitars were notoriously affiliated with bar music and drunkards. Vetancurt laments that Spanish, mestizos, indigenous, blacks, and mulatos alike fraternize while inebriated in the taverns and *pulquerias* (bars that serve *pulque*, an indigenous alcoholic beverage made of fermented agave), where *pulque* is imbibed with joy over "music played on guitars, harps, and other instruments" (*música de guitarras, arpas y otros instumentos*). Vetancurt, *Teatro mexicano*, Tomo I, 499.

[73] "En ninguna fiesta, ni ocasión, se hagan bailes, ni danzas en ambos coros, ni coloquios, aunque sean de niñas o criadas: y en las chanzonetas, y lo demás que se cantare, no haya cosa profana, que desdiga, de la compostura, y modestia Religiosa. Por lo cual prohibimos guitarras, sonajas, tambores, y aduces, y otros instrumentos, que desdicen de la modestia y gravedad del culto divino y profesión religiosa." Palafox y Mendoza, *Regla y constituciones que had de guardar las religiosas de los conventos de Nuestra Señora de al Concepción y la Santísima Trinidad*, 27r–27v.

While Palafox's rule has much to say about what church leaders considered inappropriate instruments for the church *coros*, it also attests to the variety of instruments women were capable of playing in early modern New Spain. The fact that he singles these instruments out suggests that they must have occasionally turned up in performances. As Palafox notes in his prologue to the book, following these rules would ensure that the nuns remained in a "state of righteousness."[74] This state complemented their virginal status, which the convent guarded, and which Bishop Palafox found "precisely comparable to the angels in heaven."[75]

José de Cáseda's villancico *En una nube de nieve*, ca. 1700 (CSG.152) (see Figure 2.6) indicates a certain level of pride for nuns' virginity and continued chastity. It it seems to have originally been a Eucharistic villancico for two voices, consisting of an *estribillo* (refrain) with six *coplas* (verses). The manuscript reveals, however, that the nuns wrote in a different text under the original text for the *estribillo* to suite their personal needs. What resulted was the following *estribillo*:

A Dios, santo, santo, santo,	To God, holy, holy, holy,
con seráficos ardores un coro virgíneo,	with seraphic adorations a virginal choir
en lores [sic] le adora	with praises, adores [him]
admirable en canto.	admiringly in song
O hechizo bello en canto nuestro,	Oh beautiful enchantment within our song
trisagio a Dios con celo,	a zealous trisagion to God
en canto nuestro. [76]	within our song.

[74] Ibid., 2v.

[75] "…justamente comparado con los ángeles en el cielo!" Palafox, Ibid., 5r.

[76] The former Corpus Christi text reads,

En una nube de nieve	In a white cloud
se ve un hermoso jazmín,	there is a beautiful jasmine,
y entre cándidos reflejos,	and within ingenuous reflections,
flecha luces mil a mil.	it shines thousands of light [rays].
Yo se que es jazmín,	I know it is a jasmine,
yo blanco le vi,	I saw its whiteness,
que si, que si, que si,	yes, yes, yes,
yo blanco le vi.	I saw its whiteness.

Figure 2.6 José de Cáseda, *En una nube de nieve a duo* (CSG.152), *estribillo*, second tiple[77]



The nuns fully appropriated this villancico by changing its most frequently repeated words. For practical reasons, since Corpus Christi was celebrated on the Thursday after Trinity Sunday, the nuns could use the same music within the week. In Chapter 4, I discuss the connection between the Eucharist and the Trinity, the *Santísima Trinidad* convent patron alluded in a new villancico text. More personally, they associated themselves with the angels, both in their virginal state and in song—and heralded the trisagion. There is no mistaking that, with this rendition, *En una nube de nieve* became their song—their enchantment—and not the angels' song, as emphasized by the final repetition of the phrase "*en canto nuestro*" (in our song).

[77] Reproduced with permission from Centro Nacional de Investigación, Documentación e Información Musical Carlos Chávez (CENIDIM).

Closing the Curtain to the *Coro* Chapter

The seventeenth-century rules provided to the nuns preceded Sor Barbara's life. Nevertheless, it is recorded that some nuns in Puebla disobeyed the principles of the *coro*. Similarly, in Mexico City, the nuns at the *Jesús María* convent were said to have bent the rules given to them by their prelate. Records from later in the eighteenth century list expenditures for an unknown "*Fiesta del coro alto*" (Festival of the *coro alto*), which took place across four days: "3, 6, 10, and 11 August 1748."[78] In this way, the *coros* appear to have been irresistible places for artistic pleasure—irresistible even in the most solemn Conceptionist convents, which were supposed to have housed a handful of paradigmatic nuns whose biographies were read across New Spain as examples of ideal behavior. So while sacred music and sacred space elevated the nuns' thoughts while praying, they might just as equally entertain them and the laity in the church.

The *coros* also elevated the status of women. As mentioned before, it guarded their virginal status, but, in addition, a professed nun who paid a full dowry to enter the convent was called a *monja de coro* (choir "*coro*" nun), as in Italy. And music, integral to the *coro*, was a sure way for a woman who could not afford a full dowry to enter into the fully professed *monja de coro* status, through a dowry waiver in exchange for musical performance in the liturgies. The process of obtaining the dowry waiver as part of the initiation process, or the profession process, will be discussed thoroughly in the next chapter. Profession villancicos, composed in honor of some of the wealthiest girls in New Spain will be analyzed and discussed in the context of the lavish celebrations they adorned.

Thus, the architecture, the prayers, the visions, the metaphors, and the transgressions associated with the *coros* were an integral part of the nuns' musical experiences. Without the

[78] *Libro de aniversarios y dotaciones y olbigaciones*, AHSS, Fondo Jesús María, MS129, folio 12r.

coros, there would be no early modern Novohispanic convent musical activities to examine; the extant sources are all liturgical.

Part II: A Musical Life in Christ

Chapter 3. Passage and Exclusion: Taking the Habit and the Solemn Profession in the Conceptionist Convent

Profession Music: The Ties Between Wealth and Soundscape

María de San Juan (d. 1634), the servant of the *Jesús María* convent discussed in the previous chapter, so desired to become a nun that she spent all of her spare time in the *coro* praying to a statue of Baby Jesus.[1] These statues were traditionally placed in the hands of newly professed nuns, and they functioned as icons associated with the profession ceremony.[2] María's particular devotion to the Christ Child suggests that she had an especially strong desire to become a professed nun in the convent. But, denied such a privilege on account of her African heritage, all she could do was dream about the profession:

> A few nights passed and she dreamt she was taken to the Empyrean heaven where she saw many furnishings for a solemn feast: there hung from those celestial palaces innumerable banners; [the celestial palaces were] adorned with trumpet music, and any number of other features customary to grand events. She understood through marvelous means that it was all done to celebrate her profession, and after waking up…without having told any living person her dream, she found the Venerable Mother Marina de la Cruz on her way to the *coro* and told her what she had just dreamed, and upon hearing her, [Marina de la Cruz] said: "It was not a dream, but rather reality, and all of this is prepared in heaven for when you take your vows."[3]

Just as a nun's vow of poverty was thought to make her wealthy in heaven, María de San Juan

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[1] Góngora, *Paraíso occidental*, 176r.

[2] According to Antonio García Cubas, nuns in contemplative orders held a crucifix, while nuns called "*blancas*," literally the "white ones," held a Baby Jesus statue. The nickname could be because of the white habits worn by Conceptionists and Hieronymites, but it is also allusive to skin color. See García Cubas, *El libro de mis recuerdos: narraciones históricas, anecdóticas y de costumbres mexicanas anteriores al actual estado social*, primera parte (México: Imprenta de Arturo García Cubas, Hermanos Sucesores, 1904), 16. Janet Page notes that in some Viennese convents a painting of the Christ Child was used in profession ceremonies instead of a statue. See Page, *Convent Music and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Vienna* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 19.

[3] "No se pasaron muchas noches sin que soñase le llevaban al cielo Empíreo donde vio muchísimos aparatos de solemne fiesta: pendían de aquellos celestiales palacios innumerables banderas, coronándose todos ellos con música de clarines, y cuántas otras prevenciones se acostumbran en funciones grandes. Entendió por un modo maravilloso hacerse todo aquello para festejarle su profesión, y después de haber despertado…sin haberle comunicado á persona viviente el que juzgaba sueño encontrando á la V. M. Marina de la Cruz cuando se iba al coro le dijo le contase que era lo que poco antes había soñado, y oyendo le dijo: 'No ha sido sueño, sino verdad, y todo eso esta prevenido en el cielo para cuando hagas los votos.'" Góngora, *Paraíso occidental*, 176v.

would become a nun in heaven upon her death, but only after living as an obedient servant on earth.

Maria's account is only one example of the way that profession was considered a process of both passage and exclusion. This chapter reconciles the various historical and musical sources surrounding the entrance into the novitiate as well as the solemn final profession in Conceptionist convents. A discussion of the proceedings which led to the profession of musician-nuns will demonstrate that female musicians participated in a bureaucratic professionalization process, and, furthermore, that Conceptionists maintained an elite status by accepting only women of Spanish descent.[4]

Maria's modest, though particular description of the music in her dream indicates that music was a notable component of profession ceremonies. In fact, it played a central role in both the entrance of novices, known as the taking of the habit, and in the final solemn profession after successful completion of the novitiate. Observers often commented on the high quality of music performed in Conceptionist convent churches during these ceremonies. The chronicler José Manuel de Castro Santa Anna, for example, noted with regards to the profession of a wealthy merchant's daughter in 1752:

> On the morning of the twenty-third, Sor Ana María de Jesús, daughter of Don Diego García Bravo, resident and merchant of [Mexico City], made her solemn profession as a choir and black veil nun in the *Jesús María* convent; the profession was performed by Manuel Rubio Salinas, archbishop of this holy church; it was attended by the most important lord ministers, canons, and titled nobility. The music was of the finest quality, since the most skilled in this art were brought together [for the event]: her father is very well connected, and he

[4] The issue of race in the convent was tied to elitism. The rules were bent on rare occasions to allow mixed women of noble Aztec lineage to profess at the *Purísima Concepción* convent in Mexico City the late sixteenth century. See Jacqueline Susan Holler, "'Escogidas Plantas': Nuns and Beatas in Mexico City, 1531–1601" (PhD diss., Emory University, 1998), 7. In the early seventeenth century, a wealthy native nobleman (*cacique*) founded a convent in Queretaro, where his daughter professed and became abbess. According to Asunción Lavrin, no stipulations for the admission of other native women were made. See *Brides of Christ*, 421. The first convent established exclusively for native women in New Spain, *Corpus Christi*, was a Franciscan convent that did not open until 1724. It was also meant as a cloister for women of native nobility, and thus women of African descent, and technically all other mixed-race women, remained ineligible. See Muriel, *Las indias caciques*. The exclusivity of convents came from European traditions. See Holler, "Escogidas plantas," 5–7.

> is one of the wealthiest [men] in this court, which is why this was such a grand occasion.[5]

Santa Anna's description recognizes music's prestige value as an expression of the father's wealth and business connections, which also ensured an elite guest list for the profession. Though the *Jesús María* convent likely had fine musicians of its own, it was most likely not the nuns in the convent to whom Santa Anna referred, not least since "the most skilled" (*los mas diestros*) is in the masculine plural.[6]

Any number of musicians could be deployed to make up the soundscape of the profession rituals and attendant celebration, even including native shawm (*chirimía*) players. Among the fees Cristóbal Ramírez incurred for his sister's entrance into the *San Lorenzo* convent,[7] five pesos went to natives to stand outside the church and play shawms and drums, presumably to announce his sister's arrival at the church and to entertain the guests after the ceremony.[8] This modest amount appears in an expense sheet totaling some 650 pesos for fine linens, decorations, food, fireworks, licensing fees, and various other costs for his sister's reception into the novitiate.[9] By comparison, Ramírez paid the archbishop 12 pesos for presiding over the ceremony.[10]

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[5] "La mañana del 23, hizo la profesión solemne de coro y velo negro en el convento de Jesús María Sor Ana María de Jesús, hija de D. Diego García Bravo, vecino y del comercio de esta ciudad; asistió el Illmo. Sr. Dr. D. Manuel Rubio Salinas, arzobispo de esta santa iglesia; concurrieron los mas de los señores ministros, prebendados, títulos y nobleza. La música fue de la mas delicada, por concurrir los mas diestros en esta facultad: está su padre muy bien recibido, y es de los mas acaudalados de esta corte, lo que motivó tan grave concurrencia." In José Manuel de Castro Santa Anna, 'Diario de sucesos notables,' *Documentos para la historia de México*, vol. 4 (México: Imprenta de Juan R. Navarro, 1853–57), 10.

[6] There is a precedent for more expensive music making at *Jesús María*. Josefina Muriel mentions that Archbishop of Mexico City Fray García Guerra (d.1612) used to go to the convent just to hear some of the nuns perform. The convent musicians also delighted the Viceroy's wife on an occasion when she visited. See Muriel, *Conventos de monjas*, 356–360.

[7] This was a convent of the Hieronymite order, which also shared the same profession ritual book as the Conceptionists, likely because both orders were under the supervision of the local bishop.

[8] Alicia Bazarte Martínez, *El convento Jerónimo de San Lorenzo*, 55–59. Since the first provincial church council in New Spain (1555), *chirimías* were relegated to the outdoors and not permitted in church services. See Martínez López-Cano, *Concilios provinciales mexicanos*, vol. 1, 78.

[9] Bazarte Martínez, *El convento Jerónimo de San Lorenzo*, 55–59.

[10] Ibid., 58.

Juan Rodríguez Juárez's image of newlywed natives, depicting a couple processing arm-in-arm with their Spanish sponsors (*padrinos*), reveals a similar shawm player and a pair of tambourine-slapping jesters on the far left to embellish the scene (see Figure 3.1). One need only replace the couple with a young woman dressed in her finest clothing and accompanied by her relatives and female sponsors (*madrinas*), and we would have a likely representation of the arrival of Ramírez's sister at the *San Lorenzo* church on the day she entered the novitiate.[11]

The ceremonial stripping of a woman's secular garments and her donning of a white veil and habit inside the church's *coro bajo* marked a moment of transition from the worldly to the sacred. She would then take her final vows a year afterwards. Thus, one can imagine how much attention would have been given to the final solemn profession, given the focus on the mere initiation of the novice here.

Figure 3.1 Juan Rodríguez Juárez, *Desposorio de indios*, ca. 1720[12]



[11] García Cubas, *El libro de mis recuerdos*, 14–15.

[12] Reproduced from the online catalog of the Museo de América. Accessed 30 June 2014. http://ceres.mcu.es/pages/Main. The website credits Gonzalo Cases Ortega for the image, and gives it inventory number 2002/01/01.

Ramirez, for his part, considered the expenses a donation in gratitude to God.[13] It is difficult to ascertain where the line was drawn between thanking God and showing off wealth at these ceremonies, which drew crowds of spectators to the convent church in addition to the aspiring nuns' families. By 1805, one Antonio Gomez was so frustrated with these pageantries that he complained directly to the department of state in Madrid (*Secretario y Oficial Mayor de la Secretaria de N.E. Madrid*), stating that the arrival of women in sumptuous coaches to take the habit was contrary to the convent's modesty. He suggested instead that such processions, even those with as few as few as four mules pulling the carriage (*ni de cuatro mulas*), should be prohibited.[14] This was a clear remnant of practices from the previous century, when it was reported that in some Franscican convents, novitiates would go out for a jaunt in a carriage before their final profession as well.[15] Gomez was especially scandalized that both the taking of the habit and final profession ceremonies often ended with receptions which included excessive feasting, music concerts, and dances in the convent parlors.[16] The nuns would reportedly even receive tips in cash for providing some of the refreshments and music making.[17]

Music was certainly an integral part of these "nuptial displays," as Monson describes them, "for the brides of Christ."[18] Profession villancicos commissioned by families would

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[13] "De ellos le hago gracia y donación…a Dios." Quoted in Alma Montero Alarcón, *Monjas coronadas: profesión y muerte en Hispanoamérica virreinal*, (México: Museo Nacional del Virreinato, 2008), 118.

[14] AGN/ Indiferente Virreinal/ Caja 3949/ Expediente 42, 5v–5r. There is no follow-up record to Gomez's request.

[15] BNMFR, Fondo Franciscano, caja 76, expediente 1267, años 1750–1757, S-637583, folio 1. No record specifying that Conceptionist novices were involved in these carriage rides have come to light, but given that the Franciscans were involved in these activities, it is likely that Conceptionists were involved too. In addition, Gomesz's account makes it seem as if it was a universal practice across the various orders on nuns.

[16] AGN/ Indiferente Virreinal/ Caja 3949/ 9028/ 42/ Expediente 042, folio 1v.

[17] Ibid., 4r. There are no sources that follow up on Gomez's complaints. In Europe, local bishops' interpretations of Tridentine reforms often led to restricting the celebration in ways not seen in the New World. For restrictions on profession ceremonies in Bolognese convents see Monson, *Disembodied Voices*, 185–187. On Milanese convent restrictions see Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, 135–136. For convents in Siena see Reardon, *Holy Concord within Sacred Walls*, 50. Calderón de la Barca, reported that "more girls are smitten by the ceremony, than anything else," confirming that grand festivities for women entering cloistered convents—Conceptionist convents in particular—endured well into the period after Mexico's independence from Spain. See *Life in Mexico*, 2005. Accessed 30 June 2014. http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/9364.

[18] Monson, *Disembodied Voices*, 186.

frequently praise a successful novice on the day of her metaphorical marriage to Christ by invoking her name in polyphony. Some largely unstudied villancicos and poetry from CENIDIM's Jesús Sanchez Garza Collection include two villancicos composed specifically for two seventeenth-century professions at the *Santísima Trinidad* convent in Puebla. The evidence that nuns' families commissioned these pieces lies in one particular villancico's *copla*, which refers to the woman's entrance dowry. In general, such villancicos were the musical equivalent of the crowned nun portraits discussed at length by James M. Córdova in *The Art of Professing in Bourbon Mexico*. This music likewise promoted a family's prestige, but unlike an image, which would hang in a family's home in perpetuity, the villancicos were ephemeral, and likely performed only once. [19] The texts of these pieces had close ties to profession sermons, as will be shown below, since, as Janet Hathaway shows, villancicos were didactic—like sermons set to music.[20]

Very few profession villancicos survive in the archival record. There are two from the *Santísima Trinidad* and four composed by Gaspar Fernandés, the early-seventeenth-century chapel master at Puebla cathedral, represent the only extant Novohispanic sources of their kind. As will be discussed below, there is evidence that cathedral musicians, likely hired by nuns' relatives, performed the villancicos at the convents. Yet, as Andrea Bombi suggests, if the professing nun was a musician, she too could sing a line.[21] Bombi has also shown that some villancico manuscripts from Valencia convents indicate that these pieces could have been sung during the Mass, either after the Epistle or around the time of Communion.[22] However, this practice seems not to have been universal. María Gembero Ustárroz's study of villancicos in the

[19] On the prestige of crowned nun portraits, see Córdova, *The Art of Professing*, 1.
[20] Janet Hathaway, "'Music Charms the Senses…'": Devotional Music in the *Triunfos festivos* of San Ginés, Madrid, 1656," *Devotional Music in the Iberian World*, 227. So too does Tenorio characterize the villancico poet as a preacher (*predicador*) in *Los villancicos de Sor Juana*, 52.
[21] Andrea Bombi, "The Third Villancico was a Motet': The Villancico and Related Genres," *Devotional Music in the Iberian World*, 181–186.
[22] Bombi,"The Third villancico was a motet,'" 182.

Cistercian convent of *Santa Ana* in Ávila, Spain includes one profession villancico, and she specifies that the ceremonial book in Ávila does not indicate when the piece would have been sung during the rite of profession.[23] Regardless of when the pieces were performed, they clearly present women as the main subject of the composition and celebrate their real or imagined religious fervor and talents, musical or otherwise.

As Asunción Lavrin notes, full dowries were prohibitively expensive.[24] Because music played an exclusive role, its inclusion in both the liturgies and the profession ceremonies allowed for poor women musicians to profess free of charge, in exchange for their skilled performance in perpetuity, thanks to dowry waivers.

Whether women received musical waivers or not, they were still required to show legitimate desire to become a nun before entering the convent: the Council of Trent condemned forced monasticization.[25] In order for less wealthy women with legitimate vocations to have the opportunity to profess, dowries were also raffled away as charitable gifts in lotteries.[26] Establishing these charities, it was understood, put donors in a position for a more favorable afterlife.

Every woman who met the minimum requirements of baptism and Spanish lineage was allowed to begin a novitiate. Those who completed the novitiate and vowed perpetual poverty, chastity, obedience, and enclosure during the profession ceremony were also obligated to sing the Divine Office and Mass daily for the rest of their lives. Indeed, profession specifically

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[23] Gembero Ustárroz, "*De rosas cercada*," 330.
[24] Lavrin, *Brides of Christ*, 25.
[25] Monson, *Divas in the Convent*, 18. Venetian society was particularly notorious for forcing women into cloistered convents. See Arcangela Tarabotti, *Paternal Tyranny* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).
[26] These lottery dowries, discussed in more detail below, were a long-lasting tradition, spanning over one hundred years and continuing into the nineteenth century. The documents preserving records of nuns who entered convents on these lottery dowries will frequently refer to the luck-of-the-draw, mentioning that, "she came out lucky" (salío en suerte). Some prominent examples from the Archivo Historico de la Arquidiócesis de México include AHAM 1670 Caja 10 Expediente 41, 1686–1687 Caja 17 Expediente 10, 1814 Caja 165 Expediente 32. A 1761 dowry lottery administered by the Jesuits is preserved in AGN/ Instituciones Coloniales/ Indiferente Virreinal/ Caja 2689/ 45/ Expediente 045.

produced more choir nuns. The novice and profession ceremonies are described in a Novohispanic Conceptionist ritual book dating from the 1630s and reprinted in 1756, suggesting that the ceremonies remained consistent for over one hundred and twenty years. A comparison of this Novohispanic ceremonial book to the book from the Conceptionist motherhouse in Toledo, Spain, reveals that the Novohispanic version was much richer in music, because of additional antiphons and psalms.

Since this chapter focuses on the music arranged for the metaphorical wedding of the nun and Christ, it will include details of its metaphorical consummation. A profession sermon examined here will help to elaborate this point, and so too will the text of a profession villancico. In a moment of eroticization, the villancico confirms that the consummation was considered to take place when a nun received communion. Furthermore, an account from the biography of Sor Barbara Josepha de San Francisco on the day she professed in Puebla's *Santísima Trinidad* provides material which symbolically identifies the church tabernacle as the nuptial dwelling. The conjugal duty was then performed by the consecrated Host—the body of Christ also referred to as the sacrificial lamb, the Lamb of God. "We are overjoyed," announced Bishop Palafox y Mendoza, "to see the example, and spirit, with which, for divine mercy, the virgins of our diocese follow the Lamb of God, their husband."[27]

Paradise and Sacrifice in the Convent

Professing meant entering a life of sacrifice. The convent was thus at once a paradise, filled with beautiful buildings, gardens, art, music, and female fellowship, and at the same time, it was also a place of prayer, fasting, and exclusion from the world. Martin Vallarta's guidebook

[27] "Alégranos sumamente, ver el ejemplo, y espíritu con que por la misericordia divina, siguen las vírgenes de nuestro obispado, al Cordero de Dios, su Esposo." Palafox y Mendoza, *Regla y constituciones que han de guardar las religiosas de los Conventos de Nuestra Señora de al Concepción*, 3v–4r.

for nuns follows the long tradition of picturing monasticism as an ascetic desert.[28] He assured nuns that prayer was more important even than eating, recalling the forty days Jesus spent in the desert: "Every cloister is a desert, and you know that he who is the bread of life did not wish for bread in the desert."[29] Other church leaders presented the profession process in similar terms of self-denial, including as a sacrificial rite with benefits. In his sermon for the profession ceremony of Sor Genara de Santa Teresa at Mexico City's *Encarnación* convent, one might observe Dionisio Casado's ventriloquizing of a female voice as he exclaimed on this professing nun's behalf:

> And you, great God, observe me disinterested in all that is earthly, here at last prostrate at your sovereign feet, like a victim going on her own to the place of sacrifice; but before I carry out this sacrifice, allow me to give myself the joy of testifying that I go because I want to, because my heart desires you, and that the sacrifice that I will make is not something good that is being forced upon me, but rather a double tribute that I owe you. Placing at your feet my own pride, wealth, lasciviousness, and the whole world, I should promise you, as I promise, to live in obedience, in poverty and in chastity until death. I have said it, I swear it, I write it, I sign, I will fulfill it: your grace, Lord, guarantees that these promises will be fulfilled.[30]

The meaning of double tribute, although not completely clear, was associated here with Sor Genara professing by her own free will. And free will was key according to Fr. Diego Ossorio, who elaborated this point in his sermon on the profession of Sor Josepha María de San Antonio

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[28] See especially chapter four in James E. Goehring, *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert: Studies in Early Egyptian Monasticism* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999).

[29] "Todo claustro religioso desierto es, y ya sabemos que el que es el pan de la vida ni pan quiso en el desierto." in in Martin de Vallarta, *Luz que guía al camino de la verdad y dirección de religiosas: para que muera la monja contenta y sosegada en su retiro y tenga por paraíso a su convento. Por un confesor de las comunidades de las señoras religiosas sujetas al ordinario de la Ciudad de los Ángeles.* Año 1728, folio 163v. BNMFR, Archivos y Manuscritos, MM MS.622.

[30] "Y Vos, gran Dios, desprendida así de todo lo terreno, vedme aquí ya por último postrada á vuestras plantas soberanas, como una victima que va por sí misma al lugar donde ha de ser sacrificada; pero antes de consumar mi sacrificio permitidme que me dé á mí misma el dulce testimonio de que vengo porque quiero, que mi corazón es el que os desea, y que el sacrificio que voy á haceros, no es un bien que le arrancan por fuerza, sino un doblado tributo que os debo. Poniendo pues á vuestras plantas y á las mías la soberbia, las riquezas, la lascivia y el mundo todo entero, debo de prometeros, como os prometo, vivir en la obediencia, en la pobreza y en la castidad hasta la muerte. Lo he dicho, lo juro, lo escribo, lo firmo, yo lo cumpliré: á vuestra gracia, Señor, toca salir garante de estas promesas." Dionisio Casado, *Sermón que en la profesión religiosa, que en el Convento de la Encarnación de México, hizo el día 6 de julio la R.M. sor María Genara de Santa Teresa, hija del señor don Félix Quijada y Ovejero, oidor que fué de esta Real Audiencia*, (México: Mariano Joseph de Zúñiga y Ontiveros, 1806), 37–38. BNFR Colección General (BN) G 208 MIS. 38.

at Mexico City's *Purísima Concepción* convent. Ossorio cautioned the widely held premise of sacrifice that a "victim who is not free is not acceptable to God."[31] He then referred to the story of Abraham and his attempt to sacrifice his son Isaac. This well-known account from Genesis 22 tells that Isaac's life was spared at the last minute as God's reward to Abraham on account of his obedience. However, when the angel called out to Abraham, preventing him from killing Isaac, Ossorio interpreted that moment as follows:

> It was because the victim was bound: "And he had bound his son Isaac." And it is as if God said: A victim that is not free, I will not receive; leave him Abraham: "Do not lay your hand on the boy." Our Lord would not say such a thing about the rational victim offering herself to him today. Why, even though she is her parents' only daughter, and the object of their affection, they deliver her to God without violence, but rather with full liberty.[32]

Ossorio's reference to the professing woman's parents calls to mind one particularly proud mother, the widow Sor Barbara, who professed in Puebla's *Santísima Trinidad* convent alongside her daughter in 1699.[33] Sor Barbara performed the Ignatian spiritual exercises not long before her profession, and came out "as if starving to sacrifice all of herself to God in holocaust."[34] Fulfilling the vows was what constituted this sacrifice, which linked cloistered nuns to female saints who sacrificed both their body and soul for God in martyrdom.[35] In a similar fashion, nuns sacrificed their places in the social transmission of noble blood via

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[31] "La víctima que no es libre no es sacrifico que Dios acepta." Diego Ossorio, *Exaltación del divino esposo Jesús con el sacrificio de un corazón amante, sermón que en la solemne profession que hizo de religiosa de coro y velo negro, Sor Josepha María de S. Antonio, en el Convento de señoras religiosas de La Purísima Concepción deeEsta corte, el dia 20 de julio de este año de 1760* (México: En la Imprenta de la Biblioteca mexicana, 1760), 6.

[32] "Pues no fue por otra cosa sino porque estaba la victima ligada: 'Cumque ligasset Isaac filium suum.' Y es como si dijera Dios: Victima que no está libre yo no la recibo: déjalo Abraham: "Ne extendas manum tuam supra puerum." Eso no dirá su Majestad de la victima racional que hoy se le ofrece, pues aunque es hija única de sus padres, y el blanco de sus cariños, la entregan á Dios sin violencia, sino con su plena libertad." Ossorio, *Exaltación del divino esposo Jesús*, 6.

[33] She in fact had two daughters, both of whom became nuns, and a son who was a priest. See Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 93.

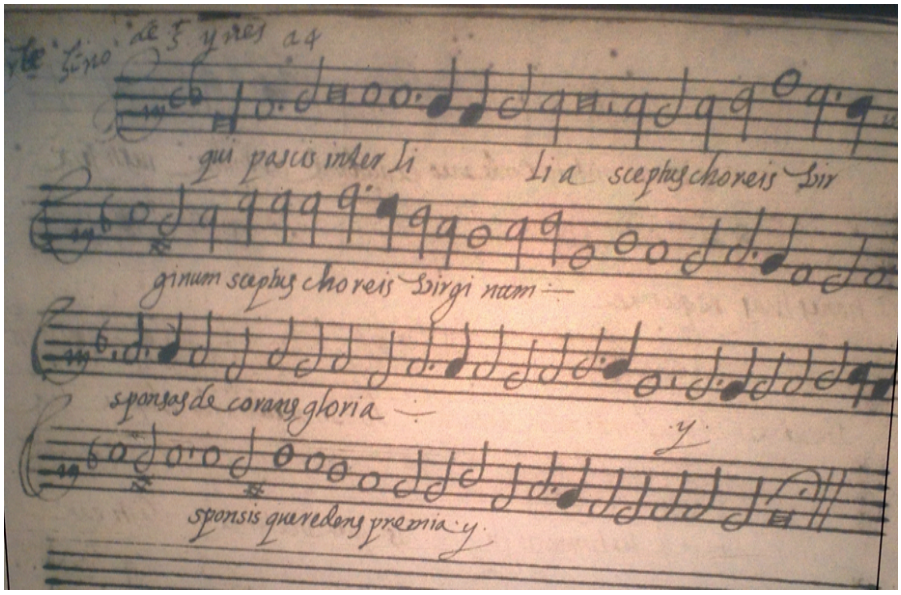
[34] "Tan animosa, y como hambrienta de sacrificarse toda á su Dios en holocausto salió la amante Barbara de sus ejercicios devotos…." Ibid., 131.

[35] Kendrick,*Celestial Sirens*, 46.

motherhood in order to follow Christ. Music and art assisted nuns in identifying further with the sacrifice of martyrs, according to Kendrick.[36]

In fact, one way in which music honored the virgin martyr St. Agnes, the patroness of the *Santa Inés* convent in Mexico City, was simply by changing the title of the hymn for the Common of Virgins. The anonymous *Jesu corona virginum* was entitled above the tiple part as the hymn of St. Agnes (*hino* [sic] *de S*ᵗᵃ *Ynes a4*) (see Figure 3.2). The majority of the hymn would have been sung in chant, which is now missing, but the *Santa Inés* choirbook preserves a 4-voice polyphonic setting of the hymn's second verse. The verse's pastoral reference to the Song of Songs, "you who feed among the lilies" (*qui pascis inter lilia*), predates Urban VIII's breviary, in which this text was modified to "you who proceed on among the lilies" (*qui pergis inter lilia*).[37]

Figure 3.2 Anonymous, *Hymno de Santa Inés a4*, tiple[38]



[36] Ibid.
[37] Any Roman Breviary prior to 1631 will contain *qui pascis inter lilia*. Compare, for example, *Breviarium romanum ex decreto S. Concilii Tridentini restitutum Pii V Pont. Max. jussu editum...* (Antwerp: Plantinius, 1628). lxxi. and *Breviarium Romanum, ex decreto S.S. Concilii Tridentini restitutum Pie V ... jussu editum ... Urbani VIII auctoritate recognitum* (Venice: Apud Cieris, 1639), lxviij.
[38] Reproduced from *Choir Book from the Convento de Santa Inés*, folios 32–33. Newberry Library Microfilm 1314. The piece, along with the rest of the manuscript, is transcribed in Bal y Gay, *El códice del Convento del Carmen*, 5–7.

In the choirbooks from Mexico City's *Encarnación* convent, the first verse of this hymn, and no other verse, is set to the same polyphony used for the second verse in the *Santa Inés* choirbook. Eliyahu Schleifer attributes the piece to the Spanish composer Francisco Guerrero.[39] These choirbooks—sources from two distinct Conceptionist convents—thus demonstrate that different practices existed for copying polyphony in Mexico City. But the question remains as to why the nuns at the *Encarnación* preferred to sing verse one in polyphony and the nuns at the *Santa Inés* preferred verse two. Local convent devotion may provide the answer.

Feeding, or better yet, "grazing" might indeed be a suitable description for the image of Jesus as a docile sacrificial lamb amid a garden of lilies. In fact, these flowers could be taken to represent the virgin martyrs themselves, who, in reward for their perpetual sacrifice, are crowned by Jesus. This action occurs in the first verse of *Jesu corona virginum.* In the second verse, however, Jesus is surrounded by choirs of virgins (*sceptus choreis virginum*), as found in the second phrase immediately following *qui pascis inter lilia.* This may well contribute to the interpretation that the lilies represent the saints and choirs. In this manner, Jesus is ultimately serenaded by the choirs of female martyrs while he grazes among the lilies. The hymn presumably takes place within a garden—a common metaphor for paradise, heaven, and convents.[40] In every instance, these fully professed nuns were undoubtedly considered virgins.

Except for the title, nothing in the hymn refers to St. Agnes, the only virgin martyr to have a convent named after her in New Spain. The designation of St. Agnes as the convent patron saint occurred by chance, since it actually had been named for Inés de Velasco (d. 1599), who herself was likely named after the saint. (She was the late wife of the convent founder Don Diego Caballero.)[41] The convent prospered as a cloister where poorer women could profess into

[39] Schleifer, "The Mexican Choirbooks," 289.
[40] See footnote 55 in Chapter 2 and Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, 160–161.
[41] Muriel, *Conventos de monjas en la Nueva España*, 94. Presumably the wife was named after the saint.

the Conceptionist order with dowries from Caballero's generous endowment.[42] There were to be thirty-three nuns at all times in honor of Jesus's age when he died.[43] Devotion to St. Agnes was well received by Mexico City's citizens, especially once her relics were brought from Rome to the convent church. According to Josefina Muriel, the difficulty in obtaining them made St. Agnes particularly famous in the Novohispanic capital.[44] And, although Muriel does not specify when the relics arrived from Rome, the title of the hymn itself may have filled a devotional void prior to the arrival of the relics.

In the hymn, allusion to the image of Jesus as a lamb grazing among the lilies, reinforces St. Agnes's association with lambs. In fact, her iconography often depicts her alongside a lamb, owing to her account in *The Golden Legend* (see Figure 3.3). "The name Agnes comes from *agna*, a lamb, because Agnes was as meek and humble as a lamb," said Jacobus de Voragine.[45] Even though the cognate is lost in the Spanish version of the name, Inés, it was nevertheless understood that her name fated her to the role of a sacrificial lamb. Inés's life and martyrdom would have offered a perfect example for nuns who themselves were considered sacrificial lambs, cloistered in their convent, an earthly pasture tended by Christ—both shepherd and lamb himself.

Another particularly famous work of Novohispanic convent art which reproduced the image of Christ "among the lilies" and as sacrificial lamb is José de Ibarra's *Cristo en el jardín de las delicias* (see Figure 3.4). Currently, it hangs in Mexico's Museum of the Viceroyalty in Tepotzotlán, although at one point it may have belonged to the *Santa Inés* convent.

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[42] Ibid.
[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid., 98. St. Agnes's skull is still preserved at the Church of St. Agnes in Agone in Rome's *Piazza Navona*. See Thomas J. Craughwell, *Saints Preserved* (New York: Image Books, 2011), 3.
[45] Jacobus De Voragine, *The Golden Legend: Readings on the Saints* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), 101.

Figure 3.3 St. Agnes Bas-Relief Above Portal of *Santa Inés* Convent, Mexico City



Figure 3.4 José de Ibarra, *Christo en el jardín de las delicias*, ca. 1728[46]



[46] Reproduced with permission from the Museo Nacional del Virreinato, Tepotzotlan, Mexico.

The painter's guild to which Ibarra belonged was based in the convent, and Ibarra was buried in the convent church.[47] In *Cristo en el jardín*, Jesus reclines on a bed of flowers, some of which are lilies, which he holds in his left hand and typically function as a symbol of his mother Mary's virginity. The three flowers are furthermore a tribute to the Trinity, according to Córdova.[48] A closer look at his face reveals that Jesus's forehead is healed from the crown of thorn lacerations. Yet we know that this is a post-Crucifixion rendering owing to the wound on his right hand, which holds his head gracefully in place. But there are two images of Christ in this portrait, the foremost one just described, and another represented by the lamb at the far right of the painting. The lamb is tending to Jesus's wounded foot.[49] Crucially, it is wearing a crown of thorns, appropriately sized for its small head, but missing from the reclining Lord himself. By licking the wound and wearing the crown of thorns, the sacrificial lamb takes on the more unpleasant, bodily aspects of the crucifixion missing from his human counterpart.

The image itself may have been considered instructive to nuns as it concerns reaching paradise through sacrifice. More explicitly, it contains numerous words scattered throughout the pastoral scene which spell out attributes of good cloistered nuns: love, suffering, grace, prayer, mortification, and so on.[50] Of the four vows taken at the profession ceremony, however, chastity is the only one present in this painting. It is a label for the lilies growing at Jesus's feet, next to the lamb.[51] In this way, chastity was one particular type of sacrifice which early modern society saw as being on a par with martyrdom.[52] And for this reason the palm frond,

[47] On Ibarra, see Paula Mues Orts, *José de Ibarra: profesor de la nobilísima arte de la pintura* (Círculo de arte, 2001). The artist seems to have painted more than one of these images of Christ, as one dating from 1727 belonged to the Carmelite *Santa Teresa la Nueva* convent. Alejandra Mayela Flores Enríquez mentions that other artists painted similar depictions of Christ as well. See Flores Enríquez, "Jardines místicos carmelitanos y su representación en la pintura del siglo XVIII: alegorías de la perfección monjil," (MA thesis, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 2014), 8 and 53–55.
[48] Córdova, *The Art of Professing*, 74.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid., 74–75.
[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid., 86.

symbolizing martyrdom and often found in the iconography of martyred saints, including the bas-relief of St. Agnes above, was often placed in the hands of newly professed nuns.[53]

Of course not all convent art so clearly alludes to these forms of sacrifice, although they do often make subtle nods to it. One clever metaphor, for example, expressed convent vows in avian, or perhaps angelic terms: "Vows and constitutions are the feathers with which the nun flies to heaven," remarked Vallarta, "but even feathers can be heavy."[54] Vallarta was clear about the challenge of fulfilling vows; it was a sacrifice similar to the experience of being weighed down.

The trope of rising to heaven and that of obtaining perfection, the goal of keeping the four vows, were both common in convents and put to good use in the villancico *Tonada sola a lo divino* (CSG.109). This anonymous composition for solo voice and bass accompaniment was written for Sor Clara Gregoria de la Ascensión of the *Santísima Trinidad* convent in Puebla, as its title-page indicates. It was likely sung as a recreational piece to highlight the importance of a Christ-centered convent life; several references to its text will be made throughout this chapter (see Example 1 in Appendix).[55] Where Vallarta's guidebook served to warn nuns, the *estribillo* of this villancico was intended to cheer them on, crying, "If the sweet rhythm of my anxiety flies to climb with wings of desire, may it not get tired in rising. By this act I bring about that an entire heaven will come to my hands." As seen in Example 3.1, the vocal part is prone to iconic word painting: the music ascends on words like "flies" (*buela* [sic]), "climb"

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[53] Ibid.

[54] "Votos y constituciones son las plumas con que vuela la religiosa hasta el cielo pero aun que son plumas pesan." in Vallarta, *Luz que guía al camino*, folio 129v.

[55] The manuscript is undated, but is followed by a Christmas villancico of similar handwriting and music dated 1679. Chapter thirty-seven of the Conceptionist ordinances specifies that joyful and honest recreation is important within the cloistered life, though it does not specify the forms and types of recreation that nuns could take part in. See *Regla de la Orden de la Concepción*, folio 52. This villancico would have no use in a liturgy, and thus its existence suggests that music was performed for recreation at the *Santísima Trinidad*. Recreational music performance was common after meals in Italian convents. See Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, 55. Baade reports on recreational music in Spanish convents, and Janet Hathaway alludes to it in the austere *Descalzas Reales* in Madrid. See "Music and Music-Making," 33 and "Cloister, Court and City," 94–95, respectively.

Musical Example 3.1 Anonymous, *Tonada sola a lo divino* (CSG.109), mm. 1–24



(*remontarse*), and "wings" (*alas*) in mm. 4–8; the word "wings" is then set to a melisma of fluttering eighth notes (mm.7–8). Elaborating on the common theme of struggle within flight, to which Vallarta also referred, the singer finally performs two fatiguing leaps of an octave at the end of the phrase, "may it not get tired in rising" (*no se fatigue por subir*). The word "rise" (*subir*) is set to a leap between F4 to F5 in mm. 15–16 and between D4 and D5 in mm. 16–17. This villancico thus emphasizes each nun's steadfast adherence to the sacrificial life to which she professed on entering the convent.

Aspiring novices, for this reason, would need to think twice before subscribing to the cloister. It was thus the duty of passionate sermonizers to be as explicit as possible to the public

about the challenges of convent life. Some scholars in fact suggest that sermons were read after the Mass and just before the official profession ceremony commenced.[56]

Allusions to the extreme dual nature of convent life—paradise and desert, joy and sacrifice, flight and fall—did not stop women from seeking the monastic life, as Sor Barbara's biography illustrates; its allure was engrained in the local culture. The novitiate was a logical step for women who had spent their youth studying in the convent. It was a valid option as well for those with little desire or no chance of marrying a man and becoming a secular housewife and mother. Convent life, despite being a never-ending sacrifice from the moment a woman took the habit, was also prestigious. Aspirants would therefore test out the sacrificial privilege through the novitiate, "so that with discreet deliberation they sampled if this life and rule was agreeable for them to partake in," according to the Conceptionist rule.[57]

Obedience, Dowries, and the Conceptionist Novitiate

The second *copla* of *Tonada sola a lo divino* stresses that a woman's free will was intended only to be used in the decision of whether to enter the convent life. It states, "The liberty that consecrates is the last desire, which happily burns from pure love in the fire" (see Example 1 in Appendix). The novitiate, for its part, served first and foremost to teach women to give up their free will, considered a product of evil, and to be obedient to their novitiate instructor, the abbess, and ultimately the Conceptionist rule.[58] Without obedience, it was considered impossible to fully guarantee poverty, chastity, and enclosure—the three other vows. Obedience even took precedence over prayer. Novices were expected to sleep and eat when told to do so, rather than to stay up late at night praying or fasting out of their own zeal,

[56] García Cubas, *El libro de mis recuerdos*, 14–15.
[57] "Por que con discreta deliberación prueben si esta vida y regla les convendrá tomar...." This quotation comes from a 16th-century Spanish translation of the Conceptionist rule in *Regla de la Orden de la Concepción*, folio 2.
[58] The issue of having to abandon one's free will was one that put the convent at odds with Enlightenment thought at the end of the eighteenth century. See Margaret Chowning, *Rebellious Nuns: The Troubled History of a Mexican Convent, 1752–1863, (*Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 8.

for example.[59] The rule also excluded women over forty from entering the novitiate arguably because church leaders were suspicious about older women's willingness to suppress their free will. [60]

At the opposite end of the spectrum, Pope Julius II's rule of 1511 stated that only girls aged twelve and older could enter the novitiate. However, following the Council of Trent's reforms, the Novohispanic Conceptionist rulebooks maintained that novices had to be at least fifteen.[61] This change narrowed the gap between the time in which the novitiate was to be completed and the time when a woman reached sixteen—the youngest age at which she could finally profess. Monson has documented how some Italian families attempted to secure their daughters' admission into the novitiate before the age of fifteen through advanced payment of dowries.[62] Similar arrangements must have taken place in New Spain, as reception of dowries before the final profession was technically forbidden in the Novohispanic Conceptionist rule, another Tridentine stipulation.[63] Dowries were only to be given during the final week of the novitiate, some eight days before the final profession.[64]

Acceptance into the novitiate required the bishop's final approval and a majority vote from the nuns.[65] A preceding series of steps which certified that the aspiring novice met the minimum requirements of descent from a good Spanish family and baptism. Otherwise, cathedral musicians administered an exam to women requiring dowry waivers for their musical abilities to prove sufficient competence on their instrument. The AGN in Mexico City

[59] "Sepan que dormir por la obediencia es mejor que sin ella velar en oración toda la noche, y así mismo el comer que ayunar." In *Regla de la Orden de la Concepción*, folio 14
[60] Ibid., folio 13.
[61] See Ibid., folio 2 and Palafox, *Regla y constituciones*, 16r.
[62] Monson, *Nuns Behaving Badly*, 11. Monson also documents the entrance of a twelve-year-old novice, a remnant of pre-Tridentine customs. See *Divas in the Convent*, 19.
[63] Palafox, *Regla y constituciones*, 17v.
[64] ACCMM, Correspondencia1617-1742, Rollo: 1287-1288, Libro: 24 Caja: 0 Exp: 0 U: 9.2, folio 18.
[65] Palafox, *Regla y constituciones*, 16v.

preserves fragments of this process in manuscripts dating from the 1670s through the 1850s.[66] Fanny Calderon attests to musical dowry waivers for aspiring nuns as late as the 1840s: "In the Convent of the Incarnation [*Encarnación*], I saw another girl…received there without a dowry, on account of the exceeding fineness of her voice."[67] Conceptionist convents were not the only ones that accepted women with such waivers, but the majority of the accounts at AGN originated from convents of that order, with rather generic titles similar to the following unusually complete example: *Acts performed in regards to the blessing of the habit, hoped to be received as a choir and black veil nun in the Convent of the Concepción, by Mariana de San José y Machuca with the status of Musician* (henceforth, expediente 36).[68]

Mariana's dossier contains all correspondence from the moment the nuns at the *Purísima Concepción* convent requested permission to accept her as a novice in 1694 until the nuns requested permission to give her profession a year later. Musicians were typically required to participate in the lengthy process to earn the dowry waiver, known as the "dowry corresponding to the status of musician."[69] Once they obtained this dowry, musician nuns were legally bound and obliged to perform—unless hindered by severe illness, as explained in Chapter 1.

Following presentation of the candidate's baptismal record,[70] the nuns offered a plea to the archdiocese on the musician novice's behalf:

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[66] Baade calls these *protócolos*. See chapter four in "Music and Music-Making in Female Monasteries in Seventeenth-Century Castile."

[67] Calderón, *Life in Mexico*, 2005. Accessed 30 June 2014. http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/9364.

[68] (*Autos hechos sobre el hábito de bendición que pretende recibir para la religiosa de coro y velo negro en el Convento de la Concepción Mariana de San José y Machuca a título de Música*). AGN/Instituciones Coloniales/ Bienes Nacionales/ Caja 130/ 30431/36/Expediente 36

[69] "Dote correspondiente a título de música." *Exploración de la novicia Mariana de San Ignacio, para su profesión religiosa de coro y velo negro, a título de voz y órgano, en el Convento de San José de Gracia, México*, 1793. AGN/ Instituciones Coloniales/ Bienes Nacionales (014) / Volumen 313/ Expediente 20

[70] The first document in Mariana de San José's packet is her proof of baptism, which took place on 3 October 1677, as confirmed by one Fr. Alonso Huerto de Velasco: he reports having checked a book of Spanish baptism records (*Libro de Baptismos* [sic] *Españoles*) held at the cathedral. By the eighteenth century, those not listed in Spanish baptism records, but rather in books for other ethnicities, indigenous, black, mixed, had to pay a tax. See

> We have been presented with a musician who is very skilled and she sings with a good voice with much training, which is an advantage because she can start singing without being taught…. She is the legitimate daughter of the accountant Agustin Fernandez Machuca, deceased, and Doña Ysabel de Salasar, his legitimate wife, who is so poor that she is sustained through alms, and to receive the status of nun, to which her virtue inclines her, she has taught [Mariana] music.[71]

This letter shows that some nuns taught each other to sing in the convent, and it follows a general pattern seen in all the profession acts, whereby the nuns describe a musical lacuna in the convent, present a musician qualified to fill the role, and then finally review the financial instability of the aspirant, despite being Spanish. That Mariana was a legitimate child of married parents, and that she was baptized, indicates that she belonged to a family of "good" citizens. Furthermore, the document attests to purposeful musical training so that Mariana could profess in a convent—a common procedure in European convents, and "a very sound investment" of family resources, as Monson puts it.[72]

The petition was signed by notary Joseph Rubio on 9 November 1694 and taken to the Vicar General Antonio de Anunzibay y Anaya, a cathedral canon. The canon showed it to Archbishop Francisco Aguiar y Seixas, who on 10 November granted permission for Antonio de Salazar and Joseph de Loaysa Augusto, cathedral chapel masters, to examine Mariana's musical skills. The examination took place on 15 November in the convent parlor. For some acts, the assessment took place in the *coro bajo*, nearly always with the grate separating the men and women, excepting for special circumstances as discussed below. The chapel masters would bring music to the convent for the exam, and the nuns also typically provided samples of music

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chapter one of Magali Marie Carrera, *Imagining Identity in New Spain: Race, Lineage, and the Colonial Body in Portraiture and Casta Paintings*, (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2003).

[71] "Se nos ofrece una música muy diestra que la hemos oído y a que canta en voz muy buena con tanta destreza y desembarazo que puede desde luego entrar ejerciéndolo sin que sea necesario el adiestrarla….[Es] hija legítima del contador Agustín Fernandes Machuca difunto ya y de doña Ysabel de Salasar su legítima mujer tan sumamente pobre que se sustenta de limosna y para conseguir el estado de religiosa a que se inclina por su mucha virtud le han enseñado la música…." AGN/Instituciones Coloniales/ Bienes Nacionales/ Caja 130/ 30431/36/Expediente 36, folio 3r.

[72] Monson, *Disembodied Voices*, 2.

for the aspirant to perform. After the exam, the examiners wrote their evaluations. The vicar general wrote his statement on the day of the exam on 15 November, making a point of specifying Mariana's ethnicity as soon as he saw her enter:

> There appeared a Spanish woman who called herself Mariana de San José, the subject of these acts, and the said chapel masters took out different sheets of music and the nun-musicians of the said convent took out others, which she sang and accompanied with said musicians. Similarly she sang another song on her own while playing the harp with much skill, and her voice is very sonorous.[73]

By commenting on the appearance of the Spanish woman before the exam, Anunzybay prefaces a record which follows in expediente 36, where Mariana's Spanish identity is confirmed through testimonies about her family lineage. This functioned as a true assessment of her "person, judgment, and circumstances," as Magali Carrera notes.[74] His comments about Mariana's performance draw upon a common general vocabulary used to describe musicians' skills, and, with a few minor differences, his testimony is the same as the chapel masters' notarized evaluations, dated two days later on 17 November. Loaysa reported that her voice was clear and high (*clara y alta*), in addition to being sonorous.[75] He also remarked on the potential deployment of her musical skills in liturgical contexts: "it is very useful and necessary for the celebration of the Divine Office in the said convent, and [she] also plays the harp, with which she can support the rest of the members who have [physically] stayed in the choir."[76]

By far the better known chapel master and composer, Salazar signed off on an almost identical, and similarly vague statement, while never mentioning explicitly which pieces of music were used to examine Mariana, or listing any musical competencies which they sought

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[73] "Pareció una mujer Española que dijo llamarse Mariana de San José y ser la contenida en estos autos el dicho maestro de capilla sacó diferentes papeles y las músicas religiosas de dicho convento otros que los cantó y acompañó con dichos músicos, y así mismo por sola cantó diferentes letras tocando la arpa todo con mucha destreza y la voz es muy sonora." AGN/Instituciones Coloniales/ Bienes Nacionales/ Caja 130/ 30431/36/Expediente 36, folio 4r.

[74] Carrera, *Imagining Identity in New Spain*, 5.

[75] AGN/Instituciones Coloniales/ Bienes Nacionales/ Caja 130/ 30431/36/Expediente 36, folio 5r.

[76] "Y es muy útil y necesario para que celebren los oficios divinos en dicho convent y que también la dicha Mariana de San José Machuca toca el arpa con que podrá ayudar a las demás compañeras que han quedado en el coro." Ibid.

from her. In fact, all such AGN documents decline to specify the type of music used in these exams. Still, the records attest to the collaboration between convents and cathedral musicians, presumably the city's best performers. These records also account for the primacy of the Divine Office within convents, as discussed in the previous chapter, and the need convents had for trained musicians and instrumentalists during liturgical services. In addition, there seems to be no extant record in which an aspiring novice seeking a dowry waiver failed her exam. And this may indicate that there was a widely known level of aptitude which girls required before beginning the process.[77] As little as the cathedral musicians describe about the examinee, the legal and musical vocabulary they choose reveals one case of a carefully structured process that fostered female musical professionalization at the *Purísima Concepción.*[78] Finally, the approval of an aspiring nun's musical abilities by at least two cathedral musicians and the vicar general was essential before the next step. [79]

Although not specifically articulated in Mariana's case, the accounts of dowry waiver music exams could also point to the importance of polyphony in the convents. In 1691, Salazar and two of his colleagues examined the extraordinarily gifted Felipa Rodriguez de Aguilar, who

[77] In one instance at the *Encarnación* convent, the cathedral organist, Manuel Martinez, suggested that Anna Manuela Herrera, who aspired to become a nun with the dowry waiver for organ playing, required more time under the tutelage of her male teacher (*maestro*) to help her with a rhythm issue she had with her playing. But it was only a small defect (*defectillo*), which would not hinder her from obtaining the dowry (*Le encontramos algún tanto defectuosa en el compás rythmo o medida*). This is a later account from 1800, and here Manuel Martinez has steered away from the formal rubrics of the past cathedral musicians. He says, for example, that Anna Manuela plays with some knowledge (*algun conocimiento*) and that she does not lack liveliness in her playing (*viveza parece no la falta*). Furthermore, "it appears that she will serve very well," noted Martinez, "if she does not allow herself to forget what she knows, and if she has the precaution to prepare herself ahead of time and learn what she has to play." (*Parece puede servir muy bien, si no deja olvidar lo que sabe, y teniendo la precaución de prepararse con la debida anticipación, a imponerse en lo que haya de tocar.*) See AGN/Instituciones Coloniales/ Templos y Conventos/ Caja 1116/Expediente 012/ folio 12.

[78] Similar musical exams were reported in Spain and Chile. See Gembero Ustárroz, "*De Rosas Cercada,*" 324–325; Alejandro Vera, "Transcending the Walls of the Churches: The Circulation of Music and Musicians of Religious Institutions in Colonial Santiago de Chile," *Music and Urban Society*, 177.

[79] Ana Xaviera de Algora actually had three cathedral musicians in addition to the vicar general evaluate her skills in voice, violón, and vihuela. See AGN/Instituciones Coloniales/ Bienes Nacionales/ Caja 130/ 30431/6/Expediente 6, folio 4v–6r.

sought a music dowry to enter the *San José de Gracia* convent.[80] She was competent in four instruments, among them, the *bajón* (dulcian), *tenor* (tenor dulcian), *faraute* (literally, "herald," and thus probably a trumpet), and *tenor de chirimía* (tenor shawm)—evidence that perhaps shawms were not only played by indigenous musicians.[81] She also sang contralto. With these musical abilities, Felipa Rodriguez de Aguilar was proposed to fill a vacancy in the choir after one of its members had died. Indeed, the abbess of *San José de Gracia* wrote that, "the choir is in much need for the Divine Office and the one who can actually perform is unavailable because the physicians have informed me that it is a threat to her life."[82]

In his evaluation of Felipa, the cathedral dulcian player José de Espinosa praised Aguilar's skills, commenting that her voice alone should earn her a dowry—but there were already too many tiples (high voices) in the nuns' choir.[83] "It will assuredly be a service to God, our Lord, for her to receive the habit," remarked Espinosa, "because this witness knows that the choir of said convent lacks voices and instruments like hers."[84] Though Espinosa specified that low voices were a particular need in the *San José de Gracia* convent, Felipa's low voice must still have been rare, given the urgent tone of the cathedral musicians' account.[85] The specification of tiples and contraltos points to polyphonic singing, despite the lack of extant music sources from

[80] AGN/ Instituciones Coloniales/ Bienes Nacionales/ Caja 310/ 30651/ 34/ Expediente 35.
[81] The three musicians coincide with the list of instruments played by Felipa. However, the cathedral canon who accompanied them, Diego de la Sierra, confused the *chirimía* for a *cornetto*. See AGN/ Instituciones Coloniales/ Bienes Nacionales/ Caja 310/ 30651/ 34/ Expediente 35, 4r. On *faraute*, See Pedro Pineda, *Nuevo diccionario, español e ingles e ingles y español: que contiene la etimología, de la propia, y metafórica significación de las palabras, términos de artes y ciencias* (por F. Gyles, 1740).
[82] "Está el coro con mucha necesidad para el culto divino y que la que actualmente lo puede hacer no le es posible por haberme encargado los médicos la conciencia de que expone a riesgo su vida." AGN/ Instituciones Coloniales/ Bienes Nacionales/ Caja 310/ 30651/ 34/ Expediente 35, 3r. This is not the first time that wind instruments caused health issues for nuns (see Chapter 1).
[83] AGN/ Instituciones Coloniales/ Bienes Nacionales/ Caja 310/ 30651/ 34/ Expediente 35, folio 5r.
[84] "Tiene por cierto que será servicio de Dios ntro. Señor se le de el hábito de bendición. Porque tiene noticia ⌈este declarante⌋ que en el coro de dicho convento falta voz ⌈e⌋ instrumentos como ella lo⌈s⌋ tiene." Ibid. Alejandro Vera reports a similar procedure for examining musician nuns in Chilean convents. See "Transcending the Walls of the Churches," 177.
[85] On the performance of low voice parts by female musicians see Monson, *Divas in the Convent*, 57 and Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, 192–193.

San José de Gracia.[86] For his part, Salazar does not elaborate further about Mariana at the *Purísima Concepción* after confirming her competency. Nevertheless, either her harp or vocal skills in themselves would have been considered no small accomplishment for her. Other musical dowries were given for just a single instrument skill.

On 18 November, a day after Mariana's music exam, Anunzibay informed the archbishop that she had passed the test, and the prelate gave permission to investigate her lineage and Spanish identity, which required two witnesses. The priest Ambrozio Fernández de Leon and Juan de Arvo, a longtime family acquaintance, stood in, and the latter testified:

> [Her parents] procreated the aforementioned as a legitimate daughter, and, as such, they raised her, fed her, always called her daughter, and she has always called them mother and father in their house and in public and [I know] that [her parents] are Spanish old Christians, pure from all bad lineage of the Moors, Jews, and those punished by the inquisition or other tribunals….Mariana de San José is a virtuous person of good life and customs, and she has no impediments that will hinder her receipt of the blessed habit, which she seeks…."[87]

Since the Spanish brought Old World fears and prejudices to the New World, and thus there was some emphasis in these evaluations on a demonstrated lineage of "pure" and reliable Catholic faith. Arvo's testament here would assure the church leaders that Mariana was free of the perceived marks of undesirable ancestors. Variants on these statements for proving Spanish blood purity would often include terms more specific to the New World, often excluding people of mixed race, for example. This was the case more clearly in the 1667 testimony of Nicolás

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[86] Around 1728, almost forty years later, the *Purísima Concepción* convent also requested permission for a musical dowry for a contralto singer, María Rita de San Miguel, attesting once more to the widespread practice of polyphony across Conceptionist houses and throughout a lengthy period. Manuel Sumaya had now taken over the chapel master role from Salazar who retired in 1714. Sumaya noted that María Rita played the harp and "solfeged" (*solfeó*) music of diverse tones very well, and that her contralto voice would be very useful when she was not playing the harp. See AGN/ Instituciones Coloniales/ Bienes Nacionales/ Caja 933 (2)/ 31455/23/ Expediente 54, folio 4v.

[87] "[Sus padres] procrearon a la suso dicha por su hija legitima y como tal la criaron alimentaron llamándole siempre de hija y ella a los suso dichos de padre y madre en una casa y compañía y que el dicho Agustín Fernández y Doña Isabel de Salazar son Españoles Cristianos viejos limpios de toda mala raza de Moros Indios y de los penitenciados por el santo oficio de la inquisición ni por otro tribunal….Mariana de San José es persona virtuosa de buena vida y costumbres y que no tiene impedimento que le estorbe a recibir el habito de bendición que pretende en el convento…." AGN/ Instituciones Coloniales/ Bienes Nacionales/ Caja 310/ 30651/ 34/ Expediente 35, folio 2v of second bundle.

Neira Barboza in support of Juana Tellez de la Banda, who aspired to enter the *Encarnación* convent. Barboza swore that her parents were, "Spanish without any mixture, nobles of all the quality of old Christians, pure of all bad race…."[88] Spanish citizens thought that it was impossible to have the qualities necessary to become a bride of Christ without these testimonies.[89] At the center of this racial rubric was the aspirant's bloodline, which was supposed to give rise to moral parents and the aspirant's own "good" nature. These features were believed to be passed from one true Spanish Christian to another.[90]

The final step in a candidate's evaluation involved a scrutiny of her personality, and for Mariana this stage arrived on 19 November, a day after confirmation of her Spanish lineage. She was asked for her name, the name of her parents, her age (she was seventeen at the time), and, most importantly, whether she sought to enter of her own free will without being forced or pressured into the convent, to which she responded that it was by her own desire.[91] When this ten-day deliberation was complete, the archbishop reviewed the material one last time and then granted the nuns permission to vote on Mariana's acceptance as a novice.[92]

As mentioned earlier in the context of the *Santa Inés* convent, there were other non-musical means by which poor women could enter the novitiate without the funds for a final profession. The establishment of individual dowry bequests as general donations for future novices is no surprise, given the universal Catholic concerns of charity and salvation. Wealthy citizens often took substantial and expensive steps to guarantee their safe passage into a

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[88] "Son Españoles sin ninguna mezcla nobles de toda la calidad de Cristianos viejos limpios de toda mala raza." AGN/Instituciones Coloniales/ Indiferente Virreinal/ Caja 4086/ 27 Expediente 27, folio 5r–5v.

[89] Singers at *Descalzas Reales* also had to prove their blood purity. See Hathaway, "Cloister, Court and City," 42–43. Baade does not bring up the issue of blood purity in the *protocolos*. Baade, "Music and Music-Making in Female Monasteries in Seventeenth-Century Castile," Chapter 4.

[90] On Spanish blood purity (*limpieza de sangre*) see María Elena Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions: Limpieza de Sangre, Religion, and Gender in Colonial Mexico* (Stanford University Press, 2008).

[91] AGN/Instituciones Coloniales/ Bienes Nacionales/ Caja 130/ 30431/6/Expediente 6, second bundle folio 3v.

[92] This process was quicker than Ana Xaviera de Algora's at *San Bernardo*, whose petition from the nuns was dated 13 June 1692, with the final confirmation from the archbishop on 5 July. See AGN/Instituciones Coloniales/ Bienes Nacionales/ Caja 130/ 30431/6/Expediente 6.

peaceful eternity. These gifts were even considered pious deeds (*obras pias*). No Catholic person's afterlife was guaranteed to be pleasant, and for this reason, in 1743, Archbishop Juan Antonio de Vizarrón y Eguiarreta left a prestigious 4,000-peso dowry to Mexico City, some three years after he left his post as Viceroy of New Spain. He believed the dowry, along with several bequeathed memorial Masses, would help ensure his soul "a most clement compassion in the divine justice."[93]

In terms of allocation, the donors themselves established regulations for how the dowry was spent. The minimum requirements for reception of a charitable dowry were once again baptism and Spanish lineage "severely excluding all other *casta*, race, or mixture," as the archbishop put it.[94] (The word *casta* was already a term used in New Spain to denote people of mixed race, and so the archbishop's redundancy makes this race restriction even more emphatic).[95] The archbishop also stipulated that the girls be citizens of Mexico City and have been cloistered either in a girls' school (*colegio*), a house of penitence for women (*recogimiento*), or a Conceptionist or Hieronymite convent for at least three years prior to beginning their novitiate.[96] Given such instructions, these institutions each voted for one qualified candidate and entered her name into a lottery (*sorteo*) which took place on the feast of St. John the Baptist, 24 June.[97] The names, written on slips of paper, were placed in an urn for selection. In what appears to have been a symbolic gesture to Matthew's Gospel ("So shall the last be first and the first last," Matthew 20:16), the final name drawn out received the archbishop's dowry.[98] It also kept up the drama to the very last possible moment.

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[93] "Produzca á mi alma alguna clementísima compasión en la Divina Justicia." ACCMM, Correspondencia1617-1742, Rollo: 1287-1288, Libro: 24 Caja: 0 Exp: 0 U: 9.2, folio 2

[94] "Excluyendo severísimamente toda otra cualquiera casta, raza, o mixtura." Ibid., folio 11.

[95] On *castas* see Martínez, *Genealogical Fictions*, 162.

[96] ACCMM, Correspondencia1617-1742, Rollo: 1287-1288, Libro: 24 Caja: 0 Exp: 0 U: 9.2, folio 11–12. On *colegios* and *recogimientos* see Elizabeth Teresa Howe, *Education and Women in the Early Modern Hispanic World* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2013); Muriel, *La Sociedad Novohispana y sus colegios de niñas.*

[97] ACCMM, Correspondencia1617-1742, Rollo: 1287-1288, Libro: 24 Caja: 0 Exp: 0 U: 9.2, folio 13.

[98] Ibid., folio 17.

This woman's new, religious name would then be required to include the archbishop's patron saints, San Juan, San Antonio, or San Lorenzo. Furthermore, she would have to exit the cloister, and, for the first time in at least three years, participate in the procession and Mass at the cathedral on the feast of St. Peter on 29 June.[99] She would have to begin her novitiate as soon as possible—within two years in an urban convent of her choosing.[100]

Elsewhere, Archbishop Vizarrón crafted specific conditions for an entire convent in which music would take pride of place. In October 1746, months before his death, he established a music school to teach poor Spanish women to play music. It was located in Mexico City's *San Miguel de Belem*, a shelter for widows and a house of penitence for young women. As noted by Josefina Muriel, music classes there were reserved exclusively for women who wanted to become nuns, reinforcing the primacy of music in the convents. [101]

Taking the Habit

Women admitted into the novitiate, whether through the means discussed above or because of their family's wealth, would be inducted through a short ceremony known as the taking of the habit. During this event, they were dressed in the white Conceptionist habit—similar to a fully professed nun's, but with a white veil instead of a black one.[102] The anonymous portrait of Sor Ana María de San Francisco y Neve from Mexico City's *Purísima Concepción* convent, offers a rare instance of a Conceptionist novice portrait dressed in such a habit; she holds a Conceptionist rule book in her right hand (see Figure 3.5).[103]

The taking of the habit began with the entry of the aspiring novice and her family into the church. The convent church bells were to be rung until all the nuns were gathered in the

[99] ACCMM, Correspondencia1617-1742, Rollo: 1287-1288, Libro: 24 Caja: 0 Exp: 0 U: 9.2, folio 17.
[100] Ibid., folio18.
[101] Muriel, *La música en las instituciones femeninas novohispanas*, 77.
[102] Calderon remarked the following about a fully professed nun's habit and veil in comparison to a novice's: "The dress is a long robe of very fine white cashmere, a thick black crape veil, and long rosary. The dress of the novices is the same, only that the veil is white." See *Life in Mexico*, 2005. Accessed 30 June 2014. http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/9364.
[103] Córdova, *The Art of Professing*, 26.

Figure 3.5 Anonymous, Sor Ana María de San Francisco y Neve, ca. 1759[104]



coro bajo with lit candles in their hands.[105] The aspirant would enter the church and kneel at the foot of the altar, holding a candle and accompanied by her relatives.[106] After the opening prayers, the priest would then begin to bless the white habit, which sat on a table before the altar, and invoke Abraham's example of obedience, chanting, "God, who by the works of

[104] Reproduced with permission from the Archivo Fotográfico Manuel Toussaint, Instituto de Ivestigaciones Estéticas. Córdova lists the work as an anonymous portrait in *The Art of Professing*, 26. The online *Art History Reference* also has a version of this painting, attributing it to José de Páez. Accessed 30 June 2014. http://arthistoryreference.com/cgi-bin/hd.exe?art2=a52402. Both sources concur on its present location at the Church of *Santa Rosa de Viterbo*, Queretaro, Mexico.

[105] *Ritual Concepcionista*, ACM, folio 1r

[106] *Orden que se ha de guardar con la que entra en religión y modo con que se ha de vestir el hábito a las religiosas de la regla de la Purísima Concepción de Nuestra Señora, y de San Jerónimo, sujetas al ordinario de este Arzobispado de México*, (México: En la imprenta nueva de la Bibliotheca Mexicana, 1756), folio 1. BNFR, Obras Antiguas, Raras, RLAF 607 LAF

Abraham, your servant, has given to the human race an example of obedience, allow your handmaiden to break the perverseness of her free will and to fulfill in all things your righteous commands…."[107] Following this prayer, the novice and habit were sprinkled with holy water, and the priest asked if she was entering the convent of her own free will, whether she had debts, or whether she was married. After answering these questions adequately, the novice kissed the priest's hand and was escorted to the *coro bajo* by her family where the nuns received her and dressed her in her new habit.[108]

Music played an important role in sacralizing the exact moment when a woman left the secular world to enter the convent. According to the Conceptionist ritual book, preserved at the motherhouse in Toledo, Spain, an aspirant was received into the *coro bajo* while the nuns chanted *Conceptio tua*, a Vespers antiphon for the feast of Mary's conception.[109] However, in the Novohispanic ritual, a novice was received with *Veni sponsa Christi* and psalm 83, *Beati qui habitant in domo tua Domine*, sung in the eighth tone.[110] In a remarkable moment of musical and textual distinction between women who were virgins and non-virgins, the ritual book specifies that this antiphon-psalm pairing be sung for virgins only.[111] If the candidate was not a virgin, the choir would sing *Veni electa mea, & ponam in te thronum meum, Alleluia* with the same psalm,

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[107] "Deus, qui Abrahae famuli tui opera humano generi obedientiae exemplar tribuisti, concede huic ancillae tuae, & suae voluntatis pravitatem frangere, & tuorum praeceptorum rectitudinem in omnibus adimplere…." In *Orden que se ha de guardar*, folio 2.

[108] Ibid.

[109] *Ritual Concepcionista*, ACM, folio Vr. The nuns at the motherhouse do not know how old the ritual book is, but Viana Cadenas places the date range within the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in "Música, fiestas y ceremonias en el Convento de la Inmaculada Concepción de Caracas (Siglos XVII-XVIII)" *Mujeres, negros, y niños en la música y sociedad cultural iberoamericana*, edited by Víctor Rondón (Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia: Asociación Pro Arte y Cultura, 2002), 19. The Novohispanic Conceptionist and Hieronymite ritual book suggests that the seventeenth-century Vicar General Anunzibay y Anaya granted its publication. However, only a re-impressed1756 edition survives. The use or disuse of the word *sponsa* is particularly relevant, not least because, as Kendrick notes, some orders stopped using it in 1600. Like the Benedictines in Milan, the Conceptionists in New Spain kept the word *sponsa* in the novice ceremony only under special conditions. On the Benedictines in Milan see Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, 133.

[110] *Orden que se ha de guardar*, folio 2.

[111] Ibid.

but in the first tone.[112] The eighth tone thus provides a major third sonority for virgins, and the first tone, a minor third for non-virgins. Of course, whether or not this detail was audible to anyone other than the choir can only be speculated. The liturgical differences between the two antiphons, however, may have been more familiar to listeners. *Veni sponsa* and *Veni electa* were both sung for the Common of Virgins, but only the latter was sung within the Common of Holy Women (matrons). Certainly the distinction between the subjects of the two antiphons—*sponsa* (bride) on the one hand and *electa* (chosen one) on the other—would be recognized, not least of all because the antiphon was repeated until the novice was fully dressed in the habit. This was also another way of enacting convent hierarchy and subordination.

Although some convents in Europe accepted only virgins,[113] this Novohispanic Conceptionist ritual book, including the example of the widow Sor Barbara, confirms that virginity was not the same issue when it came to women entering the Conceptionist order. Nevertheless, the topic was not broached in any of the accounts for dowry waivers, making it all the more unusual within the context of a ceremony. No distinction was made regarding virginity status in the final profession either, as *Veni sponsa Christi* was sung for all women at the last stage.[114] But there was indeed something particular about this antiphon for the Conceptionists, most notably because the motherhouse ritual book excluded it from the novice ritual, reserving it only for the final profession.[115] Because of the sonic distinction present in the Novohispanic ritual, excluding non-virgins from entering the *coro bajo* to the chanting of *Veni sponsa Christi*, I contend that the novitiate must have functioned as a process of purification for

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[112] Ibid., folio 3.

[113] Monson, *Nuns Behaving Badly*, 101.

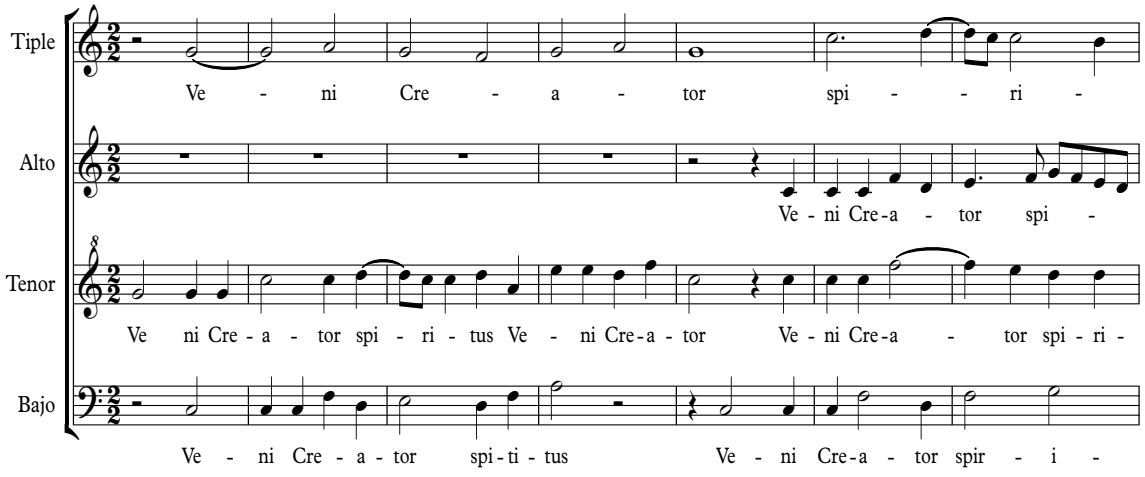
[114] Conversely, in the Dominican ritual described in Puebla's *Santa Inés de Montepulciano* choirbook, the final profession ceremony included a set of different antiphons to be sung if the candidate were a widow. See *Libro de coro del Convento de Santa Inés de Montepulciano*, BNAH, Colección Antigua Vol. 968, 25–27.

[115] *Veni sponsa Christi* was performed for novices in Siena convents with no distinction about virginity. See Reardon, *Holy Concord Within Sacred Walls*, 54. Janet Hathaway notes that at *Descalzas Reales* either *De regnum mundi* or *Veni sponsa Christi* is sung when the novice is taken in to be clothed in the habit, but she does not comment on what determines the choice of chant nor on the issue of virginity being tied to the chants. See Hathaway, "Cloister, Court and City," 121.

non-virgins. In addition to teaching obedience, therefore, it was believed to restore these women to the suitable state of *sponsa* in order to finally receive the black veil.

The ceremony continued with a prayer and the invocation of the Holy Spirit through the singing of *Veni Creator Spiritus*.[116] The anonymous four-voice setting of the hymn in the *Santa Inés* choirbook would have enriched the ceremony at that convent with polyphony (see Musical Example 3.2). Centered around C major, the ancient *Veni Creator Spiritus* chant tune is placed in the tiple voice in long note values. This combination of high pitch and slow rhythm allows the chant to stand out above the three lower voice parts which imitate each other only minimally. Only the first verse is set to polyphony, however. The rest of the verses were likely chanted, putting an emphasis upon the initial calling of the Holy Spirit at the start of the hymn. After this hymn was sung, the priest typically offered a final blessing, and then the novice embraced the abbess and all the sisters as she commenced her yearlong novitiate. The new novice's family and friends in the main body of the church departed and continued to celebrate.

Musical Example 3.2 Anonymous, *Veni Creator Spiritus*, mm. 1–7[117]



[116] *Orden que se ha de guardar*, folio 4.
[117] Transcribed from Choirbook from the *Convento de Santa Inés*. Newberry Library Microfilm 1314, folio 32v–33r.

Danger in the Midst of Joy

Within the convent itself, the Conceptionist rule expressly restricted novices from carrying out any duties; they were to remain free of any and all distractions which might arouse their free will and cause their minds to stray from focusing on prayer and study of the rules.[118] An exemption from this requirement represented one particular advantage afforded to musician novices. They were instead expected to fulfill musical duties in the liturgies throughout their novitiate. Novices were furthermore permitted to learn music during their novitiate year, as can be inferred from a document written by the abbess of the *Encarnación* convent in 1731.[119] In order to receive her dowry waiver, a novice in the convent named Sor Maria Francisca de la Santísima Trinidad was to be examined in "the science of music and on the organ". However, the candidate's music teachers could not give the exam through the grate, presumably because the organ was upstairs in the *coro alto* and not in the *coro bajo.*[120] So the archdiocese gave permission in this instance for the music teachers to enter the *Encarnación* and deliver the exam. For men to enter the cloister was no small matter, but given the circumstances, it was better to permit the musicians to come in than to allow the novice to leave the cloister. Indeed, dowry waivers often articulated strict regulations against novices exiting the convent.[121]

As a matter of fact, the novitiate was considered a dangerous time for potential nuns because, not yet having taken their final vows, their free will was considered more prone to temptation. A chapter in the Conceptionist rulebook dedicated to the role of novice teachers illustrates how they were to guide their aspiring pupils: "She must indoctrinate them to conquer and contain all desires, making them understand the danger that exists in fulfilling

[118] *Regla de la orden de la Concepción*, folio 14.
[119] AGN/ Indiferente Virreinal/ Caja 1116 / 6195/ Expediente 002.
[120] "Que sea examinada de la ciencia de la música y instrumento de órgano la novicia." In Ibid. It is not clear why the exam was not given before this candidate entered the novitiate, as in the examples above, but this leads me to conclude that the novice was allowed to develop her musical skills during the novitiate.
[121] Archbishop Vizarrón y Eguiarreta's dowry was not to be given to anyone who had left the cloister a single day, even if it were on account of illness. See ACCMM, Correspondencia1617-1742, Rollo: 1287-1288, Libro: 24 Caja: 0 Exp: 0 U: 9.2, folio 12.

their free will and, on the contrary, the merits and results of overcoming it."[122] Through private meetings with the abbess three times a week, novices would also receive advice on how to fight temptation "in a manly fashion" so as to reach purity of heart.[123] All thoughts, good and bad, were to be reported to the teacher and abbess—especially the bad thoughts. "The devil transforms himself every now and then into the angel of light," says the rulebook, "and so that they won't be deceived, they must carry themselves with open hearts [among the abbess and teachers] so that they can be taught in the truth."[124]

Lucifer, both the angel of light who betrays God (as per Isaiah 14), and the devil, was believed to be able to turn a novice into a traitor. Diego de Lemus, for example, recalls a most unusual struggle against this duplicity, when Sor María de Jesús was a novice in Puebla's *Purísima Concepción* convent:

> The devoted damsel walked along the lengthy path of that rigorous novitiate, but this alone did not content her sovereign teacher…. The Lord granted permission to the devil so that he could batter her with ugly temptations against purity; the representations of the instant incentives and suggestions to her were continuous: she resisted these and armed herself with exercises of mortification, and rigorous penance…. She gave herself long and cruel disciplines with tears running down her cheeks and blood running down her virginal body. The fight grew, and she would continue the whipping to destroy her delicacy. She called upon her mother, the sovereign Virgin, sighing and weeping bitterly in her loving presence; but the battle still lasted, so that its conquering would be more glorious, and to show the force of grace within the weakness of a damsel, who would triumph over the world, devil, and flesh.[125]

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[122] "En todos los apetitos las debe mucho doctrinar como los han de vencer y atajar, dándoles a entender el peligro que hay en cumplir la propia voluntad y por el contrario el merito y fruto que hay en el vencimiento de ella." *Regla de la orden de la Concepción*, folio 15.

[123] "Peleando varonilmente," in Ibid.

[124] "Porque el Demonio se transforma algunas veces en ángel de luz y para no ser engañadas han menester manifestar sus almas abiertamente para que en si las puedan adestrar en lo verdadero." Ibid.

[125] "Caminaba la devote doncella, por la vereda estrecha de aquel noviciado riguroso; pero no se contenta su soberano maestro con eso solo…. Fue haberle dado el Señor licencia al demonio, para que la combatiese con tentaciones feas contra la pureza; eran continuos los incentivos instantes, las sugestiones, que le representaba: á cuya resistencia se disponía, y armaba con ejercicios de mortificación, y rigores de penitencia….Tomaba largas, y crueles disciplinas, corriendo á un tiempo las lagrimas por sus mejillas, y la sangre por su cuerpo virginal. Crecía la pelea, y volvía el azoteo á destrozar su delicadeza. Llamaba como a su madre la soberana Virgen, suspiraba, y gemía amargamente en su amorosa presencia; pero duraba todavía la batalla, para que fuesen mas gloriosos sus vencimientos, y se viese la fuerza de la gracia en la debilidad de una doncella, que avía de triunfar del mundo, demonio y carne." Lemus, *Vida, virtudes, trabajos, favores y milagros de la Ven. M. Sor María de Jesús*, 43–44.

Sor María de Jesús's mortification would demonstrate to nun-readers an ideal for resisting temptation in "manly fashion." That God himself sent the devil to tempt her also indicated that temptation was a natural occurrence, even in the convent.[126]

In fact, Sor María de Jesús was said to face temptation up to the moment of her profession. "Who would have thought that the enemy would have attempted new assaults at the last minute," exclaimed Félix de Jesús María.[127] "The bride was about to be crowned, and in a brief moment, he attempted to take the crown away."[128] Sor María's father reportedly appeared on her profession day with a handsome, wealthy, and noble suitor prepared to take her out of the convent and marry her.[129] Out of respect for her father, she did not quote St. Agnes' reply when the governor of Rome courted her, "Depart from me food of death," [130] rather, Sor María expressed,

> That neither the world nor all of hell had the forces to separate her from her intention. Her father was confounded, and the gentleman sadly disillusioned, and with this final…sentence they both left and refrained from attending the sacred function, to which the tenacious novice entered, and knelt before the altar, having at her feet the world, devil, and flesh, she offered herself as a wholesome sacrifice to the omnipotent spouse, to which she remained embraced with the triplicate indissoluble bond of the three solemn vows, and the fourth of perpetual enclosure. Don Pedro Gutierrez, canon of the cathedral and vicar of all nuns' convents in the Diocese of Puebla, placed the virginal veil on said day, worthy of being noted on a white stone in that sacred *coro* of virgins, in which its cloister was enriched with such an incomparable treasure.[131]

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[126] Ulrike Strasser notes that demonic interventions in German, Spanish, and Italian nuns' hagiographies were a rhetorical device that demonstrated an "inverse gauge" of a mystic nun's spirituality. See Strasser, "Clara Hortulana of Embach or How to Suffer Martyrdom in the Cloister," *Female Monasticism in Early Modern Europe*, 50.

[127] "Mas quien creyera, que el enemigo había de repetir nuevos asaltos en los últimos minutos!" Jesús María, *Vida, virtudes y dones sobrenaturales de la venerable sierva de Dios Sor María de Jesús*, 46.

[128] "Ya iba á coronarse la esposa, y en este breve tiempo solicitó quitarla la corona." Ibid. In this statement the crown is synonymous with profession, and in his analysis of the crowned nun portraits, Córdova explains that the crown was a symbol of virginity. This supports my argument that virgin status was reinstated for non-virgins at the end of the novitiate, at the final solemn profession. See Córdova, *The Art of Professing*, 88.

[129] Jesús María, *Vida, virtudes y dones sobrenaturales de la venerable sierva de Dios Sor María de Jesús*, 47.

[130] "Discede á me pabulum mortis." Ibid., 47.

[131] " Que ni todo el mundo, ni todo el infierno tenía fuerzas, para apartarla de su propósito. Quedó el padre confuso, y el caballero tristemente desengañado, y con esta ultima…sentencia partieron ambos á retirarse de la asistencia de la sagrada función, á la que pasó de allí la constante novicia, y arrodillada ante el Altar, teniendo á sus pies al mundo, demonio, y carne, se ofreció en entero sacrificio al omnipotente esposo, de quien quedó abrazada con el triplicado indisoluble lazo de los tres votos solemnes, y con el cuarto de perpetua clausura. D. Pedro Gutierrez

These excerpts, a tribute to Sor María's unyielding dedication to Christ and the cloister, sum up many of the common themes discussed throughout this chapter, including sacrifice and its connection to the vows and the solidification of permanent virginity with the placement of the black veil and crown at the final profession.

Up to and including this point in the biography, Félix de Jesús María vilifies secular marriage. This episode reinforces the sense that marriage was a distraction—or possibly even the devil's work—for nuns with a true vocation. In ca. 1756, Jesús María used the same words written by Lemus in his account of the life of Sor María (ca. 1683) when he marks that she overcame the "world, devil, and flesh." This common trope indicates Sor María's full acceptance of the vows and suppression of her free will at the end of the novitiate.[132] Since these biographies were narratives that were meant to instruct cloistered nuns throughout New Spain, the newer edition reveals that the same rhetoric used some three-quarters of a century earlier was still considered authoritative, and, according to male clergy, remained effective against transgressions of free will. Beyond the novitiate, temptation was an issue that nuns would have to wrestle with for the rest of their cloistered lives. And it persisted as a concern well into the nineteenth century, just as Fr. Casado's profession sermon to Sor Genara at the *Encarnación* indicates:

> [The enemy] will disturb you with thousands of inopportune temptations, not least of which will be to convince you that for salvation it is not necessary to commit yourself to perpetual obedience, poverty and chastity; that many souls in the world know how to be humble despite their high status, poor in the midst of wealth, and chaste within the permitted pleasures; but today precisely you must

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canónigo de la iglesia catedral, y vicario de todos los monasterios de religiosas de la Angelopolitana Diócesis, le puso el virginal velo en el ya referido día, digno de ser notado con cándida piedra de aquel sagrado choro [sic] de vírgenes, en que se enriqueció su claustro con tan incomparable tesoro." Ibid., 47–48.

[132] For other examples of this trope, see Council of Trent Session 6, Chapter 13: "de pugna, quae superest cum carne, cum mundo, cum diabolo, in qua victores esse non possunt,'" or Abalard *Expositiones*, "*Tria autem sunt quae nos tentat, caro, mundus, diabolus,*" or even the *Book of Common Prayer*, "From the deceits of the world, the flesh, and the Devil, Good Lord Deliver us."

> close your ears to these flattering and seductive voices and persuade yourself that salvation in the world costs much more work than in the cloister.[133]

Sor Genara obviously descended from a wealthy family, considering that her profession sermon was printed and that the priest remarked specifically on "status" within it. However, it is chastity more than humility and poverty that is considered the difficult task here. Sor María would, again, set an example for other nuns, as she was considered (in a phrase established by Lemus), a martyr of chastity (*martir de la castidad*). He explains Sor Maria's visions of temptation in more detail:

> The traitor would form airy and fantastic bodies…and, as with St. Catherine of Siena, images of the shadows of the abyss would be revealed to her in figures of naked men, showing her lascivious and scandalous objects…but despite the flames of concupiscence that the enemy raised in her soul, she constantly resisted. [134]

By establishing Sor Maria as a role model comparable to St. Catherine of Siena, this text also helped the cause of her beatification, which the biographer certainly hoped to achieve. In particular, young nuns and novices sought her help to combat sensual thoughts, for which Sor María would prescribe a hardy pinch. She would also recommend that they avoid any and all conversations with men, which she considered very dangerous.[135] This is why strict permission from the bishop was necessary for music teachers to enter into the cloister. Women in the convent could further obtain advice on chastity by listening to the words of recreational music or poetry, which reinforced their fight against the devil's temptations. In such works, evil was often referred to or personified in the devil, the enemy, or the traitor. One particular convent

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[133] "[El enemigo] os incomodará con mil tentaciones importunes, entre las que no tendrá el último lugar la de representaros que para salvarse no es necesario entregarse á una perpetua obediencia, pobreza y castidad; que muchas almas en el mundo saben ser humildes en la elevación, pobres en medio de las riquezas, y castas entre los placeres permitidos; pero es preciso que desde hoy cerréis vuestros oídos á estas lisonjeras y seductoras voces, y que os persuadáis á que la salvación en el mundo cuesta mucho mas trabajo que en el claustro." Casado, *Sermón que en la profesión religiosa*, 28–29.

[134] "Formaba el traidor cuerpos airosos, y fantásticos…y como á Santa Catalina de Sena, se le ponían delante de la vista las sombras del abismo, en figura de hombres desnudos representándole objetos lascivos, y escandalosos…pero ella á pesar de las llamas de la concupiscencia, que procuraba el enemigo levantar en su alma, resistía constante." Lemus, *Vida, virtudes, trabajos, favores y milagros de la Ven. M. Sor María de Jesús*, 77–79.

[135] Ibid., 78.

poem used the latter term. In *Las virgenes prudentes* (CSG.304), a text that was not set to music, the recurring final verse of each of its six strophes proclaims, "May joy triumph and the traitor die."[136] Its lines are still preserved within the Sánchez Garza collection of works from the *Santísima Trinidad* convent in Puebla (see Example 2 in Appendix). Lacking a formal *estribillo*, this piece was likely meant to be recited alone rather than accompanied by music, or perhaps it was sung strophically to a familiar tune, since verse four makes a direct reference to singing.

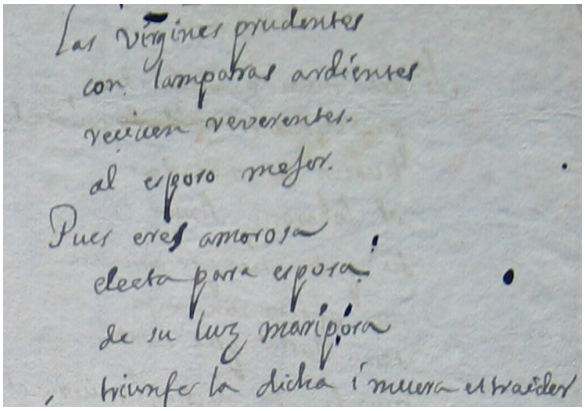
Otherwise, each strophe of the piece consists of eight rhymed verses with six to seven syllables. Each addresses some aspect of the cloistered life, either literally or allegorically, which action constitutes the triumph of joy over the traitor, as in the refrain. Thus in strophe one, we have what seems to be a direct reference to the novice ceremony and final profession ceremony where the nuns gather with lit tapers to receive the aspirant. This moment also functions as the reception of their husband Christ, in the form of the Holy Spirit, invoked by the hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus*, as discussed above:

Las virgenes prudentes	The prudent virgins
con lamparas ardientes	with flaming lanterns
reciben reverentes	receive reverently
al esposo mejor.	the best husband.
Pues eres amorosa,	Indeed you are loving,
electa para esposa	elected to be a wife
de su luz mariposa.	a butterfly of his light.
triunfe la dicha y muera el traidor.	May joy triumph and the traitor die.

This serves as the opening antiphon at the start of the solemn profession, *Prudentes Virgines aptate vestras lampades*. Unlike profession villancicos, the poem does not mention the name of a particular woman, and so it is written with the whole community in mind. It makes no distinction about who is and who is not a virgin; "prudent virgins" refers to all professed nuns at the *Santísima Trinidad* convent. Autographically speaking, the handwriting appears to have been written by the nuns themselves (see Figure 3.6).

[136] The text comes from a parable in the Gospel of St. Matthew, and it has also been the topic of early modern theater works. See, Reardon, *Holy Concord*, 88; Elissa B. Weaver, "The Wise and Foolish Virgins," 125–140.

Figure 3.6 Anonymous, *Las virgenes prudentes* (CSG.304), strophe one



The challenging novitiate period was said to train women well for the life of a black-veiled choir nun. Ideally, as the anonymous poem above suggests, nuns were supposed to live out their sacrificial lives in the convent with joy and excitement, the very same emotions felt on the day they professed: "The day 17 May 1599 was destined for the solemn profession," it was said of Sor María de Jesús, "and…the servant of the most high prepared herself fervently in the immediacy of her joy."[137]

Solemn Profession Ceremony: Preparations and Invitations

One year after the nuns requested Mariana Machuca's approval for a dowry waiver at *Purísima Concepción*, the nuns once again sent a request to the archdiocese. This time the request was to grant Mariana full profession into the convent.[138] The vicar general arrived at the convent to ask about her name, how long she had been a novice, and whether she wanted to take the four vows of her own free will; he asked if she had sought out secular marriage, whether she had sought out another convent in which to live, and whether she was healthy. Having answered these questions to the vicar general's satisfaction, Machuca's record was then

[137] "El día 17 de Mayo de 1599 fue destinado para solemnizar la profesión: y…la sierva del altísimo se disponía con fervorosas preparaciones en las inmediaciones de su gozo…" Jesús María, *Vida, virtudes y dones sobrenaturales de la venerable sierva de Dios Sor María de Jesús*, 45.
[138] AGN/Instituciones Coloniales/ Bienes Nacionales/ Caja 130/ 30431/36/Expediente 36, second bundle, folio 11r.

passed to the archbishop who approved her for the solemn profession on 11 December 1695, once the nuns had taken a final vote on Mariana's acceptance.[139]

Had Mariana been wealthy, she would have been asked to prepare a last will and testament during the month before her final profession in order to renounce any rights to family property. This is exactly what Sor Barbara Josepha was said to have completed prior to her profession at the *Santísima Trinidad* in Puebla.[140] Elsewhere, Antonio Aribol y Diez's *La religiosa instruida*, a guidebook for all female religious and novices with ties to the Franciscans, instructs that on the last days before the solemn profession, the novice must not receive any visitors, but rather, should isolate herself in meditation and prayer in preparation for her marriage to Christ.[141] Presumably, then, Sor María de Jesús was praying when her biographer said she was "preparing fervently." Sor Barbara Josepha's particular choice of preparation for her solemn profession was to perform the Ignatian exercises, as mentioned earlier. Indeed, she was excited for the profession, as reported by her biographer Torres: "Running with lucid steps in her heaven (indeed earth is heaven during a well-performed novitiate), she arrived at her desired meeting point, Barbara. The moon aligned with the divine sun of justice, on the joyous day of her religious profession."[142] According to Torres, the solemn profession was as awe-inspiring as a solar eclipse.

The same language of union and of rising and lowering as observed earlier in *Tonada sola a lo divino* can be found throughout the anonymous, fragmentary profession villancico, *Albricias sagalas* (CSG.010). This piece is in the collection from Puebla's *Santísima Trinidad*

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[139] Ibid., 11v–12v.
[140] Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 130r–130v.
[141] Antonio Aribol y Diez, *La religiosa instruida: con doctrina de la sagrada escritura y santos padres de la iglesia catholica para todas las operacionse de su vida regular, desde que recibe el hábito santo, hasta la hora de su muerte* (Madrid, Thomas Rodriguez Frias, 1734), 228. The inside of the book cover indicates that the book belonged to the refectory of the *Concepción*, perhaps indicating that it belonged to the nuns of the *Purísima Concepción* convent in Puebla.
[142] "Corriendo con lucidos pasos en su cielo (que lo es en la tierra un religioso noviciado) llegó á su conjunción deseada, porque lo era con el divino Sol de Justicia la Luna Barbara, en el día felice [sic] de su profesión religiosa." Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 128v.

convent, alongside rather pastoral lyrics.[143] The opening of its *estribillo* reads, "Make haste shepherdesses, Jesus has married, and truly for love, by giving Paula his hand, she is raised, and God comes down, being unequal they conform."[144] The piece is in the pastoral F major key. The key parallels the message of the text when the tiple arrives at the word "conform" (*conformes*) in mm. 42–44 (see Musical Example 3.3). At this point, the tiple leads in a cadence to F and the bass and tenor voices each follows in staggered fashion as the first choir dies off to allow another choir to enter. Overall, the text is projected through a three-choir polychoral setting, as indicated by the designation of eleven voice parts, (a11). The extant parts include only the tiple, and untexted tenor and bass parts of choir I. Sections of consecutive full-

Musical Example 3.3 Anonymous, *Albricias sagalas* (CSG.010), mm. 38–47



[143] George Antony Thomas translates "*zagal*" (or "*sagal*," as it is spelled in the villancico) as shepherd, claiming that pastoral language is typical of Western wedding literature in *Women and Gender in the Early Modern World: Politics and Poetics of Sor Juana Inés de La Cruz* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing, 2012), 18.

[144] "Albricias sagalas que Jesús se ha desposado y fue cierto por amor que dando a Paula la mano ella suba y baje Dios, que siendo desiguales están conformes." CSG. 009.

bar rests also point to polychorality. (A longer transcription appears in Example 3 in the Appendix; and Example 4 provides a facsimile of the tiple part.) The tenor and bass parts of the piece are untexted, save for the first two words, *Albricias sagalas*. This gives the impression that women—the nuns—performed these parts on instruments, while the texted top voice was sung.

Such large-scale works were most likely commissioned by wealthy girls' families and intended to honor their daughters and impress guests. Josefina Muriel makes an argument along these lines in discussion of two large-scale settings of *Veni Sponsa Christi* (mentioned below in the context of the profession ceremony). For its part, the music was required to accord in quality with the status of such families, who often invited high-ranking civic officials and clergy to the events.

The following printed invitation for the cathedral canon, Juan Roldán, demonstrates how families often requested an illustrious citizen's presence at a profession. This particular ceremony was to take place at the *Jesús María* convent on 1 August 1749 (see Example 5 in Appendix for the facsimile of the original):

> My very Lord: on Sunday the third of this month, at nine, with divine favor, at the Sacred Royal Convent of *Jesús María*, the solemn profession of choir and black veil, by royal nomination, will be made by Sor María Anna Josepha de Jesus, our daughter, niece, and goddaughter; and so that it will be most splendorous, we beg Your Lordship the honor of your attendance, for which we will be very grateful. May our Lord keep Your Lordship many years. Mexico, and August 1. of 1749. Your Servants kiss the hand of Your Lordship, D. Juan Joseph Urueña, D. Joseph Gonzalez Movellan de la Madriz.[145]

[145] Fanny Calderón also received a similar invitation letter to a ceremony at the *Encarnación* convent, but it states that one Doña María de la Concepción is "assuming the habit," the term used for the entrance into the novitiate, not the final profession, as indicated in this example of Roldan's invitation. This is another source that continues to convince me that she mixes up the two ceremonies. See *Life in Mexico*, 2005. Accessed 30 June 2014. http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/9364.

It is unclear whether Juan Roldán was being invited to preside over the service or whether he was simply being asked to participate in order to make the ceremony more splendorous, but certainly music would have added to the event's general sense of opulence.

Solemn Profession Ceremony II: The Ritual Books

In the Toledo motherhouse, the uncatalogued Conceptionist ritual book is musically simpler than the Novohispanic ritual which I will discuss shortly. In the Spanish rite, the hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* was sung both at the beginning and at the end of the ceremony. Between the prayers and blessings, the priest also sang *Veni Sponsa Christi* three times, to which the nuns responded by chanting the following to each respective call: "I have with me the keeper of my body, the angel of the Lord"(*Mecum enim habeo custodem corporis mei, angelum Domini.*)**;** "I am wedded to him whom the angels serve, whose beauty the sun and moon admire" **(***Ipsi sum desponsata cui angeli serviunt, cuius pulchritudinem sol et luna mirantur*); and "With his own ring has my Lord Jesus Christ espoused me, and as a bride has adorned me with a crown" (*Anulo suo subaravit me Dominus meus Jesus Christus, et tanquam sponsam decoravit me corona*). Otherwise, there is no indication of any veiling, crowning, or placing of a ring on the new nun's finger as in the Novohispanic rite.

By contrast, the ritual for Conceptionists in New Spain included many chanted antiphons—similar, in fact, to the Benedictine profession ceremony in Milan.[146] As mentioned earlier, the solemn profession would begin with the antiphon, "Prudent virgins, prepare your lamps, behold your spouse is coming, leave [the world] to follow his way"[147] (*Prudentes Virgines aptate vestras lampades, ecce sponsus venit, exite oviam ei*). The priest and ministers chanted this antiphon at the *coro bajo* grate after celebration of the daily Mass. The chanting then continued until the nuns gathered close to the *coro bajo* grate with their lit candles in order for the

[146] Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens* 134. My source is *Orden que se ha de guardar*, folios 1–40.
[147] Translated in Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, 134.

blessing of the black veil to commence. After the prayers over the veil were completed, the priest sang, "Come daughter, hear me, I will teach you to fear the Lord" (*Veni filia, audi me, timorem Domini docebo te*). He called the candidate to the grate, where she responded by singing the antiphon, "And now I follow you and, with my whole heart, I fear you and I long to see your face, Lord, do not turn me away, but do with me according to the gentleness of your mercy" (*Et nun sequor, & in toto corde timeam te, & quaeram faciem tuam videre Domine, ne confundas me, sed fac mecum juxta mansuetudinem misericordiae tuae*). At this point, the priest would ask her if she accepted the four vows, and after responding affirmatively to the vows, the novice professed in the hands of the reverend mother, at which point the singers chanted the litany of the saints. When the litany ended, more prayers followed, but the novice herself was taken to the back wall of the *coro bajo*, as the priest standing by the grate chanted, "Come, bride of Christ, receive the crown which the Lord has prepared for you for all eternity" (*Veni Sponsa Christi, accipe coronam, quam tibi Dominus praeparavit in aeternum*). He would chant this phrase three times, and the ritual book indicates that each call was to grow louder and louder in volume.

Josefina Muriel and Luis Lledías transcribed two eighteenth-century settings of *Veni Sponsa Christi*, preserved in the Mexico City Cathedral Chapter Archive. One is for ten voices and five instruments by Ignacio Jerusalem (ACCMM, AM 0597), and the other is by Matheo Tollis de la Roca (ACCMM, AM 0444).[148] The latter is set for continuo, orchestra, and triple choir, and the title indicates that it was composed for the profession of one Sor Josepha del Santísimo Sacramento, who professed in an unknown convent in 1764. Given the grand scale of these works, Muriel assumes that Sor Josepha belonged to an elite family, and she argues that

[148] Muriel, *La música en las instituciones femeninas novohispanas*, 412.

the piece, along with Jerusalem's setting, had to have been performed by the cathedral music ensemble. She nevertheless suggests that nun musicians may have played a part as well.[149]

The Mexico City cathedral's musicians did indeed participate in convent professions, according to Javier Marín.[150] Given that each *Veni Sponsa Christi* call was intended to crescendo, a large chorus and orchestra for the final iteration might have given the dramatic effect indicated in the ritual book. After the first call, the novice responded, "For I have with me the angel of the Lord to keep my body" (*Mecum enim habeo custodem corporis mei Angelum Domini*); after the second, she responded, "The kingdom of the world, and all the beauty of the age I despise for the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, who I have seen, whom I loved, in whom I believed, whom I worshipped" (*Regnum mundi, & omnem ornatum saeculi contempsi propter amorem Domini nostri Jesu Christi, quem vidi, quem amavi, in quem credidi, quem dilexi*); and after the third, she said, "I am the servant of Christ, therefore I appear to have a servile character" (*Ancilla Christi sum, ideo me ostendo servilem habere personam*). Fanny Calderón recalled a particularly dramatic moment at the *Encarnación* convent in response to the third *Veni Sponsa Christi* call:

> They made her sing a hymn alone, on her knees, her arms extended in the form of a cross, before all the immense crowd; "Ancilla Christi sum," "The Bride of Christ I am."… As might be expected, her voice faltered, and instead of singing she seemed inclined to cry out. Each note came slowly, heavily, tremblingly; and at last she nearly fell forward exhausted, when two of the sisters caught and supported her.[151]

The overall responsorial character of the ceremony would give women with a decent singing voice, and certainly those entering with music dowries, ample opportunity to demonstrate their skills. But this also led to a certain amount of nervousness, as Calderón observed. In the cases of excess nervousness, the choir could respond in place of the novice, according to the ritual book.

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[149] Ibid.
[150] Marín López, "Música y músicos entre dos mundos," vol. 2, 70–71.
[151] Calderón, *Life in Mexico*, 2005. Accessed 1 August 2014. http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/9364.

When the *Veni Sponsa Christi* dialogue was finished, the choir sang *Veni Creator Spiritus*.[152] Meanwhile, the celebrant replaced the white veil with the black veil.[153] After another blessing, the singers then stopped the *Veni Creator Spiritus*, and the newly professed nun (*professa*) sang the antiphon "He put the sign on my face, that I may receive no other lover" (*Posuit signum in faciem meam, ut nullum praeter eum amatorem admittam*). The priest then married her to Christ saying (*diciendo*), "I marry you to Jesus Christ son of the almighty Father who will keep you unharmed" (*Desponso te Jesu-Christo summi Patris Filio, qui te illaesam custodiat*). At this point, the *professa* responded by singing in confirmation, "I am espoused to him, whom the angels serve, whose beauty the sun and the moon admire" (*Ipsi sum desponsata, cui Angeli serviunt, cujus pulchritudeinem Sol & Luna mirantur*). For symbolic effect, the priest then placed a ring on her finger, followed by a crown on her head, and finally a palm frond in her hand. These actions were each followed by specific prayers, after which the *professa* sang, "The Lord has dressed me in gold and adorned me with a great pendant" (*Induit me Dominus ciclade auro texta, & immensis monilibus ornavit me*).

These antiphons enacted a kind of narration to the action performed during the ceremony. Following its narrative, then, the choir resumed the *Veni Creator Spiritus* until all its verses were completed. After the hymn, the *professa* or the choir sang the antiphon for the feast of St. Agnes, "Behold, now I see that which I have desired. Now I possess that which I have longed for. Rejoice with me and congratulate me, because along with all of these things I received a shining seat, and I am joined in heaven to that mind, whom I loved with complete devotion while on earth" (*Ecce quod concupivi jam video, quod speravi jam teneo, congaudete mecum, & congratulamini, quia cum his omnibus lucidas sedes accepi, & illi mente sum juncta in caelis, quem in terries posita tota devotione dilexi*). After yet another prayer, the *Te Deum* was performed before

[152] *Orden que se ha de guardar*, folio 10.
[153] This was presumably done through the grate, as the ceremonial book does not instruct priests to enter the *coro bajo*.

the new nun embraced all her sisters. A final prayer was then recited before the nuns retreated to the refectory singing devotional songs on the way to a small celebration.[154]

The *Te Deum*, like the *Veni Creator Spiritus*, could also be sung polyphonically. The Sánchez Garza collection has the fragments of anonymous bass parts for both hymns conveniently written on the same folio with no text underlay. These would have been performed at the *Santísima Trinidad* convent in Puebla for profession ceremonies (CSG.118; see Example 6 in Appendix).

Solemn Profession Ceremony III: Record-Keeping and Commemorations

Those nuns who professed with dowry waivers were required to have witnesses attest to their solemn profession. These accounts are also found in AGN, confirming in each instance that the profession had been observed through the *cratícula*, an opening in the *coro bajo* wall where nuns received communion.[155] For the sake of record-keeping, convents also required their newly professed nuns to sign a book. The *Jesús María* convent still holds two of its profession books, one dating from 1581 and the other from 1774. The books dedicate one page per newly professed nun, a space where each could write a brief biography, for the most part stating who she was and who her parents were, and usually restating confirmation of her vows of obedience, chastity, poverty, and enclosure.[156] When a nun died, the sisters would record the date on the same page where the deceased had written down her solemn vows. Although they do not refer to music making in the convent, these books show evidence of artistic appreciation owing to the gorgeous illuminations contained in them that depict Conceptionist devotions and devotions

[154] *Regla de la Orden de la Concepción*, folio 16.
[155] AGN/ Instituciones Coloniales/ Indiferente Virreinal/ Caja 2689/ Expediente 045.
[156] Some entries in the profession books could be personalized, as was Sor Juana's entry in one of the *San Jerónimo* convent's profession books, in which she swore allegiance to the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. See Tenorio, *Los villancicos de Sor Juana*, 93.

particular to the convent. They were intended exclusively for the eyes of fully professed nuns (see Example 7a–d in Appendix).[157]

Meanwhile, profession portraits, or crowned-nun portraits, preserved the visual impression of a bedecked nun. The name "crowned-nun portrait" refers to the long monastic tradition of placing a crown of flowers atop a nun's head during the profession ceremony.[158] Along with the veil, the ring, the palm frond, and the Christ Child, many of of these paintings include a short biographical note indicating the name of the *professa*, the convent where she professed, the date of profession, and, in some cases, a brief mention of her family background. Figure 3.7 illustrates one of the most elaborate of these portraits. Excepting the note on the

Figure 3.7 Alcíbar, *Portrait of Sor María Ana Josefa de San Ignacio*, 1793[159]



[157] The illuminations have been discussed and analyzed by María Concepción Amerlinck. See "La pintura en los libros de profesiones de las Concepcionistas novohispanas," *La Orden Concepcionista: Actas del I Congreso Internacional : León, 8 al 12 de mayo de 1989, Monasterio de la Purísima Concepción*, Vol. 2, (León: Universidad de León, 1990),165.

[158] See Jeffrey F. Hamburger and Susan Marti, *Crown and Veil: Female Monasticism from the Fifth to the Fifteenth Centuries* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 13.

[159] Reproduced from Donna Pierce, Rogelio Ruiz Gomar, and Clara Bargellini, *Painting a New World: Mexican Art and Life, 1521-1821* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2004), 266.

bottom marking the *San José de Gracia* convent as Sor María's place of profession, one can hardly tell that this image is of a Conceptionist nun behind her highly ornamented habit. Some women indeed personalized their habits, a custom that was highly criticized by Archbishop Payo Enríquez Ribera in 1673. Sor María obviously ignored this criticism, as the painting's date would suggest.[160] One might otherwise have expected a simple white habit with a blue cape on top and the black veil. The white and blue was said to mimic the dress of the Conceptionist Order's patron and namesake, the Virgin Mary, during her Immaculate Conception. These paintings also often depict the circular large pendant on the chest and the shoulder, called an *escudo*, here with a representation of the Immaculate Conception. Sometimes they included other personal devotions. The *escudo* was a particular Conceptionist tradition that developed in Spain and was later taken up by the Hieronymites.[161]

A shoulder *escudo* is more noticeable on the right shoulder of Sor Ana Josefa de la Santísima Trinidad, just above her flower-decorated palm frond (see Figure 3.8). She, the portrait notes, professed in Puebla's *Santísima Trinidad* convent in 1754. Sor Ana Josepha's portrait is unique among profession portraits in that it depicts her with a large artificial black beauty mark on her right temple. Known as a *chiceador*, this mark was associated with the portraits of elite Spanish and Novohispanic women.[162] Unfortunately, any records of human interactions between the initial commissioning of these art works to their actual painting and delivery are missing from the archival record. So whether the paintings were ultimately destined to hang in the living rooms of the depicted nuns' proud parents—a hypothesis made

[160] The archbishop's critique of elaborate habits was specifically for nuns in the *Encarnación* convent, but given that he was in charge of all Conceptionist convents, his chastisement of ornate habits would have extended to the entire order. See *Edicto del Arzobispo Fray Payo Enríquez sobre el vestido de las monjas del Convento de la Encarnacion*, ACCMM, Correspondencia 1648, 1721–1838 rollo 1384–1385 Libro 38 Caja: 0 Exp: 0 U: 9.3.
[161] Córdova, *The Art of Professing*, 60.
[162] Ibid., 44–45.

Figure 3.8 Anonymous, *Sor Ana Josefa de la Santísima Trinidad*[163]



by Rogelio Ruiz Gomar—is likewise unknown.[164] What is clear, however, is that these portraits functioned as outward demonstrations of family prestige. They commemorated a milestone that was significant not just for the nun but also for her family.[165]

Less familiar are musical analogues to such paintings: profession villancicos. Villancicos served a purpose similar to these portraits—but only more elusively, because they were performed just once. It is highly doubtful that families took the scores home with them after the profession ceremony either. Marín has uncovered a lengthy list dating from 1589 of some

[163] Reproduced with permission from the Archivo Fotográfico Manuel Toussaint, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas, UNAM.
[164] Córdova, *The Art of Professing*, 190
[165] Córdova notes that the development of the portraits flourished especially in the later half of the eighteenth century as a way for conservative citizens to demonstrate an adherence to the family and social values epitomized by life in the convents that Enlightenment tenants were beginning to challenge. See Ibid.,134–135.

thirty-eight profession villancicos in an inventory from the Mexico City cathedral music chapel. This number and the date attest to the subgenre's long existence and use in New Spain.[166] Why exactly these villancicos were preserved in the cathedral is unclear, but, in any case, their preservation provides further clear evidence that cathedral musicians participated in convent profession ceremonies, and that their music was considered the property of the cathedral chapel.

A transaction or agreement likely took place in order for villancicos to be left in the convent. One such example was Juan de Baeza's *Chansoneta a 4 a la profesión de Theresica la chiquita* (CSG.134), composed in 1667. The ten *coplas* for this villancico are flanked with a first and last *copla* about a girl named Theresa and the *Santísima Trinidad* convent, where she professed (see Table 3.1). *Copla* number one sets the scene: "Barely has our Teresa seen her fifteenth year when she has given her body to the cloister with her entire soul." In *Chansoneta*, Theresa begins her novitiate as young as possible in order to profess as soon as she reaches the age of sixteen. (A sign of maturity, the music boasts). In particular, *Copla* nine sets this villancico apart, in that it alludes to her family's status as elite citizens through its specific suggestion that Theresa's family was financially capable of providing their daughter with a convent dowry. Later, the ultimate *copla* states, "To achieve her promises she vows to observe all four [vows] carefully in the Trinitarian heaven." Since the majority of the *coplas* make mention of the four vows, *copla* ten is left to specify where Theresa professed: the cloister of the *Santísima Trinidad*, a Trinitarian heaven.

[166] Javier Marín López and Tess Knighton, "The Musical Inventory of Mexico Cathedral, 1589: A Lost Document Rediscovered," *Early Music* 36, no. 4 (November 1, 2008), 575–96.

Table 3.1 Juan de Baeza, *Chansoneta a 4 a la profesión de Theresica la chiquita* (CSG.134), 1667

Estribillo Cuerdamente te acoxes [sic] hoy a lo sagrado. Para tener, Theresa, dulce descanso.	Wisely you accept, today, the sacred, so that you may have, Theresa, sweet repose.
Coplas 1. Apenas nuestra Teresa divisó sus quince años cuando con toda su alma dio con su cuerpo en el claustro.	Barely has our Teresa seen her 15th year when she has given her body to the cloister with her entire soul.
2. Velo quiere y velo negro para acertar con el blanco ques tiro que no se yerra el que su dicha ha hallado	She wants a veil, a black one, to assure with the white one that it is a shot that does not fail him who her joy has found.
3. Disque ha dado en hacer votos pues con lindo desenfado delante de Dios y el mundo los hecha de cuatro en cuatro	Supposedly she has made her vows with lovely ease before God and the world; she takes them four by four.
4. Un hábito pobre viste ques riquísimo brocade porque desta suerte quepan honra y provecho en un saco.	She wears a poor habit of richest cloth because it keeps honor and privilege in sackcloth.
5. Castidad es una dama de aliño tan aseado que una mancha no consiente en su vida ni en su trato.	Chastity is a woman of such clean ornament that not a single stain is found in her life or her character.
6. Es la obediencia su hermana, que cuando más a lo bajo se humillan sus prontitudes suben mejor a lo alto.	Obedience is her sister so that her readiness is at its peak when it humbles itself to the lowest.
7. La pobreza voluntaria dejando pompas y faustos lo tiene todo sin susto sin pensión ni sobresalto.	Voluntary poverty, leaving behind pomp and splendor, provides all that is needed without fear, shelter, or distress.
8. Libre la clausura vuela a el apasible descanso sin que le estorben enredos ni le impidan embarazos.	Enclosure, free, flies to the peaceful rest, complications do not encumber it, obstacles do not stand in its way.
9. Hoy pues cuando se desposa Dios con Teresa le ha dado a questas arras en dote que las tiene de su mano.	Today, then, when God marries Teresa, she has given him the wedding tokens demanded as a dowry, which she has in her hand.
10. Y para lograr su dicha hace voto a todos cuatro de observarlos cuidadosa en el cielo trinitario.	To achieve her promises she vows to observe all four carefully in the Trinitarian heaven.

The *coplas*, in duple meter, are set syllabically in a homophonic texture so that they can be heard as clearly as possible and serve their didactic purpose (see Musical Example 3.4). As a standard compositional feature of villancicos, the *estribillo* varies from the *coplas* in terms of meter. It is set to triple meter and introduces Theresa from the start, remarking, "Sanely you accept, today, the sacred, so that you may have, Theresa, sweet repose." This *estribillo* combines both imitative polyphony and homophonic texture. The second verse, for example, where Theresa's name is mentioned, begins with tiple 1, which is then imitated by the alto in m. 21 and tiple 2, at m. 23; the name Theresa is here emphasized and drawn out in whole notes (see Musical Example 3.5).

While this *estribillo* may have only been performed once, the piece itself seems to have had a second life. The text of another *estribillo*, glued above the original *estribillo*, and easily detachable, reads, "With smooth voices and sweet song, the Seraphim intone, three times, holy holy holy" (*Con suavidad de voces y dulce canto, Serafines entonan tres veces santo, tres veces santo*) (see Example 8 in Appendix). With a generic text reciting the Trisagion,

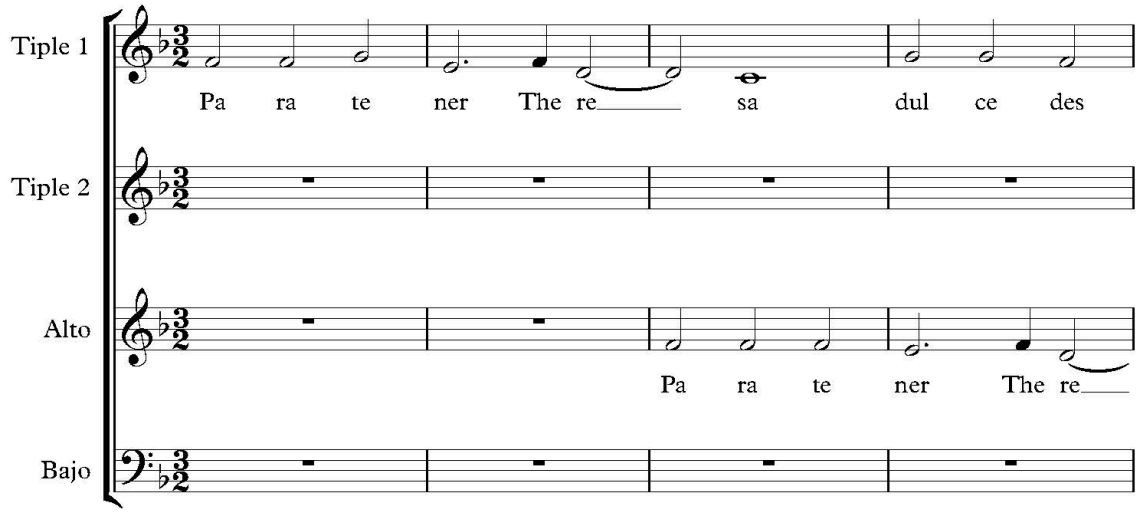
Musical Example 3.4 Juan de Baeza, *Chansoneta a4 a la profesión de Theresica la chiquita, coplas* 1 and 10



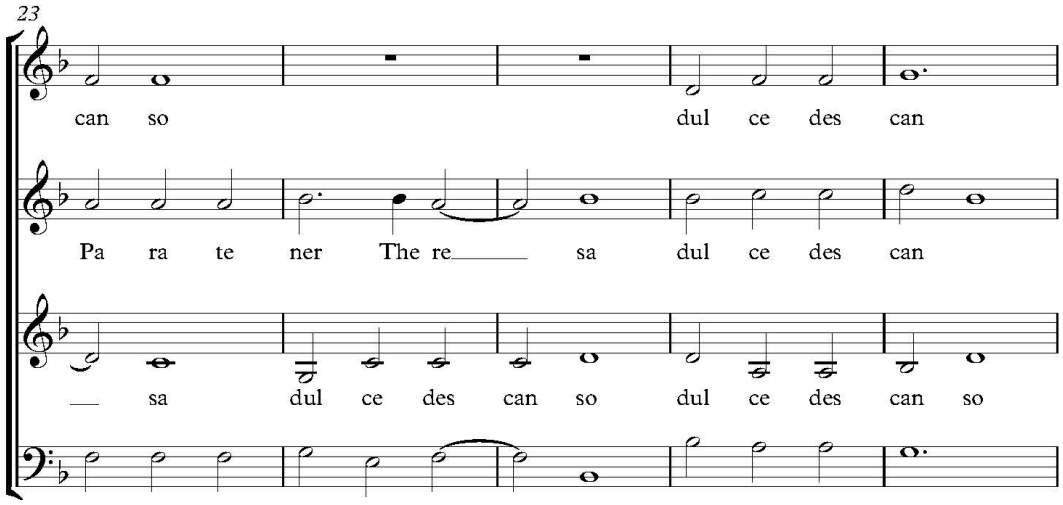
Musical Example 3.4, continued



Musical Example 3.5 Juan de Baeza, *Chansoneta a4 a la profesión de Theresica*, mm. 19–27



Musical Example 3.5, continued



this *estribillo* could stand alone as a short devotional work for the convent patron, the Holy Trinity.[167] But by removing *coplas* one and nine, the ones which mention Theresa's name and dowry, the nuns could simply perform the same work replaced with a new *estribillo* for any professing sister. Theresa's name, however, would always remain in the title and in *coplas* one and nine of this original version, a reminder to future convent singers of her family's wealth.

George Thomas notes that lower-class women in some Iberian convents also arranged villancicos to be performed for their profession ceremonies.[168] In a special instance, he discusses a villancico written by the famous Portuguese writer and nun, Sor Violante do Céu. Her piece was intended for two nuns whom she took up as goddaughters, who professed on the very same day. He contends that double professions such as these were unusual and that no elite woman would want to share her profession day—and villancico—with another.[169]

[167] This important detail regarding the two *estribillos* is not explained in the Muriel/Lledías edition, where only the new *estribillo* is transcribed and the older *estribillo* with Theresa's name is ignored. See *La música en las instituciones femeninas*, 369–474.
[168] Thomas, *Women and Gender in the Early Modern World*, 24–25.
[169] Ibid., 26. It was, of course, circumstantial that Sor Barbara Josefa professed together with her daughter at the *Santísima Trinidad*. It would have been impractical for them to have separate professions despite their elite status.

Certainly most women seemed to have wanted their names included in the polyphonic musical splendor that commemorated convent professions.[170] The music and the ceremony drew into the convent church the rich and the poor alike—although reportedly the poorest were sometimes drawn into it by force. Cristóbal Ramírez's list of expenses for his sister's profession is once again illustrative here, since it shows that he purchased a dress of eight pesos for a little girl of Black decent (*mulatilla*) named Antonia.[171] Antonia was likely a family servant, and it is possible, although unclear, that she accompanied his sister in order to be given to the convent as a servant, which was common practice.

This issue regarding servants brings us back to María de San Juan, the *Jesús María* servant whom we met at the very start of this chapter. Her story about her desire to profess, and the answer that the nun gave her regarding her dream has broader implications relating to early modern Novohispanic society and its relationship to heaven. Heaven was indeed a common metaphor assigned to any matter of place where good deeds were performed in this society, including the convent *coro* or the entire cloister. These metaphors and the nun's reaction to María de San Juan's dream in fact speak to a society obsessed with the afterlife. Archbishop Vizarrón y Eguiarreta's dowry rules confirm a similar reading. And finally, the servant's story further alludes to a society that believed heaven was specifically different for different people.[172]

In the case of the convent, heaven was where nuns were reunited with Christ when they died.[173] As *copla* four of *Tonada sola a lo divino* says, "In order to unite herself with the sweet husband, she despises the world, and by calling him loving, she repeats with sweet echoes; oh

[170] In Viennese convents, for example, the profession services of lower class women still mimicked the profession ceremonies of women from elite families. See Page, *Convent Music and Politics in Eighteenth-Century Vienna*, 30–31.
[171] Bazarte Martínez, *El Convento Jerónimo de San Lorenzo*, 55–59.
[172] In mid-eighteenth-century New Spain, it was not uncommon for people to believe that heaven was only for religious and for Spaniards. See Carrera, *Imagining Identity in New Spain*, 25–26.
[173] Thomas, *Women and Gender in the Early Modern World*, 12.

sweet master, oh love that in you the soul searches for its center" (see Example 3.1 in Appendix). The nuns, however, did not have to wait to go to heaven in order to consummate this marriage, metaphorically speaking. This occurred, as I will note, on the day that they professed.

Consummating the Marriage with the Lamb of God

"And who is the groom?" asks Fr. Ossorio rhetorically to Sor Josepha María in his profession sermon; "A lamb," he answers himself.[174] Indeed, the very sacrificial creature whom nuns were supposed to symbolically mimic when entering the stringent convent life was also considered their groom. To support this notion further, Sor Barbara Josepha de San Francisco "considered that in these spiritual nuptials, the souls celebrate with Christ…the consummation of their chaste, pure marriage, joining in solemn sacrifice of their vows, the immaculate lamb…."[175] Immediately following her profession ceremony at the *Santísima Trinidad*, Sor Barbara experienced a vision:

> I saw myself inside the tabernacle beside my Lord, standing as if I had just professed, with a very white habit; the cape appeared to be of a fine blue cloth, adorned with gold and silver stitch work in the shape of stars; I could see the veil on my head was elaborated with diamonds and emeralds; the stole was garnished similarly; and the crown and palm [were made] of gold….In my right hand I had a beautiful Baby Jesus richly dressed wearing the ring on his finger that I placed….I observed this with much attention, and my Lord made me understand [in such a way] that it appeared I heard [this come out of] his Blessed mouth; 'You are my wife and in this way that I have you pictured with me, you must remain all your life.'[176]

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[174] "Y quién es el desposado? Un cordero." Ossorio, *Exaltación del divino esposo*, 8.

[175] "Consideraba, que en estas espirituales bodas celebran las almas con Cristo…la consumación de su casto purísimo matrimonio, uniéndose en sacrificio solemne por sus votos, con el inmaculado cordero…." Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 128.

[176] Me vi en el Sagrario al lado de mi Señor, parada, como cuando acabe de profesar, con habito muy blanco; el manto me parecía de una tela azul muy rico, salteado de labores, que parecían estrellas de oro, y plata; el velo de la cabeza. lo veía todo labrado de diamantes y esmeraldas; la estola guarnecida de lo mismo; y la corona, y palma de oro…. En la mano derecha tenía un niño Jesús muy hermoso ricamente vestido, y con el anillo, que yo le puse en el dedo…. Miraba yo todo esto con atención, y me dio a entender mi Señor, que parece lo oía de su Santísima boca: 'Tu eres mi Esposa y así, como te tengo aquí conmigo retratada has de estar en tu vida.'" Ibid., 132–133.

According to Torres, Sor Barbara then began to pray to the Virgin Mary, and, as she felt her soul fainting in the presence of her Lord, she also experienced deep unworthiness, indeed humility, and the pressure not to disappoint her Lord.[177]

Sor Barbara's vision after professing might have inspired the posthumous painting of her profession portrait seen in Figure 3.9. This portrait is also unique in that it depicts Sor

Figure 3.9 Anonymous, *Sor Bárbara Josefa de San Francisco*[178]



[177] Ibid., 133.
[178] Reproduced from the website of the Museo de Historia Mexicana: http://www.3museos.com/themes/coleccion/mv_19.html. Accessed 20 August 2014.

Barbara's patron, St. Joseph, Jesus's step-father, inserted into the top right corner of the painting. Most portraits simply depict the professing nun, as in each of the examples offered above, but here St. Joseph himself mirrors the nun holding the Christ Child. According to Rogelio Ruiz Gomar, this child-holding action symbolizes the idea that a nun's "only role as 'mother' would be to [Jesus]."[179] But these portraits, indeed, are at odds with the notion that a profession celebrated the marriage between a nun and Christ. "The portrayal of an infant groom," notes Córdova, "seems to have been intended to de-eroticize the conjugal union of Christ and bride, imbuing it with an innocent, nonsexual character."[180] Nevertheless, many other articles of profession continued to eroticize the relationship. In this way, the ideals of both motherhood and wifeliness seemed to be simultaneous, though paradoxical, within the early modern convent.[181]

In fact, Ossorio and Barbara's rhetoric referring to marriage with the Lamb of God present both in the Eucharist and in the tabernacle, makes very clear the intimacy with which nuns might approach their relationship with Christ, and in particular their communion on profession day. Caroline Walker Bynum and Miri Rubin have already discussed the erotic tones in the writing of late-medieval religious women with respect to the Eucharist, but their studies were never tied to profession, except on one occasion described by Bynum, in which the host stood for a nun's wedding ring.[182]

Profession villancicos, however, could be even more explicit. The *copla* to *Albricias sagalas*, for instance, a profession villancico for Paula at the *Santísima Trinidad*, directly describes a nuns' relationship to the Eucharist on the day of solemn profession: "Jesus the

[179] Pierce, *Painting a New World*, 267.
[180] Córdova, *The Art of Professing*, 78.
[181] For precedents of this phenomenon, see Caroline Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1984), 186–191.
[182] Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*, 131 and 178; Miri Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 168–169.

sacrament is now Paula's husband; the honeymoon will last if she places the groom in her heart."[183] This plainly erotic, marital language surrounding the Eucharist and profession indicates that nuns could practice a very specific and personal devotion to Christ in this context which was not to be experienced or repeated by any other kind of person or in any other context. This notion, along with Eucharistic-devotion music discussed in the following chapter, will demonstrate that consuming the Host, the body of Christ, also symbolized radically different notions to different groups and individuals around the convent and beyond.

Profession villancicos were strictly not devotional. They were not used to invoke a saint's intercession or to praise God or the Virgin Mary in and out of the liturgies, as the villancicos in the chapters that follows. Profession villancicos did, however, honor women who could pray for intercession on behalf of their patrons, relatives, and others outside the convent. They also made allusions to devotion, but with a different subject in mind. That each woman's name was set to polyphony, similar to the musical texture for devotional pieces, was no small gesture either. Profession villancicos for male clergy, for instance, have not come to light.[184]

The profession process for nuns provided an exclusive opportunity for this particular, gendered art—an opportunity which was occasionally turned into a devotional piece of worship, as demonstrated with the Baeza villancico for Theresa. On the other hand, as we have also seen, such music also served as a means of inclusion for poor women who might enhance the convent liturgies with their instrumental and vocal skills. The next chapter begins, then, with the devotional and liturgical, located back inside the convent church tabernacle where the Eucharist was reserved.

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[183] Esposo de Paula ya, Jesús en el sacramento, durara el pan de la voda si mete al nobio en el pecho." *Albricias sagalas* (CSG.010). Honeymoon is indeed how an early modern Spanish-English dictionary of idioms explains "*pan de la boda*." See Pineda, *Nuevo Diccionario*. This type of language on the intimate relationship between nuns and the Eucharist was not unique to the New World. See Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, 170–171.

[184] Córdova has documented a few portraits of friars with crowns of flowers atop their heads. See Córdova, *The Art of Professing*, 204.

Chapter 4. Eucharistic Devotion and Music

Lulling Christ to Sleep: The Blessed Sacrament, Nuns, Souls, and Voices

In the early eighteenth century, the nuns of the *Jesús María* convent in Mexico City sponsored the publication of a devotional book for women religious. The text was intended to help nuns achieve perfection. In some sections, the book was organized as a dialogue between a hypothetical nun and her trusted confessor. For instance, in the chapter on Eucharistic devotion, the nun asks, "how shall we be…true devotees of the Blessed Sacrament?" Her confessor responds:

> On all occasions and times, visiting him frequently between day and night, performing all your devotions in His presence, going to the *coro* with joy because you will be in His presence. And remaining in it whenever times possible, as it is natural for the lover to enjoy this attendance, visiting, and talking to the beloved; and even if you do not talk to Him, or even if you do not feel Him...your being in the same room next to the bed where your lover is sleeping, is equally consoling to the lover. This is how you should contemplate your dearest one, as if He were sleeping in the floral bed of the tabernacle, covered with white linen from His earthly manifestations, etc. and keeping watch over His sleep from the *coro*; and if you sing, you will do it with the same care as one who sings to her lover, who comes to listen, or is hearing [her] in the church, etc.[1]

The confessor's answer presents the image of a nun in the *coro* serenading her spouse to sleep in the tabernacle—His metaphorical bed. Christ, the spouse of all professed nuns, is represented as a white communion host, and His earthly manifestations, the

[1] "Y como seremos muy devotas, y verdaderas devotas del Santísimo Sacramento?...En toda ocasión, y tiempo, visitándole muchas veces entre día, y noche, haciendo todas sus devociones en su presencia, acudiendo al coro con gusto por estar en su presencia. Y estándose en el todos los ratos, que pudieres, pues es tan natural al amante, gustar de asistir, visitar, y hablar con su amado; y aun que no le hable, ni aun lo sienta…estar el amante en la misma pieza junto al lecho donde su amado está durmiendo, le es de especial Consuelo al mismo amado. Así ha de contemplar á su querido, como durmiendo en el florido lecho del Sagrario, cubierto con los blancos lienzos de sus accidentes, etc. y que le va á guardar el sueño al coro; y si cantares, lo haréis en la misma consideración, como quien canta á su amado, que lo viene á escuchar, o le está oyendo en la Iglesia, etc." Antonio Nuñez, *Distribución de las obras ordinarias, y extraordinarias del día, para hacerlas perfectamente, conforme al estado de las señoras religiosas. Instruidas con doce máximas substanciales, para la vida regular, y espiritual, que deben seguir. Sale a luz a solicitud, y expensas de las señoras religiosas del Convento Real de Jesús María, quienes la dedican a Cristo Señor Nro. Sacramentado*, (México: Viuda de Miguel de Ribera Calderón, 1712), 70–71.

unleavened bread, are here His metaphorical bed linens. In every Catholic church, the Blessed Sacrament, the consecrated host believed to be Christ's body, is reserved within a gold box called the tabernacle, located on the high altar for safe keeping when not exposed for adoration. Hence the tabernacle is a private space where Christ's body rests, and is therefore his bedroom.

Unusually, this passage does not refer directly to a nun's soul. However, there is a long, alternative tradition in which the feminized soul of any individual joined the Eucharistic Christ, as expressed in another Eucharistic devotional book, Diego de Jesús's *Nombres de Christo Sacramentado* (*Names of the Sacramental Christ*).[2] Quoting the Song of Songs 2:14 ("My dove in the clefts of the rock, in the hollow places of the wall, show me your face, let your voice sound in my ears: for your voice is sweet, and your face comely"), de Jesús writes, "Consider that you hear the voice of the spouse of souls, Christ Jesus, and speaking to your [soul], he says: 'get up, my friend, my wife, do not hold back, come because I desire to see your face, to hear your voice, because it is sweet to my ears, and your face is very pleasing to my eyes.'"[3] Whereas Nuñez lays out his text in a didactic question-answer format, de Jesús's Eucharistic devotional book is calendric, allowing readers, female or male, to meditate on the allegory of the Eucharistic Christ daily throughout a four-week cycle. And from here comes its title, *Names of Christ* (although perhaps *Allegories of Christ* would work as well).[4] Both Nuñez and de Jesús's devotional texts seem to suggest that devotees can relate romantically to

[2] This interplay between the feminine soul and Christ is derived from the Song of Songs. See Kendrick, 170–171.

[3] "Considera, que oyes la voz del esposo de las almas, Cristo Jesús, y el que hablando con la tuya, le dice: Levántate, amiga mía: esposa mía, no te detengas: ven, que deseo ver tu rostro: oiga yo tu voz, porque es dulce a mis oídos, y tu cara muy agradable a mis ojos." Diego de Jesús, *Nombre de Cristo Sacramentado, dispuesto en veinte y ocho consideraciones*, (México: Imprenta de los Herederos del Lic. D. Joseph Jauregui, 1784), 113. This text from the Song of Songs was the source for musical settings by Ercole Porta and Giovanni Paolo Cima. The latter considered the text especially suitable for convent singers. See Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, 90.

[4] It is similar to a Book of Hours. See Rubin, *Corpus Christi: The Eucharist in Late Medieval Culture*, 297.

the Blessed Sacrament. De Jesús' particular passage above of comes from Wednesday of week two in the cycle, in which the Sacrament was to be contemplated as if Christ's body were that of a loving husband. Meanwhile, the absence of the soul in Nuñez's text—again, written specifically for nuns—presents the relationship as more routine in nature. It appears more physical than metaphysical, more closely related to the body-centric writing of late-medieval female mystics as analyzed by Caroline Walker Bynum.[5]

Nevertheless, the use of the word "soul" was not completely absent from nuns' Eucharistic devotional texts. For example, a nun's soul might well be symbolized as the tomb in which the body of Christ was to be interred.[6] And there are other unusual textual metaphors for Christ's body as well—such as the one contained in this anonymous villancico for the Blessed Sacrament *Divina nave que al puerto* a 4 (Divine Ship Which Sails Toward the Port) (CSG.037), from the *Santísima Trinidad* convent in Puebla. The fourth *copla* in particular, characterized the Blessed Sacrament as a sailing vessel and the soul as its seaport of arrival:

Entrad a donde mi vida	Enter into where my life,
tan fatigada, hoy espera.	so fatigued, awaits today.
Pues cuando te ausentas muero,	Because when you are absent, I die,
y vivo cuando te acercas.	and I live when you come near.
Si con tu fuerza divina de el amor,	If with your divine power of love
el rigor sosiegas,	you soothe the harshness,
he de tener en mi pecho	I will have in my soul
por nave, puerto y estrella.	a port and compass for my ship.

Allegories of the Sacrament as a nun's spouse thus were not uncommon when they concerned a nuns' physical reception of communion, known as sacramental communion. This rhetorical device was especially typical of private devotional

[5] Women were more prone to writing about feeling hunger for God. Bynun elucidates this difference between male and female mystics when comparing how they described their souls' yearning for God. See Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*, 152.
[6] Nuñez, *Distribución de las obras ordinarias*, 65.

literature, including nuns' biographies, such as Sor María de Jesús' and Sor Barbara's.[7] In the convent, there were actually two forms of receiving communion: the aforementioned sacramental reception, and spiritual communion, during which no physical consumption of the body of Christ took place. In the convent, both forms were often associated with a nun's vow of obedience.

Despite its rhetoric, Nuñez's text is less often steeped in the explicit eroticism reflected in the profession villancico discussed in the previous chapter. Instead, the text assumes a different, more spiritual mode in which nuns might relate to Christ through the Eucharist, or the second of the two forms of communion—the sacramental and the spiritual. Although it was not strictly a piece for Eucharistic devotion the anonymous profession villancico, *Albricias sagalas*, (dedicated to a young woman named Paula at the *Santísima Trinidad* convent), was composed for Paula's marriage to Christ in the Eucharist. Each time Paula takes communion, the text states, she will relive her honeymoon with Christ (see Chapter 3).

Villancicos intended for year-round praise of the Blessed Sacrament, including the annual Feast of Corpus Christi, allowed nuns to share their music of Eucharistic praise with an urban public.[8] At the *Santísima Trinidad* in Puebla, the laity even requested their favorite villancicos from the convent singers on Corpus Christi, and the convent singers were reprimanded for complying with their requests (see Chapter 2).[9] Extant Eucharistic devotional music also underscores another feature shared by the Nuñez's and de Jesús' passages. Both authors allude to the fact that sound would please Christ. They cite the second chapter from the Song of Songs in particular, with de Jesús

[7] On sacramental communion see Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 63.
[8] It was common to venerate and sing villancicos to the Blessed Sacrament after the Office of Sext, known in Spanish-speaking parts as *siesta*. See Álvaro Torrente, "Function and liturgical context of the villancico in Salamanca Cathedral," *Devotional Music in the Iberian World*, 112.
[9] Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 193.

stating explicitly that, in addition to the sight of the soul's face, Christ Himself desired to hear the sound of the soul's voice. Meanwhile, Nuñez encourages soulful song throughout his text. Singing and listening to villancicos, then, seem to be considered viable options for giving thanks to God pre- and post-sacramental communion. In fact, performances of the villancicos would be a form of spiritual communion.

This chapter examines the music associated with Conceptionsts' Eucharist devotion, highlighting archival sources about the Feast of Corpus Christi. Special care was taken to make sure that this feast was celebrated with utmost solemnity, according to devotional literature intended to prepare nuns for the feast. Some Conceptionist cloisters were even granted special favors during Corpus Christi. At *Purísima Concepción* convent in Mexico City, for example, tradition held that the cathedral chapel would come to sing during its Corpus Christi liturgy, because it was the oldest convent in New Spain.[10] I will focus on the texts of various villancicos, placing them in dialogue with other sacred texts in order to elucidate the different metaphors attributed to the Eucharist. I will also show that literature and villancicos about the Blessed Sacrament often alluded to devotion for the Passion of Christ and to the Trinity, a practice that is not surprising given that this was the titular feast of the *Santísima Trinidad* convent where the villancicos originated.

Music in the form of villancicos was said to elevate and sustain Sor Barbara's devotion to the Eucharist on Corpus Christi in Puebla's *Santísima Trinidad* where she resided. The villancico *Pajarito que en el aire elevado* (Little Bird Raised in the Air) (CSG.151), a duo in honor of the Blessed Sacrament by Diego de Cáseda (d. 1694), for instance, reminded listeners and musicians to remain in the right state of mind, focused

[10] ACCMM, MUSICAT Registro 6000519, Libro 04, folio 262v.

on God, when taking in the music (a notion first discussed in Chapter 2). This villancico falls into a sub-category of metamusical villancicos, because the poetry speaks about music.[11] The *estribillo* to *Pajarito* reads:

En el aire pajarito,	O, little bird,
en el aire elevado,	raised in the sky,
con dulces motetes,	celebrate your love
festeja tu amor,	with sweet motets,
al cantar con gran primor,	as you sing with great skill,
a este Dios sacramentado.	to this sacramental God.
Llega a comerle,	Come and eat of it,
no temas a este divino bocado.	do not fear this divine morsel.
No te engañe el corazón.	Let not your heart deceive you.
Come contrito y llorando,	Eat with remorse and weeping,
en el aire pajarito elevado.	O little bird raised in the sky.[12]

This *estribillo* presents the convent singer as a caged bird,[13] singing "sweet motets" while being called to eat of the body of Christ with "remorse" and penitence. It thus encourages sacramental communion and song.

Meanwhile, the villancico's second *copla* offers the admonition that singers should not enjoy an advantageous position when praising the Eucharistic Lord:

No cantes porque te importa	Do not sing because you care
para rendirle a tu amor.	to perform for your love.
Mas la firmeza en el pecho,	Firmness [of faith] in the heart
que la mudanza en la voz.	is greater than the flux of the voice.

The text in *copla* three is similarly instructive and cautionary:

Si el dolor de amante times,	If you would feign a lover's pain
no cantes sonora.	do not sing sonorously.
Mira que la destemplanza	Realize that dissonance
hace armonía al dolor.	harmonizes with pain.

[11] Cashner coined the term metamusical villancico in "Faith, Hearing, and the Power of Music in Hispanic Villancicos, 1600–1700."

[12] See Example 9 in Appendix for text and translation of the whole piece.

[13] Craig Monson also compares nuns in their choir lofts to birds in a cage. See "The Perilous, Enchanting Allure of Convent Singing," *Structures and Subjectivities: Attending to Early Modern Women*, edited by Joan E. Hartman and Adele Seeff (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Press, 2007), 123.

These *coplas* convey the message to both singers and listeners that their music was strictly to be sung for God's praises, and not to please anyone else. Repetitions of the *estribillo*, and especially the phrase, "Eat with remorse," could reinforce this contrition, so essential for receiving communion properly.

The Sacrament: Obedience, Meanings, and Vigils

The frontispiece to one of Sor María de Jesús's biographies depicts cherubim observing the venerable sister from Puebla's *Purísima Concepción* convent just as a consecrated host flies out of a ciborium towards her mouth (See Figure 4.1). This piece

Figure 4.1 Sor María de Jesús Pictured in the Frontispiece of her Biography[14]



[14] Reproduced from Jesús María, *Vida, virtudes y dones sobrenaturales de la venerable sierva de Dios Sor María de Jesús*, front cover.

captures a moment of exemplary devotion to the Eucharist and Sor María's own dedication to her vow of obedience. On one occasion, the convent abbess prohibited Sor María de Jesús from receiving communion during Mass to test her obedience. As a result, Sor María envisions the consecrated host traveling directly up into her mouth while she prays in the *coro*:

> …And she realized that an object flew from the cup, which the priest had in his hands, and the very Sacramental God came toward Sor María de Jesús's mouth, [thus] her husband entering through her lips, then more sweet, once again transmittable, since he came to introduce [himself] into her heart with soft touches, disguised as the communion host. In this form, with a love that shone wonderfully, and a presence that declared itself a miracle, the celestial husband gave his virgin wife on that occasion the delight of the honeymoon, the tokens of eternal life, and communion of his Sacramental body, without impeding the reverend mother's inhibition, the major joy of all hidden glory, and all that is good in the simplicity of one form, communicated to this gentle dove, who tasted the purest seed of the most glorious laurel in the candid circle of the Sacrament.[15]

This extraordinary passage resonates with the erotic undercurrents of nuns' relationship with Christ. Here, Sor María takes on the same image of a bird as in the *estribillo* of *Pajarito*, but in this case she is a dove, feeding on the sacrament in the form of laurel seed. And not only does Pardo elevate Sor María using a soaring image (which recurs, incidentally, on her Ascension Day, as discussed in Chapter 2), but the choice of the dove also brings to mind the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary.[16]

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[15] "Y apercibieron sus anhelos, que voló una forma del vaso que tenia el sacerdote en sus manos, y se le vino a la Madre María de Jesús el mismo Dios Sacramentado a la boca, entrándosele por los labios su Esposo, entonces mas dulce, por mas nuevamente comunicable, pues vino a introducirse en su pecho con accidentes de Sacramento, y vuelos de enternecido. De esta fuerte con un amor que despuntaba en prodigio, y una asistencia, que se declaraba en milagro, le dio a su Virgen Esposa, el Esposo celestial en acuesta ocasión el regalo del pan de la boda, las arras de la eternidad de la vida, y la comunión de su cuerpo Sacramentado, sin estorbarle la inhibición de la Prelada, el gusto mayor de toda la gloria escondida, y todo el bien en los candores de una forma, comunicado a esta apacible paloma, que así gustaba el grano mas puro del laurel mas glorioso, en el circulo cándido del Sacramento." In Pardo, *Vida y virtudes heroicas de la Madre María de Jesús*, 132v–133r.

[16] The representation of the Holy Spirit as a dove is common, but so too was its white-colored feathers comparable to the Virgin Mary's purity. Some villancicos dedicated to the Virgin Mary in the Sánchez Garza collection, for example, have *coplas* in which the Virgin is allegorized as a dove. See *Nace la aurora*

The flying host in Sor María's biography parallels a supernatural occurrence from the life of the mystic Dominican St. Catherine of Siena. The consecrated host was said to have flown miraculously to St. Catherine when her paralytic ecstasies prohibited her from attending communion.[17] Yet, this is a somewhat unusual comparison—if only because of the contentious history between the Dominicans and the Conceptionists' allies, the Franciscans. Nevertheless, Catherine seems a central role model for Eucharistic miracles, regardless of order. In fact, Miri Rubin has addressed the similarities between Catherine's Eucharistic miracle and those of several other late-medieval holy women, some of whose hagiographers were Catherine's contemporaries.[18]

It has been the subject of visual art as well. The Eucharistic miracle appears in Domenico Beccafumi's early masterpiece *The Miraculous Communion of St. Catherine of Siena*, ca.1513. Figure 4.2 illustrates St. Catherine receiving the host from an angel, and although there is no evidence to confirm that Beccafumi's works were known in New Spain, it resembles the frontispiece of Félix de Jesús María's edition of Sor María's biography, which Rossi published in Rome in 1756. The similar themes between the images suggest that the likely Italian artist of the frontispiece could have been familiar with Beccafumi's work. In both cases, the divine communion of these holy women

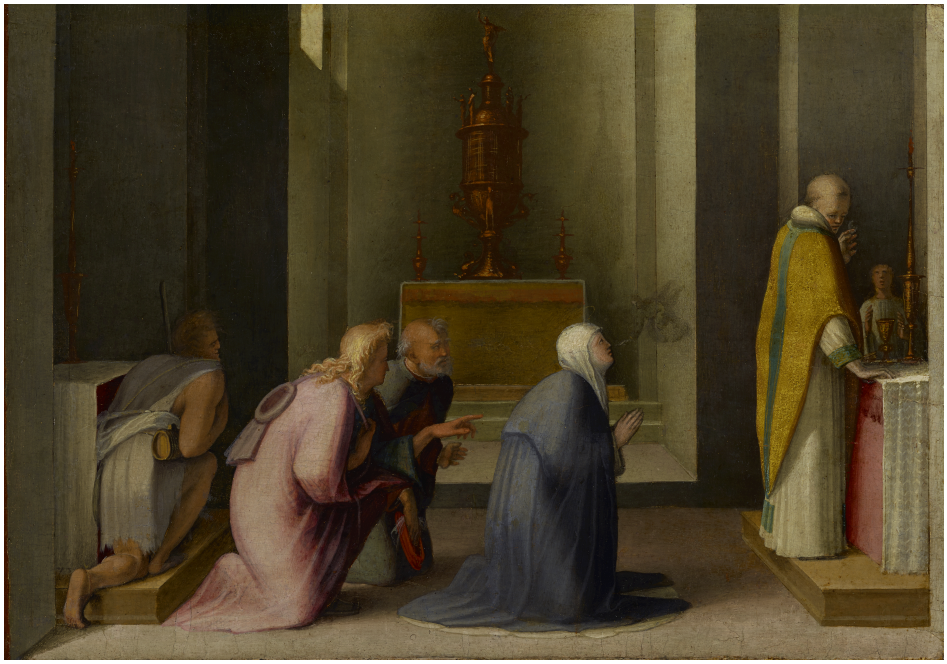
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divina (ca. 1727), by Juan Corchado (CSG.157); *O, paloma remontada*, by Francesco Corradini (ca. 1690–1769) (CSG.161). Citing M. el Abate Martigny, María Leticia Garduño Pérez notes that in the early years of the Church, the Blessed Sacrament could also be reserved inside a Eucharistic dove, a dove-shaped container made of precious metals that hung in church sanctuaries. See Garduño Pérez, "Un viril hecho un sol: del simbolismo en la platería sacra," *Lo sagrado y lo profano en la festividad de Corpus Christi*, edited by Montserrat Galí Boadella and Morelos Torres Aguilar (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, Instituto de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades "Alfonso Vélex Pliego," 2008), 111. Furthermore, according to Abate Martigny, the dove was considered a symbol for Christ. In *Diccionario de antigüedades Cristianas*, (Madrid: Impresores de la Real Casa, 1894), 618–619.

[17] Debby, *The Cult of St. Clare of Assisi in Early Modern Italy*, 107.

[18] Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 120.

Figure 4.2 Domenico Beccafumi, *The Miraculous Communion of St. Catherine of Siena*, 1486–1551[19]



gestures to female agency by presenting the nuns as individuals who could receive the host without a priest, even though the images do not capture the eroticism in Pardo's artful rhetoric.[20]

The erotic tone of Sor María's consumption of the host in Pardo's biography parallels that of the profession villancico discussed at the end of Chapter 3. Indeed, it includes the same usage of the term honeymoon (*pan de la boda*).[21] Furthermore, the physicality with which Pardo describes Sor María's communion blurs the line between sacramental and spiritual communion. The essence of spiritual communion is that it was supposed to yield the same satisfaction as sacramental communion for nuns who were free from sin. And yet the instructions in the biography concern not only devotion to

[19] Reproduced with permission from the J. Paul Getty Museum.
[20] Ibid., 120–121.
[21] Pedro Pineda, *Nuevo diccionario, español e ingles e ingles y español: que contiene la etimología, de la propia, y metafórica significación de las palabras, términos de artes y ciencias* (por F. Gyles, 1740).

the Eucharist, but also provide a lesson on obedience overall. Therefore, despite not taking communion, Sor María is reported to have received the same satisfactory sensations as a reward for obeying the reverend mother. Indeed, it seems nuns often would receive communion directly from Christ when they were restricted by a superior's orders.[22] And because Sor María agreed to abstain from communion—one of her favorite spiritual acts—she was ultimately portrayed, and rewarded, as a model of obedience.[23]

In this way, communion was inseparable from a nun's vow of obedience, the vow that regulated her daily convent life and that kept her focused on fulfilling her three other vows. Living out her vows properly would earn the nun a place in heaven, but obedience throughout her earthly life would also earn her sacramental communion, which was the highlight of any day in a nun's life.[24] Nuns took communion when they were told to do so, and abstained when the convent abbess or their confessor advised them to abstain from it.[25] A good relationship with the confessor was therefore key. As Monson observed, dissatisfaction with a convent confessor could lead nuns to use confession and communion as a form of disobedience: the Camaldolese in Bologna, for example, boycotted confession and communion for several months because they were assigned a secular confessor rather than one from their own order.[26] Conceptionist

[22] Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*, 118.
[23] Jesús María, *Vida, virtudes y dones sobrenaturales de la venerable sierva de Dios Sor María de Jesús*, 137.
[24] On the importance of frequent communion for Italian nuns, see Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, 428. Also see Reardon, *Holy Concord within Sacred Walls*, 171.
[25] Nuñez, *Distribución de las obras ordinarias*, 57.
[26] Monson, *Divas in the Convent*, 156. The issue of having the right confessor was a wide concern for nuns across the early modern Catholic world. See, Jodi Bilinkoff, "Soul Mates: Spiritual Friendship and Life-Writing in Early Modern Spain (and Beyond)," *Female Monasticism in Early Modern Europe*, 144.

convents, however, allowed the nuns to choose their own confessors, which prevented the problems experienced in Bologna.[27]

In particular, Sor Barbara's biographers portrayed her as very trusting of her confessors. Even before taking vows at the *Santísima Trinidad* convent, she was said only to receive communion as many times a week as her confessor advised.[28] In her role of a fully professed choir nun, Sor Barbara was reported to take communion on a daily basis, making sure to prepare herself by going to confession regularly and examining her conscience four times daily, weeping for forgiveness over any imperfection.[29] According to her biographer, Torres, these copious tears were pleasing to Christ, who received them at the gates of his celestial palace as if they were daisies for adornment.[30]

Shedding tears before communion made Sor Barbara into a Christian model par excellence, because, as *copla* 4 of Cáseda's *Pajarito* instructs, "Impressive is the heart that is mute from weeping, the eloquence of love" (see Example 9 in Appendix). Sor Barbara's eloquence thus earned her satisfying communions, which Torres characterized as an intimate feast. Furthermore, he describes her thoughts immediately prior to and after receiving communion in matrimonial prose:

> She was of the opinion that she was like a wife ready for the spiritual nuptials that she would celebrate with the supreme majesty; and finally she found herself as if wedded in the glorious possession, and immanent reciprocation, with which she enjoyed Christ, her soul completely transformed, and the Lord completely united and transformed inside His wife.[31]

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[27] Sebastiana Villanueva Cervantes Espinosa de los Monteros, *En religiosos incendios* (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1995), 54–55.
[28] Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 292–293.
[29] Ibid., 294–295.
[30] "Regalaba después con copiosas lagrimas de sus ojos; porque estas son tan agradables a Jesucristo, que las pone, como preciosas margaritas en las puertas de su celestial Palacio." Ibid., 295.
[31] "Juzgábase como esposa preparada ya para las espirituales nupcias, que avía de celebrar con la Majestad Suprema; y finalmente se hallaba ya, como desposada en la posesión gloriosa, y reciproca inmanencia, con que se gozaba en Cristo transformada toda su alma, y el Señor todo unido, y transformado en su esposa." In Ibid., 296.

Here Sor Barbara's reception of communion becomes both the wedding and the honeymoon. Her body and the body of Christ become one flesh, as in Genesis 2:24 and in several quotations of this passage in other parts of the Bible.

Sor Barbara experienced other visions and emotions during communion raptures, which were just as physical. For instance, when she took communion, she saw herself as an infant drinking milk from Christ's breast.[32] Her satiation was accompanied by a sense of sweetness in her mouth.[33] Similarly, Bynum explained that late-medieval women described the body of Christ as sweet like honey.[34] None of these earlier women, however, saw themselves as nursing babies, but rather as adults nursing from a mother-like Christ when they received communion.[35] Many of these portrayals, including St. Catherine's, linked the living mother Christ who provided milk from His breast with a grotesque, but equally nourishing and salvific image of a dead crucified Christ, from whose pierced side they drew blood.[36] This conflation of blood and milk is an understandable one, due to the presumed proximity of the lance piercing with Jesus's breast. It also elucidates the Eucharist's association with the Passion.[37]

The comingling of these two bodily fluids recalls the roles linking Sor Barbara and Christ with the nuns portrayed in the profession portraits holding the Christ Child (see Chapter 3). The portraits represented the nuns as new mothers to Christ, promising to nourish Him with prayers and devotion. Meanwhile, Christ the mother

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[32] Ibid., 296. Bynum reported that holy men also wrote about nursing at Christ's breasts, but that their writing typically lacked the physicality of female visionaries, as it was more common for men's souls to do the nursing. Some women also envisioned themselves nursing the Christ child. These visions were all associated with passages about breasts and food found in the Song of Songs. See Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*, 270.

[33] Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*,296.

[34] Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*, 114–116.

[35] The image of mother Christ developed with the second-century writings of Clement of Alexandria. See Ibid., 94 and 116.

[36] Ibid., 122, 142, 166, and 173–178. "Medieval natural philosophers thought that breast milk was blood." Ibid, 179.

[37] Ibid., Plate 25.

nourished the baby Sor Barbara with what many men and women religious considered to be real sustenance. And so the two roles of both nourisher and nourished seem to coexist within convent spirituality.

In instances when Sor Barbara was ill and could not attend daily Mass or receive sacramental communion in person, she was said to attend Mass spiritually, envisioning all the prayers and rituals taking place at the high altar.[38] But rather than the host coming to her, as with Sor María and St. Catherine, Sor Barbara heard the Lord calling her from the tabernacle and inviting her to receive communion in spirit.[39] "If all the sick…" says Sor Barbara, "raised their wings of the spirit with vehement desire to fly to their Sacramental spouse, I guarantee that as a prize for their devotion, they would be healed…."[40] Similarly, on Sunday of week two in *Nombres de Christo Sacramentado*, de Jesús assigns the title of divine physician to the host, whose contemplation heals of all physical and spiritual illness.[41]

Pide el alma el sacramento a 4 (The Soul Asks for the Sacrament) (CSG.097) takes the Eucharist's healing power one step further. This anonymous villancico suggests that it is in fact a lifesaving medication (see Table 4.1). The piece takes its title from the *coplas*, and maintains an atmosphere of urgency throughout: the death of a soul is imminent. It suffers from love for the Eucharist, which can only be assuaged through sacramental communion.[42] Naturally, the active ingredient in the communion remedy is the Body of Christ which it conceals. Yet *copla* 4 emphasizes that the soul would

[38] Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 234.
[39] Ibid.
[40] "Si todas las enfermas…levantaran con vehementes deseos las alas del espíritu para bolar a su esposo Sacramentado; yo les aseguro, que en premio de su devoción; os consiguieran la sanidad…." Ibid. 234–235.
[41] Jesús, *Nombres de Cristo sacramentado*, 74.
[42] Some convent communion motets in Italy also displayed urgency. See Monson, *Divas in the Convent*, 78. For more on communion motets in Italian convents see Reardon, *Holy Concord within Sacred Walls*, 191; Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, 369.

nonetheless die eventually without actually ever seeing Christ in the bread. The soul must therefore rely on faith to trust that Christ's body was truly present in the Eucharist.

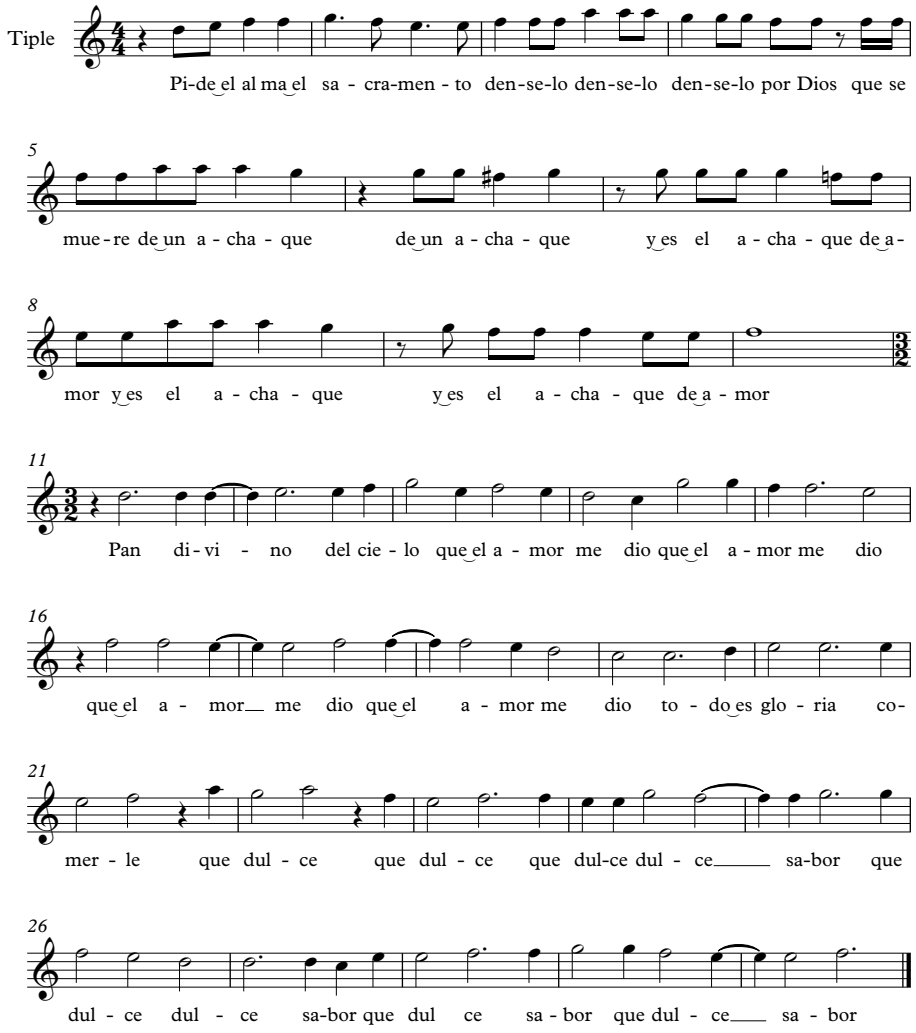
Table 4.1 Anonymous, *Pide el alma el sacramento a 4* (CSG.097)

Coplas	
1. Pide el alma el sacramento, dénselo, dénselo, dénselo, por dios, que se muere de un achaque, y es el achaque de amor.	The soul asks for the sacrament, give it, for God's sake, for the soul will die from guilt, and that guilt is the guilt of love.
2. Tiene su vida en la hostia, dénsela, dénsela, por que es rigor que se muera sin remedio, a prisa cuerpo de Dios.	Its life is in the host, give it, because it is cruel that the soul should die without remedy, make haste Body of God.
3. No te nieguen la comida, déjenle, déjenle, ver el sabor, que es milagro de los cielos, que coma a quien le crio.	May they not deprive you of food, let the soul taste its flavor, which is a miracle from the heavens, may it eat the one who has created it.
4. En el pan esta el remedio, muérase, muérase, viendo que no llegue, quien le da la vida, en el remedio mejor.	The bread holds the remedy, may the soul die eventually without actually seeing what had been in that perfect remedy, [which once saved its life].
Estribillo	
Pan divino del cielo, que el amor me dio, todo es gloria, comerle, comerle, que dulce sabor.	Divine bread from heaven, that love gave me, everything is glory, eat of it, eat of it, what sweet flavor.

In contrast to the *coplas*, the *estribillo* seems calmer, as its text alludes to relief provided by the Eucharist. It emphasizes the sweet taste of the divine remedy, which helps the souls to remain faithful. Why else would the remedy be sweet, the text seems to say, if it were not for the real presence of Christ within it? Musical Example 4.1, a

transcription of the tiple part, reveals slower, longer notes for the soothing text of the *estribillo*, which begins at m. 11 with the change from duple to triple meter. By contrast, the music for the *coplas*, on the first three systems of the example, reflects the urgency of the text with its faster note values. The mention of and demand for communion in the

Musical Example 4.1 Anonymous, *Pide el alma el sacramento* a 4 (CSG.097), first *copla* and *estribillo*



first *copla* suggest that the piece would have been appropriate during the elevation, enticing those present in the church with words about the healing power of sacramental communion.[43]

Otherwise, spiritual communion for the nuns who lacked a chance to repent their sins with their confessor took the form of personal prayer and penance underscored with a spirit of longing for redemption and for the Body of Christ.[44] As observed in Cáseda's *Pajarito*, villancicos could also encourage penitence. Another one of Cáseda's *coplas*, the fifth in *Pajarito*, reads, "But if you want to sing in such a sweet form today, adapt your voice well to the notes. Because God is in the notes" (see Example 9 in the Appendix). Singing the wrong notes thus seems equivalent to sin, and so repentance was an attempt at singing the correct notes—the state of being in tune being like the realm of God. One might imagine that this text would lend itself to musical word painting, such as dissonances to represent sin, and consonance, repentance. However, the *coplas* are strophic, making it difficult for the music to fit each verse perfectly.[45] Perhaps the melisma on the word "notes" (*puntos*) in mm. 10–12 in Musical Example 4.2 is an attempt at a madrigalism with its gloss through a few major and minor second intervals at mm. 10 and 12. But the melisma sounds like a more effective representation of the first *copla's* "chirps" (*gorgeos*)—the sounds of a penitent bird.

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[43] Regarding the villancico's place within the Mass, see Knighton and Torrente, *Devotional Music in the Iberian World*, 57, 100, 138–140, and 156.
[44] Nuñez, *Distribución de las obras ordinarias*, 62.
[45] The music seems flexible enough for improvisation at least in the baseline to provide variation for each strophe. The scant documentation on villancico performance practice precludes us from knowing whether some type of improvised strophic variation of the vocal line took place at the moment of performance, as was the case with other seventeenth-century vernacular songs. See Margaret Murata, "Image and eloquence: secular song," *The Cambridge History of Seventeenth-Century Music*, edited by Tim Carter and John Butt (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 398–410.

Musical Example 4.2 Diego de Cáseda, *Pajarito que en el aire elevado a duo* (CSG.151), *copla* 5, mm. 9–12



Penitence also lies at the center of Nuñez's warning against missing communion too frequently. Failure to repent through confession or the inability to gain access to confession would preclude a nun from receiving communion, which could be dangerous for a nun's soul.[46] Prelates feared that consistent abstention from confession and communion could even result in demonic possession. This would be comparable to the spiritual death described in the second *copla* of *Pan divino del cielo* (refer to Table 4.1 above). In the event that confession was not available to them, nuns were instructed to perform their own private confession, to receive communion, and to confess in person with a priest as soon as possible.[47] Thus Nuñez also highlights the saving power of the Eucharist, as evidenced in another villancico, the anonymous *Cuando el pan que al mundo salva* (When the Bread that Saves the World) (CSG.026). From this piece, only a wordless tenor part still survives. However, the text of the title suggests, as does the complete text of *Pan divino*, that listening to some villancicos could be a form of spiritual communion because of their emphasis on the Eucharist's redemptive nature.

Reception of communion and adoration of the Blessed Sacrament was not only a penitential act. These Eucharistic devotions also marked the order's important feast days. The Conceptionist rule required that all nuns to receive communion on particular celebrations throughout the year, unless otherwise prevented by illness. The feast days

[46] Ibid., 63.
[47] Ibid.

included the Annunciation, Holy Thursday, Easter, Ascension, Pentecost, Corpus Christi, the Feast of St. John the Baptist, Mary's Assumption, Birth, Conception, and Purification, All Souls' Day, Christmas, and Epiphany.[48] In the evenings prior to these feasts, the nuns were required to pray over the Blessed Sacrament exposed on the high altar of the church from within the *coro*.[49] The question remains as to whether or not these adoration sessions included the singing of villancicos.

We know from Álvaro Torrente's work that elsewhere in the Spanish speaking world, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament certainly involved singing villancicos.[50] And the text of the anonymous *Amar adorando* (To Love While Adoring) (CSG.012) suggests the possible context of a late-night devotional service at the *Santísima Trinidad*. This piece is labeled as an eighteenth-century *romance*, likely accompanied by continuo much like *Pajarito*, but only a single sheet of music survives to us—a solo soprano aria. Below certain words in the manuscript, some alternative texts have been added in order to expand the work into three verses:

1. Amar adorando,	Loving while adoring,
que luces dará	what lights shall he give
que pueda alcanzar,	that I can reach,
y cuando a la vista	and when the Lord
reserve el cristal,	catches a glimpse of your sight,
fuerza será.	he will be your strength.
Segar y adorar.	Close your eyes and adore.
2. Amar adorando,	Loving while adoring,
que luces dará	what lights shall he give
que pueda alcanzar,	that I can reach,
y cuando a la vista	and when the Lord
reserve el cristal,	catches a glimpse of your sight,
gracias será.	he will be your grace.
Amar y esperar.	Love and wait.
3. Amar adorando,	Loving while adoring,

[48] *Regla de la Orden de la Concepción*, folio 21r–21v.
[49] *Regla de la Orden de la Concepción*, 21v.
[50] Torrente, "Function and liturgical context of the villancico in Salamanca Cathedral," 112.

que luces dará	what lights shall he give
que pueda alcanzar,	that I can reach,
y cuando a la vista	and when your sight,
le sobra piedad,	abounds in piety,
fuerza será.	he will be your strength.
Gemir y llorar.	Sigh and weep.

These verses refer specifically to the coming of light, suggesting that the nuns' adoration of the Eucharist might last until dawn.[51] Throughout public adorations of communion wafers, the consecrated host was held inside a viewing glass (a *cristal*), which was considered symbolic of the host itself, just as the villancico suggests. Thus when the host—Christ—caught a glimpse of the sleepless nuns keeping vigil, he was said to fill the nuns with strength and grace. Therefore, the third verse underscores the pious spirit to which all Eucharistic adoration should adhere. To complete the vigils, a hymn such as the anonymous *Dichoso yo, feliz* (Blessed am I, Happy) (CSG.034), composed as a recitative and aria for solo soprano voice and accompaniment, might have been appropriate. This appears to be a type of thanksgiving song in gratitude for the strength to finish the vigil process:

Recitative	
Dichoso yo, feliz,	Blessed am I, happy,
si he llegado a gozar	if I have arrived at joy
ya de vos tantos favores.	now in your many favors.
Ya cesó mi desvelo	Now has my slumber and
y mi cuidado,	my watch ceased,
si en luces los ardores	if ⌜my⌝ zeal converted your
convirtió tu presencia.	presence into light.
O sol flamante,	Oh flaming sun,
de mi esperanza atlante:	Atlas of my hope:
feliz pues mil veces	a thousand times happy
yo me llamé, y todo el orbe	I called myself, and the whole world
triunfos te proclame.	proclaims triumphs to you.
Aria	
Dichoso yo que ufano favor,	Blessed am I that happy favor,

[51] Though the Conceptionist rule does not specify a timeline for the night vigils, it alludes to the vigils continuing all night, since nuns could take turns adoring and sleeping in the *coro*. See *Regla de la Orden de la Concepción*, 21v.

tan soberano consigo de tu cielo,	I obtain from your heaven above,
logrando en tal consuelo,	obtaining in such consolation,
remedio de mi mal.	remedy from my illness.
Pues sea menor desvelo,	Then may it be the least of my slumbers,
si siempre vigilante,	if always vigilant,
si siempre con anhelo,	if always with desire,
adoro fiel constante,	I adore constantly with faith,
objeto sin igual.	⁅that⁆ object without equal.

The piece praises the sunrise which marks the formal end of a long vigil for the Blessed Sacrament. Though the word Blessed Sacrament appears nowhere in the text, there is no doubt that "the object without equal," mentioned at the end of the aria, was the Eucharist—since it was so often referred to as the "remedy" for illness, a symbol already discussed at length above. Indeed, these texts appear as if they were meant to encourage the nuns and raise their spirits, perhaps to attest that their exhausting adoration was not in vain.

It is also possible that convents might have added their local feast days to the list of celebrations requiring communion and vigils. At first glance, it seems unusual that Trinity Sunday, for example, would not have merited an official call to vigil in the rule. This feast, which honored the patron of the *Santísima Trinidad* in Puebla, initiated the week leading to Corpus Christi on the following Thursday. Might two vigils in one week have been too much for convents to handle while preparing for the busy Octave of Corpus Christi? Probably not, as illustrated by the vigils for Holy Thursday and Easter during Holy Week. Whatever the case may be for not including the Trinity as an official feast to keep vigil over the Blessed Sacrament, the section that follows will pay homage to the Trinity. As some villancicos highlight, the Eucharist was also believed to embody the Trinity in itself—with the Father and the Holy Spirit in addition to the body of Christ the Son.

The Eucharist and the Trinity

As a testament to the relationship between the Eucharistic and Trinitarian devotions, and in order to illustrate that Sor Barbara was a role model during the Divine Office, Torres claims that, "Sor Barbara focused her soul toward the tabernacle, before the Holy Trinity, which she believed and adored in the sacrosanct host."[52] Because Sor Barbara believed in the Trinity's presence within the Eucharist, she was said to receive a vision in which the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit were each revealed to her within the exposed Blessed Sacrament on one Corpus Christi day.[53] And, in yet another comparison to a holy woman outside the Conceptionist order, Torres describes Sor Barbara's vision of the Trinity very similarly to an experience of the Dominican Beata Agueda de la Cruz (b. 1549) of Madrid.[54]

Since the Eucharist was the Body of Christ, and Christ was part of the Trinity, texts for villancicos about the Trinity appear to be just as amorous as some of the devotional texts for the Blessed Sacrament. This is clearly the case in *De amores deshecho* (Torn by Love) (CSG.028), set for solo soprano with continuo. The *estribillo* reads:

De amores deshecho, me abraza su ardor,	Torn by love, I cling to his zeal,
que dando mi pecho herido a su arpón,	in giving my wounded bosom to his
y así pues recibe en el corazón,	lance, and thus the heart receives
la gracia, la vida, la gloria mayor.	grace, life, and greatest glory.

While this *estribillo* consists of a general Christic text, the *coplas*, such as the first *copla*, speak more directly about the Trinity:

O misterio incomprensible,	Oh incomprehensible mystery,
que el inmenso ser de Dios,	that the immense being of God,

[52] "Postrada toda su alma en el sagrario, ante la Trinidad Santísima, que creía, y adoraba en la sacrosanta hostia…." Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 202.
[53] Ibid., 320.
[54] Ibid. Agueda de la Cruz's vision of the Trinity in the Eucharist was also cited as a source of authority in a Jesuit book of Catholic doctrine. See Juan Martínez de la Parra, *Luz de verdades católicas, y explicación de la doctrina cristiana, que siguiendo la costumbre de la Casa Profesa de la Compañía de Jesús de México*, (Barcelona: Lucas de Bezáres, 1755), 399–400.

en tres personas finitas	in three finite persons,
su escénica manifestó.	his essence manifested.

The anonymous villancico *Romance a 4, Trinidad de Dios, señores, a la Santísima Trinidad y al Santísimo Sacramento* (Trinity of God, the Lords, for the Blessed Trinity and the Blessed Sacrament) (CSG.114) demonstrates that it was not unusual for both devotions to be performed simultaneously, just as Sor Barbara practiced them:

Trinidad de Dios, señores,	Trinity of God, lords,
que el cielo abajo se viene,	that heaven comes down,
y en ves de blando rocío,	and instead of a soft sprinkling,
doradas espigas llueve.	golden wheat pours down.
A la tierra debe	To the earth, heaven owes
tal cosecha el cielo.	such a harvest.
Pues trigo coge	Indeed, wheat is reaped
cuando siembra nieve.	when snow is sown.

The phrase "Trinity of God" serves here as thankful exclamation for the miracle of an abundant rain of wheat—the crop necessary for the production of the communion wafers which the priest transubstantiates into the Body of Christ during Mass.[55] The phenomenon of harvesting wheat when snow is sown mirrors the mystery of Christ's presence in the Eucharist, hidden by white bread as white snow covering a wheat field.

The nuns at the *Santísima Trinidad* in Puebla were also in the habit of physically covering over the texts of preexisting villancicos with Trinity texts. This practice appears in the *estribillo* of the Baeza's profession villancico *Chansoneta a4 a la profesión de Theresica la chiquita* (see Chapter 3), as well as in the Blessed Sacrament villancico *En una nube de nieve* by José de Cáseda (1660–1725), son of Diego (see Chapter 2). The latter is a more typical example of such pasting in the sense that there seem to be many more examples of music for the Blessed Sacrament accompanying new texts for the

[55] Tenorio notes that villancicos for the Nativity could also make use of the metaphor of sprouting wheat as a symbol for Christ's birth, in *Los villancicos de Sor Juana*, 29.

Trinity. *Divina nave que al puerto a4*, discussed above, is one such piece whose *coplas* are covered over by another text about the Trinity. However, its *estribillo* was left as is and likely not sung together with the Trinity text, since it referred to sails on a boat—the direct symbol for the Blessed Sacrament. Like *De amores deshecho*, the new Trinity text in *Divina nave* makes use of a hunting metaphor, and it also uses the word "essence" to speak of the three-in-one nature of the Trinity, as in the second *copla*:

Tres aves de lindo vuelo	Three birds of beautiful flight
son en una sola esencia,	are of a single essence,
con superior providencia,	with superior wisdom,
las que anidan en el cielo.	those that nest in heaven.
Errar el tiro récelo,	Miss the suspicious shot,
si es una y también son tres,	if it is one bird and three as well,
porque a la verdad,	because truth
no es tanto blanco para mi.	is not an easy shot for me.

Yet another example of a Trinity text set over one of Cáseda's villancicos for the Blessed Sacrament was Diego's *Ay cómo pica la flor* (Oh How the Flower Stings) (CSG.147). The strip of paper containing the new text was glued so tightly over the original text that the archivists would not allow the newer text to be pulled off to reveal the older one. Yet the fifth *copla* for the newer Trinity text reveals similarities with texts for the Blessed Sacrament. It reads:

Es un enigma escondido	It is an enigma hidden
en luces, en sombras no,	within light, not in shadows,
que sombras ninguna llega,	since no darkness can come
a esfera tan superior.	toward such a superior sphere.

Belief in the Trinity and in the presence of Christ's body in the communion host were both incomprehensible mysteries of faith in Christ, and both were cited heavily in devotional texts.[56] Thus, the rhetoric about three persons hidden in one Trinitarian

[56] Davies used the term "baroque" to describe Novohispanic Corpus Christi texts that highlighted the mysteriousness of the Blessed Sacrament. See "El sacramento galante: ¿'maravilla rara' o 'galán amante'?," *Lo sagrado y lo profano en la festividad de Corpus Christi*. Edited by Montserrat Galí Boadella and Morelos

essence paired well with texts about Christ's body hidden in the Eucharist. An example of the latter appears in Cáseda's *Hola, posta del cielo* (Hello, Message from Heaven) (CSG.149), in which the short *coplas* describe a feast at the table. The second *copla* recalls the pilgrims at Emmaus (Luke 24) and considers their bread using three different words with roughly the same meaning or connotations—disguised, hidden, or occult:

Disfrazado en la mesa se disimula,	Disguised at the table he hides,
porque es de majestades estar ocultas.	because it is majestic to be occult.

Another example of this type of language in Eucharistic villancicos is found in the first *copla* of *Que enigma tan bello* (What a Beautiful Enigma) (CSG.249), by the early eighteenth-century Puebla composer Miguel de Riva Pastor:

Entre cándidos celajes,	Within white clouds,
todo un Dios está escondido,	an entire God is hidden,
que es todo pan a los ojos,	that is all bread to the eyes,
y es todo Dios a los oídos.	and is all God to the ears.

Through this *copla*, Riva's villancico also reinforces the theological belief that true faith can only be practiced through the sense of hearing rather than by seeing.[57]

Though there are a number of villancicos dedicated solely to the Trinity and solely to the Eucharist, the examples provided so far demonstrate that at the *Santísima Trinidad* convent in Puebla the devotions would be joined via music. This was not exclusive to Puebla, however. In Mexico City Cathedral, an eighteenth-century antiphonal for the Feast of Corpus Christi contains an illuminated miniature of the Trinity with Jesus holding a monstrance.[58] Arturo Luna Rosas and Silvia Salgado Ruelas have suggested that this little work of art demonstrates a joining of the two

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Torres Aguilar (México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Benemérita Universidad Autónoma de Puebla, Instituto de Ciencias Sociales y Humanidades "Alfonso Vélex Pliego," 2008), 153–155.

[57] Cashner, "Faith, Hearing, and the Power of Music in Hispanic Villancicos, 1600–1700," 70–79.

[58] Arturo Luna Rosas and Silvia Salgado Ruelas, "Cantorales de la iglesia catedral de México con la festividad del Corpus Christi. Descripción codicológica, bibliográfica e iconográfica," 196–197.

devotions in what I would consider a paramusical manner.[59] It was thus understood that the Eucharist contained all three forms—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—and not just the Son's body.

The Feast of Corpus Christi

Every church attempted to commemorate the entire Octave of the Feast of the Body of Christ, Corpus Christi, with the best resources available for their liturgies. This intention comes through notably in a 1610 account from the cathedral chapter in Mexico City. The canon Francisco de Paz urged that Miguel Bal, an organ tuner and Franciscan friar from the province of Michoacán, prioritize repairing and tuning the big organ over the small one, "mostly because it can serve in the many feasts coming up soon, especially Corpus [Christi] and its Octave…."[60] The grandeur of the feast would not be contained, however, within the walls of these churches. Large processions of clergy, civic leaders, confraternities, other lay religious groups, and indigenous, black, and mixed race people who often served as entertainers, took to the city streets to accompany the Blessed Sacrament as a form of public veneration. The spectacle often included setting off fireworks and the carrying of large puppets, a blend of secular amusement with sacred devotion. From circa 1616 to 1790, the processions also included a large wooden dragon of Provençal origin called a *tarasca*, which represented sin, and thus Christ's victory over it.[61] Many scholars have described the Corpus Christi procession as a walking display of Novohispanic society.[62]

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[59] Luna Rosas and Salgado Ruelas, "Cantorales de la iglesia catedral," 196–197.
[60] "Ante todas cosas porque pueda servir en las muchas fiestas que de próximo se esperan y, particularmente, en la del Corpus [Christi] y su octavario…." MEX 6000334, "Determinación unánime para que un religioso franciscano, experto en la materia, repare los órganos," ACCMM, Libro 5, Folios 188r–188v.
[61] Frances Ramos, *Identity, Ritual, and Power*, 88; Linda A. Curcio-Nagy, "Giants and Gypsies: *Corpus Christi* in Colonial Mexico City," *Rituals of Rule, Rituals of Resistance: Public Celebrations and Popular Culture in Mexico*, edited by William H. Beezley, Cheryl English Martin, William E. French (Wilmington, DE: Scholarly Resources, 1994), 3; Serge Gruzinski, "El Corpus Christi de México en tiempos de la Nueva

The history of Corpus Christi within Mexico City has been traced extensively by Linda Curcio-Nagy and others.[63] Two processions commemorated the feast in the Novohispanic capital, one on the Thursday solemnity and one on the Octave.[64] Procession routes varied from year to year, but one notable stop during the 1683 procession was at the *Santa Clara* convent, where the nuns were said to have dropped confetti over the crowds from the roof of their church as the procession halted for prayer and adoration at this Franciscan house.[65] Prelates in fact gave license for the nuns to look out toward the streets from their windows and over their convent roofs in order to watch these and other sacred civic affairs—license which Sor Barbara never

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España," *Celebrando el Cuerpo de Dios*, edited by Molinié, Antoinette (Lima: Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú, Fondo Editorial, 1999), 6. On the origins of the *tarasca* see J. E. Varey and N. D. Shergold, "La tarasca de Madrid," *Clavileño* IV no. 20 (1953), 18–26. The tradition of carrying a dragon in Corpus Christi processions within Spanish-speaking Catholic realms bears a resemblance to fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Catholic traditions in Northern Europe. In various northern cities the procession of a dragon was used to convey the same message of Christ's conquest of sin during the Easter season, particularly on Ascension Day. See Anne Walters Robertson, "The Savior, the Woman, and the Head of the Dragon in the *Caput* Masses and Motet," *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 59, no. 3 (Fall 2006), 575–580.

[62] The phrase "mirror image" of society has often been used often to describe the Novohispanic Corpus Christi procession. See Linda A. Curcio-Nagy, "Giants and Gypsies: *Corpus Christi* in Colonial Mexico City," 156–160. According to Alfredo Nava Sánchez, the Corpus Christi celebration was one of the few occasions for all of New Spain's racial and ethnic groups to come together for collaborative devotion. See "La Fiesta de Corpus Christi. Entre el Poder y la Reblión," 89. Frances L. Ramos sees it as an exaggerated representation of society in *Identity, Ritual, and Power in Colonial Puebla*, 93. The phrase "mirror image" became more problematic when describing Corpus Christi processions in the later quarter of the eighteenth century owing to the cultural and spiritual reforms taking place in New Spain, according to Drew Davies. See "El sacramento galante: ¿'maravilla rara' o 'galán amante'?," 150. On the diversity of Corpus Christi procession participants in early modern Cuzco see Carolyn Dean, *Inka Bodies and the Body of Christ: Corpus Christi in Colonial Cuzco, Peru*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999), 63–64; Geoffrey Baker, *Imposing Harmony: Music and Society in Colonial Cuzco*, (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2008), 36–39. For a perspective from Lima, Peru see Knighton, "Music and Ritual in Urban Spaces: The Case of Lima, c. 1600," 41–42.

[63] Curcio-Nagy, "Giants and Gypsies: *Corpus Christi* in Colonial Mexico City." Jesús Ramos Kittrell emphasizes the role of the cathedral chapel during Corpus Christi, in "Dynamics of Rituals and Ceremony in the Metropolitan Cathedral of Mexico City 1700–1750" (PhD diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2006), 157–162.

[64] Serge Gruzinski, "El Corpus Christi de México en tiempos de la Nueva España," 157. In Salamanca, Spain, the procession on the Octave was held inside the cathedral. See Torrente, "Function and liturgical context of the villancico in Salamanca Cathedral," 112.

[65] Curcio-Nagy, "Giants and Gypsies: *Corpus Christi* in Colonial Mexico City," 5.

took advantage of because of her deeply austere lifestyle.[66] Instead, she had visions of being out on the streets, accompanying the Blessed Sacrament procession.[67]

No evidence for these Eucharistic processions passing by Conceptionist convents in Mexico City is yet available, but the presence in the *Encarnación* convent choirbooks of one anonymous Corpus Christi Matins hymn, *Sacris Solemniis*, (for four voices) might indicate such processions could have taken place. *Sacris Solemniis* is one of the oldest hymns within the collection, according to Schleifer, containing a simple homophonic texture typical of the early sixteenth century (see Musical Example 4.2). [68] The piece was also used for Corpus Christi processions, and may well have been performed to welcome a procession at the *Encarnación* or for the nuns' own procession inside the cloister, as its texture seems simple enough for singing while processing.[69] The melody in the top voice, derived from Spanish chant books, was popular for performance on harp and vihuela, according to Schleifer.[70]

Some Conceptionist convents were granted other privileges for Corpus Christi, even if the procession did not make a stopover at their particular cloisters. In 1601, for example, the cathedral chapter considered whether or not to allow the chapel musicians to continue performing for Corpus Christi Vespers at the *Purísima Concepción* convent,

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[66] Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 160.
[67] Ibid., 318–319
[68] Schleifer, "The Mexican Choirbooks," 200. The presence of a *basso seguente* suggests a later date of creation, perhaps even a retrospective style, though it could have been tacked on subsequently.
[69] Schleifer attributes the piece's simple texture to diminished musical resources at the *Encarnación* during the eighteenth century when the piece was copied. See Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 276.
[70] Ibid., 198–199. Antonio de Cabezón and Cristóbal de Morales both composed organ arrangements based on the Spanish *Sacris Solemniis* chant. See Willi Apel, *The History of Keyboard Music to 1700*, translated by Hans Tischler (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1972), 7.

Musical Example 4.3 Anonymous, *Sacris Solemniis*, *Encarnación* Convent Choirbook 4, folios 65v–66r



noting that such an important feast merited having the chapel present at the cathedral.[71] The chapter concluded that they should continue performing for the nuns on this most holy feast because the convent was "the oldest of this city and subject to the archbishop, and must be attended and showered with the most favors."[72]

Corpus Christi and its ritual power in Puebla have been documented most recently by Frances L. Ramos.[73] According to Ramos, the first processions took place on the solemnity, and the second procession occurred on the subsequent Sunday—a tradition that supposedly originated at the suggestion of Sor María de Jesús herself:

> She was so zealous in her veneration, that she introduced a solemn feast in the city, which was celebrated on the Sunday after Corpus Christi, and still continues today. This public devotion consisted of the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament with grandiose magnificence of lights, decoration of the church, and the devout harmony of music concerts: the procession was then organized afterward, no less well-attended than the one on the previous Thursday, attended by the lord canons and all the cathedral clergy, all secular priests, [male] religious orders, and all the nobility. The venerable mother was also able to procure from the Apostolic See a plenary indulgence to make the feast more solemn.[74]

This passage, together with the cathedral chapel's continued performance of Vespers in Mexico City's *Purísima Concepción* convent, testifies to the type of influence Conceptionist convents maintained with high-ranking clergy to argue in favor of their ornate public devotions.

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[71] MEX 6000515, "Consideraciones sobre la celebración de Corpus Christi," ACCMM, Libro 4, Folio 262v.

[72] "Y por ser aquel convento el más antiguo de esta ciudad y sujeto al ordinario, a quien se debe acudir y regalar con mayores favores." Ibid.

[73] Ramos, *Identity, Ritual, and Power in Colonial Puebla*, 70–79.

[74] "Fue tan celosa de su veneración, que introdujo una solemne fiesta en la ciudad, la cual se celebra, y hoy día prosigue, en el domingo siguiente al Corpus Christi. Consistía esta publica devoción en la exposición de el Santísimo Sacramento con grandiosa magnificencia de luces, ornato de la iglesia, y devota armonía de diferentes conciertos de música: se ordenaba después la procesión no menos numerosa, que la de el jueves antecedente, en que intervenían los señores canónigos con todo el clero completo de la catedral, toda la clerecía, las comunidades religiosas, y toda la nobleza. Procuró también la ven. Madre conseguir de la sede apostólica indulgencia plenaria para hacer más solemne la fiesta." Jesús María, *Vida, virtudes y dones sobrenaturales de la venerable sierva de Dios Sor María de Jesús*, 75.

The official requirements for private devotion in the Conceptionist rule required the nuns to keep vigil both during the night before the main feast and during the Octave. However, hagiographies indicate that the convents exposed the Blessed Sacrament for prayer and vigil throughout the entire week of Corpus Christi, when the nuns were encouraged to pray to the consecrated host as often as possible. Thus, we might take the rule to mean that there was supposed to be an eight-day vigil of the Blessed Sacrament. In fact, Sor Barbara was so concentrated on the Sacrament around the time of Corpus Christi that she was reported to even keep vigil in her sleep, and to dream about the Eucharist every night throughout the Octave.[75]

A variety of devotional demonstrations involving sound both inside and outside the churches took place during the Octave of Corpus Christi. In 1637, Sor María de Jesús died (see Chapter 5) during an especially raucous confluence of musics for the Feast of Corpus Christi at the *Purísima Concepción* convent in Puebla, according to record:

> Ultimately, the hour for Vespers had come…with the convent bells resounding in festive peals, the entering of a concerted dance through the church doors to celebrate the day with festivity; the piercing of the air with loud shawms and trumpets, and the nuns singing the divine praises in the *coro*, with delicate canticles.[76]

The procession in Puebla made a stop at the *Purísima Concepción*, according to Diego de Lemus, and helped initiate the Vespers service there. Although the description does not specify whether the nuns were playing the shawms and trumpets, it is not improbable that the women played these instruments at the time (as discussed in Chapter 3).

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[75] Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 317.

[76] "Últimamente, llegó la hora de vísperas…resonando las campanas del convento con festivos repiques: entrando por las puertas de la iglesia una concertada danza a celebrar con un festín el día; rompiendo el aire sonoras chirimías, y trompetas, y entonando en el *coro* las religiosas con suavísimos cánticos las divinas alabanzas." Lemus, *Vida, virtudes, trabajos, favores y milagros de la Ven. M. Sor María de Jesús*, 436.

One could say that the convent bells mediated the jubilant cacophony of sacred and secular sounds during the procession. Since the nuns themselves could not join in outside the convent, the bells' peals announced the start of the Office, drawing people into their church to adore the convent Blessed Sacrament. However, the bells in this scenario also served as a form of welcome for the procession participants as they passed through the doors of the convent church. That the nuns coordinated the start of their Vespers service with the entrance of the Corpus Christi procession into their church suggests how cloistered women still managed to participate musically in the urban celebration from within their own walls; it likewise suggests a convent's collaboration with confraternities, the lay organizations often in charge of the procession.[77]

The mingling of sounds which was possible inside the church walls during such a busy feast day might also explain why de Paz put a high priority on the repair of the cathedral's larger organ before Corpus Christi. He intended to make sure that its sacred timbre resonated above all other sounds and instruments. But the faithful presumably enjoyed villancicos the most. Colleen Baade, for one, notes that in Spain people very much looked forward to the villancicos performed for Corpus Christi by the nuns at the *Encarnación* convent in Ávila. In fact, her account seems to suggest that the villancicos were the primary cause for excitement about the feast.[78] We can count on a similar enthusiasm for Corpus Christi villancicos in New Spain, particularly since nuns' relatives were known to have requested their preferred Blessed Sacrament villancicos from the singers at the *Santísima Trinidad* in Puebla (see Chapter 2).[79] Whether villancicos were appreciated because of their texts or because of their musical features—

[77] Davies, "El Sacramento Galante," 150.
[78] Baade, "Music and Music-Making," 11. This account recalls Thomas Gage's critique of Novohispanic society and convent culture in Chapter 1.
[79] Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 193.

texture, rhythm, harmony—would be difficult to ascertain on empirical grounds alone. In the literature, they are in fact praised for both lyrical content and musical form—however vaguely—as will become more evident shortly.[80]

The publication of villancico poetry in printed chapbooks (*pliegos*) throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries might suggest that the text was considered more significant than musical notation. However, Corpus Christi villancico texts generally did not circulate in printed chapbooks. This has confounded villancico scholars, particularly because it was so common to print chapbooks of villancico texts for private devotional use for many other popular feasts, including Christmas and the Immaculate Conception.[81] Nevertheless, the published biography of Sor Barbara is once again instructive here, illuminating seventeenth-century New Spain's text-music preferences. Torres described Sor Barbara's experience with Corpus Christi music as follows:

> For these solemn Octaves [of Corpus Christi] the nun muses compose some sacred poems that they sing to tempered sounds, and [accompanied by] instruments, in harmonious musics, and at the same time that these were being sung in the *coro*, Sor Barbara meditated on the meaning of the words, and she felt as if she heard them from God.[82]

This salient passage suggests a presence of well-versed poets among the nuns at the *Santísima Trinidad*, although it leaves out the crucial detail about who set their texts to music. Still, the pieces Sor Barbara was listening to must have been in Spanish, and indeed villancicos, because in earlier parts of the biography, Torres states that she did

[80] On the appeal for Corpus Christi villancicos in Spain, see Baade, "Music and Music-Making," 11.
[81] Davies, "El Sacramento Galante," 152; Cashner, "Faith, Hearing, and the Power of Music in Hispanic Villancicos, 1600–1700," 309.
[82] "Para estas octavas solemnes componen las religiosas musas algunos sagrados poemas, que cantan al son de templados, y sonoros instrumentos en músicas harmoniosas, y al tiempo que estas se cantaban en el coro meditaba la madre [Sor] Bárbara en el sentido de sus letras, y solía oírlas de las inteligencias soberanas…." Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 320–321.

not understand Latin.[83] Torres, for his part, hyperbolically claims that these pieces were reminiscent of and just as grand as the works of King David and St. Thomas Aquinas, past "theologian-composers."[84] In any case, the passage is the first instance of a source in which a religious person contemplates the meaning of villancico texts.[85] And whether or not Sor Barbara actually contemplated the texts as Torres suggests, what is exceptional is the idea of Sor Barbara's attention to sung sacred texts as a model for listeners throughout New Spain, where her biography circulated widely.

Torres continues on to suggest how one might react to the unspecified pieces whose texts Sor Barbara was contemplating. They reminded him, he notes, of St. Thomas Aquinas's hymn *Adorate devote*, which he included in the biography in a Spanish translation. [86] This Eucharistic song makes the connection between the Body of Christ, the Trinity, and Christ's Passion, particularly in the third and fourth verses:

En la cruz, sola tu Deidad latía; mas lo humano, y divino se disfraza en ese blanco pan, que mi alma adora, y pide lo que Dimas impetraba.	On the cross, only your deity is hidden; But the human and divine are disguised in that white bread, which my soul adores and asks for what Dimas implored.
Como Thomas no veo tus cicatrices y mi Dios te confieso en esas aras. Dame Dios, uno, y trino las virtudes, de fe, de caridad, y de esperanza.	Like Thomas I do not see your scars, and I confess you are my God on that altar. Give me God, one and triune, the virtues of faith, of charity, and of hope.[87]

One might consider the fact that Sor Barbara was listening closely to a text with similar themes, as in the anonymous Blessed Sacrament villancico *Corazón deshecho al aire* a 4 (Heart Damaged by the Wind) (CSG.216). Its allusive third and fourth *coplas* in particular refer to Christ's martyrdom for his love of humanity, and his mysterious—

[83] Ibid., 74 and 202.
[84] Ibid., 321.
[85] Personal reactions to music were also rare in Italy. See Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, 428.
[86] Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 321.
[87] Ibid., 322.

that is, silent—presence in the Eucharist, whose color in the consecrated host is described as being as white as ermine:

Quien se regala en la gloria,	You who give yourself in glory,
regálese en el martirio,	give yourself in martyrdom,
y consigo de amor muera,	and die of love together with the one
quien de amor vive consigo.	who out of love lives with you.
O que bien que vive y muere,	Oh how good that he lives and dies,
aquel soberano armiño,	that sovereign ermine,
de amor hecha su palabra	out of love he gives his word
en silencio de si mismo.	in silence.
Si naciendo fue en su padre,	If being begotten of the father
extremo de su entendido,	surpasses understanding,
extremo de sus finezas	his extreme delicacies
muda esfera de amor hizo,	created the communion host out of love,
desde allí flechando flores,	shooting flowers from the altar
crucificado cupido.	as a crucified cupid.
A un Dios vivo dejó muerto,	He left a living God dead,
y a un cordero muerto vivo.	and left a dead lamb alive.

There are various descriptions of the Eucharist combined in this *copla*: Christ on the cross; Christ as cupid; and Christ on the cross within the Blessed Sacrament as a mute disk, or rather the reserved host venerated and carried in procession through the streets on Corpus Christi. Likewise, here is Christ in the communion host consumed at the altar, described as a sacrificial lamb within the final line. The *copla* thus alludes to both a spiritual and sacramental communion.

Critically, Torres precedes his interpretation of *Adorate devote* by mentioning that, like King David, St. Thomas, and the *Santísima Trinidad* nuns, Jesus Christ too was a fine musician. The same Corpus Christi villancicos that Sor Barbara enjoyed hearing also inspired Torres to draw a comparison between New Testament and Old Testament texts, claiming that singing hymns, such as *Adorate devote* to the Blessed Sacrament in the processional monstrance was akin to King David singing and dancing

before the Ark of the Covenant (2 Kings: 6). This Ark, in fact, was said to hold manna, a kind of prefiguration of Christ's nourishing body:

> David not only sang, but [he] also danced in the eyes of the public, before the Holy Ark, which held the manna, figure of the Blessed Sacrament, and [that] in sum is the *Eucharistia 'Cithara Jesu,'* in its rigorous anagram, and thus, then, the sweet, and divine Jesus is the one who plays it while one eats at the table….[88]

The anagram of "*Eucharistia*" and "*Cithara Jesu*" (cithara of Jesus)[89] is also a reference to the Passion of Christ being recreated at communion during Mass. The section that follows will consider the implications and wider usage of this anagram and any further Eucharistic-Passion connections.

Anagrams and String Instruments: The Eucharist and the Passion

Early Christian writers made use of mythological characters to elaborate biblical and theological teachings, and this tradition included the symbol of Christ as a new Christian Orpheus.[90] The adoption of this new Orpheus was recorded in a Jesuit book of emblems, that seems to be the first source for the anagram *Eucharistia /Cithara Jesu*, although no record confirms its presence in New Spain. The anagram indeed accompanies a picture of Orpheus escorting Eurydice out of the fiery depths as he performs music (see Figure 4.3). Orpheus was of course classical mythology's preeminent musician, a role that meshed well with Eusebius's depiction of "Christ's use

[88] "David no solamente cant[ó], sino bail[ó] también a vista de todo el Pueblo, delante de la Arca Santa en que iba el Mana, figura del Sacramento Eucarístico, y en suma es la Eucaristía *Cithara Jesu*, en su rigoroso anagrama, y así, pues, el dulce, y divinísimo Jesús es quien la toca mientras se come en la mesa." Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara, 322.*

[89] The letter "I" is substituted with the letter "J" in *Jesu*, but essentially the Latin spelling *Iesu* is what creates the accurate anagram with Eucharistia.

[90] See Robert A. Skeris, *CHROMA THEOU: On the Origins and Theological Interpretation of the Musical Imagery Used by the Ecclesiastical Writers of the First Three Centuries, with Special Reference to the Image of Orpheus* (Altötting: Verlag Alfred Coppenrath, 1976), 145–156.

Figure 4.3 General Community, *Imago primi saeculi Societatis Iesu*[91]



of his human body to heal sick souls with the musician's use of his instrument."[92] This book of emblems was entitled *Imago primi saeculi Societatis Iesu a Provincia Flandro-Belgica eiusdem Societatis repraesentata* and published in the Spanish Netherlands in 1640 to commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Society of Jesus. It demonstrates that Christian theology which include the Orpheus-Christ motif of the first three centuries was still valued well into the seventeenth century.

[91] Reproduced from Godefridus Henschenius, et al., *Imago primi saeculi Societatis Iesu*, 463.
[92] Skeris, *CHROMA THEOU*, 108.

The emblem of Orpheus is found under the heading "General Community," in the book's third chapter, which treats the successes and activities of the order.[93] Below this image reads a passage from the Aeneid with the anagram appended at the end, "If Orpheus could bring back his wife from the depths, relying on the strings that sang loud on his Thracian lyre, *Cithara Iesu/Eucharistia*."[94] This phrase is followed by a poem which explains the connection between Orpheus's lyre and Jesus's cross, both instruments of salvation. The relevant excerpt reads, "Why could the divinity not convert the evil human into something good with the cithara of Jesus? There, the talented love extended his limbs and tied to the lyre of the powerful cross with nails, his song resonated in heaven…."[95] The anagram *Cithara Iesu/Eucharistia* is likely original to this source, given the use of other anagrams elsewhere in this book of emblems. Theo Herman notes that the anagram relates to another one used in *Imago primi saeculi Societatis Iesu*, in which the name "Society of Jesus" was scrambled into the phrase "cut off wicked things" (*Societas Iesu/Vitiosa seces*).[96] The Jesuits' crucial participation in the Counter-Reformation—and in the indoctrination of indigenous people in the Americas—was a success constantly boasted in the self-congratulatory book of poems and emblems, and many elements of this history, including anagrams, became very

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[93] Nienke Tjoelker,"Jesuit Image Rhetoric in Latin and the Vernacular: The Latin and Dutch emblems of the *Imago Primi Saeculi*," *Renaessance Forum* 6 (2010), 102.

[94] Translated in Virgil, *Aeneid*, Robert Fitzgerald, trans. (New York: Random House, 1983), lines 175–177.

[95] The original Latin reads, "Cur cithara Iesu numen humanis malis nequeat benignum flectere? Illi tetendit artifex neruos amor, clauisque constricta fide crucis potenti Carmen insonuit chely ⌈sic⌉…." In Godefridus Henschenius, et al., *Imago primi saeculi Societatis Iesu a Provincia Flandro-Belgica eiusdem Societatis repraesentata*, (Antwerp: Balthasar Moretus, 1640), 463. It was quoted and translated into Spanish as follows: "Por qué con la cítara de Jesús la divinidad no podia convertir el mal humano en algo bueno? Allí el diestro amor extendió los nervios y sujeto a la lira de la cruz ponderosa con los clavos, su canción resonó en el cielo," in Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *El Divino Orfeo*, edited by J.E. Duarte (Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 1999), 27.

[96] Hermans, *The Conference of Tongues*, (Manchester: St. Jerome Publishing, 2007), 108.

popular because of this collection.[97] Still, how might this play on the words *Cithara Iesu/Eucharistia* have made its way into Torres's biography of Sor Barbara? The sources indicate that Torres could have learned it from an actual play, if it was not composed independently out of coincidence.

As a testament to the popularity of *Imago primi saeculi*, particularly of *Cithara Iesu/Eucharistia*, the anagram also reappeared in a work by the famous seventeenth-century Spanish playwright Pedro Calderón de la Barca (1600–1681).[98] His plays circulated around the Spanish-speaking world—not least in New Spain where they were made available to lay and religious citizens, including nuns. Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz's *auto sacramental* (sacramental play) *El divino Narciso* (The divine Narcissus), for example, was heavily influenced by Calderón's *auto El divino Orfeo* (The Divine Orpheus) of 1663, which suggests that she might have owned an edition.[99] *El divino Orfeo*, which includes a choreographed spelling out of the anagram, appears in a collection of nine plays for Corpus Christi based on Classical mythology.[100] *Autos sacramentales* were performed throughout the Octave of Corpus Christi to serve as a form of theological enrichment to the public. Whether or not the convents possessed the resources needed to perform *autos* remains unknown. The nuns themselves, however, did recruit students living with them in the convents to act and perform music for plays. They were referred to as

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[97] Some 1,050 books were published, followed by the publication of 1,525 copies of a condensed edition in Dutch. See Tjoelker,"Jesuit Image Rhetoric in Latin and the Vernacular: The Latin and Dutch emblems of the *Imago Primi Saeculi*," 98. The Dutch version, though considerably reduced in size and content, according toTjoelker, held on to the Orpheus image together with the anagram. See Jean de Tollenaere, et al., *Af-beeldinghe van d'eerste eeuwe der Societeyt Jesu voor ooghen ghestelt door de Duyts-Nederlantsche provincie der selver societeyt*, (Antwerpen: Plantin, 1640), 276.

[98] Calderón was in fact inspired by *Imago primi saeculi*. See introduction by J.E. Duarte in Pedro Calderón de la Barca, *El Divino Orfeo*, 27.

[99] Alexander A. Parker, "The Calderonian Sources of *El divino Narciso* by Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz," *Romanistisches Jahrbuch* 19 (1968), 264.

[100] Barbara E. Kurtz, *The Play of Allegory in the 'Autos Sacramentales' of Pedro Calderón de la Barca*, (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 1991), 65.

coloquios, which took place either in the convent *coro bajo* or in the parlor, places where the public could come and watch from across the grate (see Chapter 1).[101]

Like many Jesuits and early church fathers, Calderón invoked the new Orpheus-Christ motif—and the figure's power to save through music—in *El divino Orfeo.* The anagram was spelled out during a laudatory prelude to the play, called a *loa*, whereby actors held all the letters that spelled *Eucharistia*; each letter represented other attributes of Christ—**C**harity, **H**onor, **A**ugmentation of Faith, **R**edemption, **I**neffable grandeur, etc. [102] The attributes subsequently competed to decide which one was the best attribute of Christ, and Redemption won the approval of all the others.[103] Calderón then instructed the actors to perform a choreographed dance to unknown music around the stage and to arrange themselves so that they spelled *Eucharistia.* Lastly, they were instructed to move around once more to form the phrase *Cithara Iesu.*[104]

Any number of instruments could have been used to accompany the dancing on stage, and string instruments which could be strummed or plucked—such as the vihuela, the harp, the guitar, or the bandurria—were commonly played in Calderón's time.[105] Perhaps the most appropriate instrument for this *loa* was the harp, which most closely resembles Orpheus's lyre. Later, Calderón even compares the Classical player's instrument to Christ, and the body on the cross, at several instances in the *auto.*[106] However, the Jesuit emblem from which it is presumed that Calderón took the anagram

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[101] Torres and/or Sor Barbara criticized this practice in the convents, noting that it was fine to perform these plays within the cloister for the edification of the schoolgirls and the nuns during Corpus Christi, but it was unacceptable to perform them for the public even though the bishops allowed the convents to do so. Torres followed up with a vision, in which Sor Barbara learned about God's disappointment when the plays were being performed for the entertainment of lay people. See Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 190–191.
[102] Kurtz, *The Play of Allegory in the 'Autos Sacramentales' of Pedro Calderón de la Barca*, 111–112.
[103] Ibid., 112.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Henry Cart de Lafontaine, "Spanish Music," *Proceedings of the Musical Association* (London: Novello, 1907), 39.
[106] Calderón, 60–61.

does not show Orpheus playing a harp or a lyre, but rather a guitar-like instrument, or, in the literature, a cithara. This in fact recalls the ambiguity about what a cithara really was. In fact, the instrument was used for several purposes by the early church fathers, and while it was typically described as sacred, it was often compared or even confused with other string instruments of elusive definition.[107] This makes it all the more appropriate as a symbol for the Body of Christ.

Whether Sor Barbara's biographer, Torres, a Mercedarian, learned about *Cithara Iesu/Eucharistia* through the Jesuit *Imago primi saeculi*, Calderón's *auto*, or whether he came up with it himself, he completely neglects to mention Orpheus. Could the source of the anagram thus lie elsewhere? Perhaps, but what is clear is that Torres appropriated the anagram for the use of Christians who no longer had need for Classical mythology. More importantly, the anagram's mention in Torres' biography was motivated by Sor Barbara's meditation on Corpus Christi villancicos which, as evidence suggests, associated the Eucharist with Christ's Passion.[108]

And in fact, *Qué música divina* a 4 (CSG.153) by José de Cáseda did just that. [109] Like *Corazón deshecho al aire*, this villancico was performed in Sor Barbara's home, for the Feast of Corpus Christi. Its poetry allegorizes Christ's divinity and humanity as a cithara in the first *copla* and thus alludes to Origen, who characterized Christ's divinity

[107] Cashner, "Faith, Hearing, and the Power of Music in Hispanic Villancicos, 1600–1700," 383–387.
[108] Alain Bègue has noted that Corpus Christi villancicos could highlight Passion devotion. See Alain Bègue, "La jácara en los villancicos áureos," *Literatura y música del hampa en los Siglos de Oro*, edited by María Luisa Lobato and Alain Bègue (Madrid: Visor Libros, 2014), 129.
[109] For a thorough analysis of the theological and theoretical implications of this villancico's music see Ibid., 377–406. I am very grateful to Larissa Brewer-Garcia for her help with this villancico's interpretation.

as a psalterium (another vaguely defined plucked string instrument) and Christ's suffering humanity as a cithara.[110] The first *copla* to *Qué música divina* reads:

Suenen las dulces cuerdas de esa divina cítara y humana, que aun sol que es de los cielos, forma unida la alta con la baja.	Let the sweet strings resound of that divine and human cithara, though still sun of the heavens, it unites the high [divine cithara] with the low [human cithara].[111]

Christ's dual nature comes together in the Eucharist, presented here as the metaphorical sun.[112] As this villancico instructed, so, too, the Archbishop of Mexico City Joseph de Lanciego y Eguilaz (1655–1728) taught the nuns under his jurisdiction in a pastoral letter to consider that Christ chose to stay with them in the Eucharist, "essentially remaining in the Blessed Sacrament, as real, and truly as he is in heaven."[113] This then follows Torres's interpretation of the anagram *Cithara Iesu/ Eucharistia* above, whereby Christ plays the cithara when his real presence is venerated and consumed through the Blessed Sacrament, the communion host. In this case, the veneration is through music, which has already established above as a method to engage in deep spiritual communion.

Copla three then turns to the actual features of the string instrument associated with the cross upon which Christ was crucified, but the rhetoric is shifted towards

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[110] Skeris, *CHROMA THEOU*, 141. For comparison, there is a unique instance in which the Virgin Mary is symbolized with various musical instruments in a convent motet by Claudia Rusca discussed in Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, 265.

[111] Following a metamusical interpretation, Cashner transcribed *sol* as the musical pitch, thus giving an alternative description for the passage based on seventeenth-century vihuela tuning practices. See "Faith, Hearing, and the Power of Music in Hispanic Villancicos, 1600–1700," 392.

[112] This metaphor is reinforced through religious metalwork. Some monstrances for the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament were constructed such that the host was surrounded by stylized rays, as if the host were the sun giving off light. See Garduño Pérez, "Un viril hecho un sol," 116.

[113] "Quedándose sustancialmente en el Santísimo Sacramento, tan real, y verdaderamente como está en el cielo." Jose Lanciego y Eguilaz, *Carta pastoral, que el Ilustrísimo, y Rmo. Señor Maestro D. Fray Joseph de Lanciego, y Eguilaz, Arzobispo de México ... Escribe a sus amadas hijas las religiosas de toda su filiación,* (México: Miguel de Rivera Calderón, 1716), fol. 25v.

features of an instrument with a decorative pierced rosette of wood placed over the opening in the soundboard called a *lazo*:[114]

De el lazo a este instrumento	The union that attaches his extremities
sirve la unión que sus extremos ata,	benefits from this instrument's rosette,
tres clavos son clavijas,	three nails are the pegs
y puente de madera fue una tabla.	and a bridge of wood was the plank.

It is difficult to capture the language at play within a literal translation, but essentially the *copla* compares the parts of the cross to the parts of a particular stringed instrument, stating that the bridge and pegs hold the extremes of the strings, in much the same way that the nails in Christ's extremities attached him to the cross's wooden planks. The very image of Christ stretched on a cross, like strings across a soundboard, was one that Archbishop Lanciego y Eguilaz encouraged nuns under his jurisdiction, including Conceptionists, to imagine as a lesson in patience.[115]

The rosette in the vihuela was purely decorative and used here in the *copla* merely to describe the opening of the soundboard. The opening amplifies the sound of the plucked strings by allowing the string's vibrations to resonate within the body of the vihuela. The soundboard and strings are essentially less resonant on their own, but when these features are combined on one instrument, they "benefit" from each other to create vibrant music. Similarly, Christ's body coming together with the cross redeemed the world; a wooden cross by itself would have been useless.

Following these earlier hints, *copla* four finally mentions the vihuela directly, describing it as mysterious in just the same way that the Body of Christ in the Eucharist was described many times before in other villancicos and in Eucharistic devotional literature:

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[114] For this definition of *lazo*, see John Griffiths, "Hidalgo, mercader, sacerdote o poeta: vihuelas y vihuelistas en la vida urbana," *Hispánica Lyra: revista de la Sociedad de la Vihuela* no. 9 (2009), 15–17.
[115] "Tan tirado, y estirado en su cruz, como está la cuerda en el arco; coronada de crueles espinas su santísima cabeza…." Lanciego y Eguilaz, *Carta pastoral*, fol. 19r–19v.

Misteriosa vihuela,	Mysterious vihuela,
al herirle sus cuerdas una lanza,	as a lance wounded its strings,
su sagrada armonía se vió allí	its sacred harmony was seen there,
de siete órdenes formada.	formed of seven orders.

The result of plucking the vihuela's strings is the production of music. The performance of this musical instrument via plucking thus paired here aptly with the piercing of Christ's side with a lance (*lanza*) while on the cross—an action yielding an outpouring of blood and water, according to John 19:34. The confluence of these two substances in the text invoke Christ's dual human and divine natures. They then musically produce the harmony mentioned in the following line, which echoes the harmony suggested in the first *copla.* Christ's death on the cross, which was historically confirmed by the piercing of his side, resulted in the redemption of humanity. Thus music seems a metaphor for redemption here, similar in fashion to its use as a metaphor for penance in the villancico *Pajarito que en el aire elevado.*

Christ's death was the foundation of the Church and its seven sacraments: baptism, communion, penance, confirmation, matrimony, extreme unction, and holy orders—also known as orders (*ordenes*). This definition used in the fourth *copla* of *Qué música divina*, derived from the fact that each sacrament was "ordered" to have a specific ritual.[116] The most important sacrament was holy orders. Only through this sacrament could the rest of the sacraments take place (not least the Eucharist, which was only possible through the transubstantiation of bread and wine into Christ's body and blood).[117] The Passion was to be recreated by a priest at every Mass, as Lanciego y Eguilaz instructed:

> Consider that the love of Christ was not satisfied with having redeemed us through his Passion, and death, expending all his being for our love,

[116] Bartolomé Carranza de la Miranda, *Comentarios del reverendísimo Señor Fray Bartolomé Carranza de Miranda, Arzobispo de Toledo, etc. sobre el catecismo*, (Anvers: Martin Nucio, 1558), 341.
[117] Ibid., 344.

> but rather, he wanted that this benefit be repeated frequently in the sacrifice of the altar [the Mass], because even though he redeemed us, we would still continue to be sinners, and he knew that we would once more offend [him].[118]

The sacrament of the Eucharist, moreover, renewed the nuns' redemption. This same message was extended in symbolic fashion in *Que música divina*, making the piece a viable selection for Mass at any time of the year, not just at Corpus Christi.

Indeed, nuns' Eucharistic and Passion devotions could be enhanced with sacred music and devotional literature. As nuns contemplated the specific meanings of texts for these devotions, some mystics could also experience the Passion through the Eucharist and through their own bodies.

Women Imitating the Body of Christ and Concluding Thoughts

Monson observed that in Italy, nuns would sing about the cithara as a way to praise Christ's suffering body, and as their own form of attempting to imitate Christ.[119] This practice hearkened back to earlier traditions in which notable role model nuns with supernatural powers were said to have experienced the pains of Christ's Passion. One such reported example was Mother Juana de la Cruz, a sixteenth-century Franciscan mystic from Spain.[120] Ronald Surtz's monograph on Sor Juana de la Cruz's writings details her relevant ecstasy:

> I seem to see all the limbs and veins and joints of my body transformed into the strings and keys or pegs of a guitar and Our Lord playing on them with His most holy hands, playing on them as upon an instrument or vihuela and making a very sweet and gentle harmonious sound.[121]

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[118] "Considera, que el amor de Cristo, no se contentó con habernos redimido a costa de su Pasión, y Muerte, expendiendo por nuestro amor toda su substancia, sino que quiso, que este mismo beneficio se repitiese frecuentemente en el sacrificio del altar, porque aun después de redimidos, habíamos de ser pecadores, y supo que le habíamos de volver a ofender." Lanciego y Eguilaz, fol. 26v–27r.
[119] Monson, *Disembodied Voices*, 109.
[120] Ibid., 86–87.
[121] Quoted in Surtz, *The Guitar of God*, 68.

This experience was highly controversial: though published in Juana de la Cruz's 1610 biography, the vihuela scene was edited out in a revised 1613 edition.[122] Other relevant moments of her life lived on, such as her noteworthy spiritual communions, cited in Juan Martinez de la Parra's *Luz de verdades católicas y explicación de la doctrina cristiana* (1722).[123] Through Parra, Torres then compares Sor Barbara's exceptional devotion to the Blessed Sacrament with that of Juana de la Cruz.[124] Thus, despite some initial controversy, Juana de la Cruz's life, like St. Catherine's, was used as a way to validate the experiences of other mystic nuns.

Nuns in New Spain could furthermore approach Christ's Passion through the Eucharist by practicing humility. Indeed, an after-communion meditation suggested by Nuñez involved the technique of nuns imagining themselves as the cold grave in which Christ's dead body had been deposited:

> Now, savior, and husband of mine, enter into the pretorium, or Calvary of my soul, where my persecuting passions and sins, flog, prick, and tear you, etc., and you will be placed, dead for my sake, in the cold and hard tomb of my heart; it is not a new sepulcher, in which no one has yet been deposited; rather an old sepulcher, full of disgust; white on the outside; and full of disgust and rotting inside….[125]

This passage would have resonated strongly with Conceptionists who wore a white habit, especially the *Jesús María* convent nuns who sponsored the devotional book. Even after receiving communion, however, the sisters were to consider themselves unworthy of receiving the Body of Christ as a form of humility in reverence to Jesus, who humbled himself as an innocent victim on the cross.

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[122] Ibid., 78.
[123] Juan Martinez de la Parra, *Luz de verdades Católicas y explicación de la doctrina cristiana*, (Madrid: Francisco de Hierro, 1722), 348.
[124] Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 301.
[125] "Ahora, salvador, y esposo mío, entrareis en el pretorio, o Calvario de mi alma, donde los verdugos de mis pasiones y pecados os azotarán, espinarán, desgarrarán, etc. y seréis puesto, muerto por mi en la losa fría, y durísima de mi corazón; no es sepulcro nuevo en donde ninguno ha sido depositado, o sepultado; sino sepulcro viejo, aseoso [sic]; blanqueado por de fuera; y por de dentro lleno de ascosidad y podredumbre." Nuñez, *Distribución de las obras ordinarias*, 65.

Ultimately, considering the relationship between humility and innocence with respect to the Eucharist may be a successful way to understanding the anonymous Novohispanic portrait of the Christ Child playing a stringed instrument in the shape of a cross (see Figure 4.4). His innocence is indicated to us chiefly by means of his youth. The banner above the Christ Child comes from Psalm 118: 54, "Your songs were my statutes in the house of my pilgrimage" (*Cantabilis mihi erant iustificationes tuae in loco*

Figure 4.4 Anonymous Novohispanic Canvas, ca. 17th century, Private Collection[126]



[126] Reproduced from Luis Robledo Estaire, "El cuerpo y la cruz como instrumentos musicales: iconografía y literatura a la sombra de San Agustín," *Studia Aurea* 1 (2007), 3.

peregrinationis meae). Beneath it, Christ is surrounded by several articles of the Passion.[127] The Eucharistic connections between the cross and stringed instruments should be evident by now.

The Eucharist, celebrated privately and publically with sacred literature and song, would have reminded cloistered nuns of their mystical marriage to Christ—an equally mysterious phenomenon. As shown in this chapter, the invisible Body of Christ lent itself to various allegorical interpretations while also reinforcing other Christic devotions, particularly the Trinity and Passion. Given Nuñez's encouragement for nuns to sing to the host, Torres' imploring of religious women to meditate carefully on the words of villancicos, and the ongoing motif of holy bodies as musical instruments, one can observe just how essential music was for enhancing a Eucharistic devotional experience in the convents, especially during the liturgies for Corpus Christi. This could explain why the *Santísima Trinidad* convent musical sources contain a wealth of Eucharistic devotional songs.

In the following chapter, devotion to the Passion will be treated in terms of its regular commemoration outside the sacrament of the Eucharist and highlighting the grand liturgies of Holy Week and their music. As with Corpus Christi, Holy Week allowed nuns to join the wider community in urban gestures of piety from within their cloister. Meditating on Christ's suffering through the Passion, however, was also a year-around spiritual exercise for the brides of Christ, as this would ensure that they lived their vows in a state of perfection, thus allowing them to join Christ physically when they would die and go to heaven. Because of this, Passion devotion music and literature

[127] Translated in Robledo Estaire, "El cuerpo y la cruz," 4.

are less steeped in rhetoric of mysteriousness and Christ's invisibility than in the Eucharist. Rather, the focus becomes His visible body and human traits.

Chapter 5. Conceptionists and the *Imitatio Christi*: Musical and Devotional Reactions to the Passion

Introduction

In this chapter, I will consider how Conceptionist convents of Mexico City and Puebla commemorated the Passion of Christ with music throughout the liturgical year. As one of the most important devotions for nuns, contemplation of the Passion was fostered from the very start of the novitiate. Thus I will begin by tracing how sacred literature was said to instill that devotion in the hearts and minds of aspiring nuns. In the previous chapter, the liturgies, music, and literature in honor of the Eucharist emphasized Christ's invisible presence in the consecrated host. In this chapter, Christ's visible presence throughout various steps of his Passion, particularly his crucifixion, takes precedence. But just as nuns were charged with contemplating and imitating the bravery and suffering of their spiritual spouse, they could also be moved to sadness through villancicos and poetry that enjoined them to lament Christ's suffering and death along with Christ's mother in the popular devotion, the Virgin of Sorrows (*Dolorosa*) featuring her anguish over her son's way to the cross and death.

Christ's spiritual brides could also be instilled with compassion over Christ's suffering by participating in devotions and reading texts that emphasized his human traits, such as courage and humility. Examples from local Novohispanic devotional customs, including the Office of Christ mocked by Herod Antipas (taken from an episode in Luke), and the poetics and music of a villancico (*jácara*) from Puebla's *Santísima Trinidad* convent, in fact feature these characteristics. The *jácara Oigan la jacarilla* (Listen to the *jacarilla*) (CSG.150) by Diego de Cáseda (d. 1694) was particularly suitable for celebrating Christ's Passion, because *jácaras* were

a subgenre of villancicos adopted from fifteenth-century ballads about heroes, criminals, and the marginalized of Spanish society.[1]

The liturgies for Lent and Holy Week were the epitome of Passion devotion in the Catholic world. During Holy Week, both male and female religious enjoined lay citizens to contemplate Christ's suffering as a community. The wealthiest churches could re-enact Christ's suffering through the dramatic singing of the four Gospel Passions—sometimes in polyphony, as in the *Encarnación* and *Santa Inés* convents. The best convent singers might thus take on the voices of well-known participants in the Passion, as they sang the Gospels for Palm Sunday, Holy Tuesday, Holy Wednesday, and Good Friday.

Passion Models and Crucified Nuns

In addition to being one of the patron saints of the Conceptionist order, since the Middle Ages, St. Francis of Assisi was also said to serve as a model for the imitation of Christ's suffering.[2] He was thus invoked in the Conceptionist rule, which instructed novice teachers (*maestras de novicias*) on how best to instill Passion devotion among their pupils:

> She should give them time to read books of the holy doctrine and great devotion, so that they [the novices] learn to feel the Passion of our Lord and love it and imitate it, since it is the basis on which our father St. Francis and all the saints learned and initiated [their missions]; it is in one's best interest to know how to feel the Passion of our redeemer and to motivate oneself to imitate it because of the tenderness of his love communicated to those who truly focus on his cross and Passion.[3]

[1] María Luisa Lobato and Alain Bègue, "Prólogo," *Literatura y música del hampa en los siglos de oro*, edited by María Luisa Lobato and Alain Bègue (Madrid: Visor Libros, 2014), 9.

[2] Norman Scott Johnson, "Franciscan Passions: Missions to the Muslims, Desire for Martyrdom and Institutional Identity in the Later Middle Ages" (PhD Diss., University of Chicago, 2010), 95–96. Louise M. Burkhart also highlights St. Francis's affliction with the stigmata as an important attribute that associated him further with the Passion in *Holy Wednesday: A Nahua Drama from Early Colonial Mexico* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), 23–24.

[3] "Sí debe darles tiempo para que lean libros de santa doctrina y gran devoción, y que aprendan a sentir la pasión de nuestro señor y amarla y imitarla, que este es el a. b. c. En que nuestro padre San Francisco y todos los santos aprendieron y principiaron; conviene a saber sentir la pasión de nuestro redentor y animarse a imitarla por la suavidad de su amor, que el comunica a los que de veras estudian en su cruz y pasión." *Regla de la orden de la Concepción*, folio. 15.

Throughout an aspiring nun's life, her mission was to learn to imitate Christ's suffering—the very foundation of a saint's saintliness, as described in this excerpt from the rule. Nuns too could become saints if they had a strong enough spiritual formation based specifically on imitating Christ's Passion. The excerpt also urged them to read devotional literature (*libros de santa doctrina y gran devoción*) as one of the most appropriate exercises for developing nuns' devotion to the Passion, explicitly ordering novice teachers to allow ample time in their curricula for such private spiritual enrichment through reading. Here, the rule also dictates that the Passion, which was usually associated with Christ's physical pain and suffering, might also convey Christ's tenderness and love.

In Sor María de Jesús's biography, Christ's pain and love for his brides also stands out as one unified object. This becomes clear, for instance, in Francisco Pardo's description of a communal vision during a Passion devotion prayer service during the Lenten season. During Lent, the nuns of the *Purísima Concepción* convent in Puebla traditionally recited thirty-three daily *Credos*—one for each year of Christ's life.[4] The nuns who followed through with the recitation, Pardo recalls, were rewarded in the *coro* with a vision of Christ opening His eyes at them while he hung on the cross:

> In order to be in a better mindset to celebrate Holy Week, which required daily meditation on the labor, distress, sorrow, and wounds of their crucified spouse, and deceased loved one: the convened virgins continued to say the *Credo* this number of times [thirty-three] every day until the so-called Lazarus Friday (it is the one before Good Friday), and on the said penultimate Friday of Lent, that squadron of virgin souls (led and commanded by Sor María de Jesús) took a sacred crucifix—which is now venerated in the *coro*, placed in the middle of one of its niches—and put it on an altar surrounded by reverent decorations and affections. At that time the mute image, or dead image on the crucifix, having always had its eyelids shut, opened its eyes miraculously, and that Lord, nailed on the cross, nailed them [fixed his eyes] or placed them sweetly on all the nuns that had fulfilled the said devotion, and he remained staring at his very wives who had served him well…. Sor María de Jesús asked her sovereign and dead-

[4] Pardo, *Vida y virtudes heroicas de la Madre María de Jesús*, 192v–193r.

> on-the-cross husband himself to deign to give a blessing to all the nuns of that cloister….[5]

Filled with the amorous rhetoric which Passion literature could adopt, devotion to the Passion could perhaps recall the nuns' vows of chastity, and likewise their vow of enclosure, which guaranteed that chastity. But communal mortification was also a method employed to prevent impure thoughts inimical to the vow of chastity. Indeed, chastity was a form of martyrdom for nuns, as discussed in Chapter 3, requiring them to inflict physical pain on themselves while recalling the tortures endured by Christ during his Passion.[6]

In the same way, the Conceptionist rule called for convent communities to mortify themselves in the *coro* after Compline every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday; this was known as *disciplina*.[7] The consequence for missing community mortification resulted in public humiliation. Even in the mid-eighteenth century edition of Archbishop Manso y Zuñiga's rule for Mexico City's Conceptionists, the order remained that those who skipped community mortification, for instance, must eat off of the floor (*coman en tierra*/eat on the dirt) on the next

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[5] "Porque así se dispusiesen con mas sentidas a la celebración de la Semana Santa, que se seguía, meditando con atenciones cotidianas los trabajos, congojas, dolores, y heridas de su crucificado esposo, y enamorado muerto: continuaron las convocadas vírgenes, el cuidado de decir este numero ⌈treinta y tres⌋ de veces la oración del Credo, repitiéndola todos aquellos días, que corrieron hasta el viernes que llama de Lázaro (y es el antecedente al Viernes Santo) y en el sobredicho penúltimo viernes de la Cuaresma, llevaron aquella escuadra de almas vírgenes (que conducía y acaudillaba Madre María de Jesús) la imagen de un sagrado crucifico, que hoy se venera en el coro colocado en el comedio de uno de sus lienzos, le pusieron en un altar con mucha reverencia de adornos, y afectos. A este tiempo aquel simulacro mudo, o imagen muerta del crucifijo, teniendo siempre cerrados los párpados, abrió milagrosamente entonces los ojos, y los clavo aquel Señor clavado en la Cruz, o los puso dulcemente en todas la Religiosas, que avían frecuentado la devoción dicha, y permaneció mirando a las mismas esposas suyas, que en este ocupación le avían servido….⌈La⌋ Madre María Jesús: pidió a su soberano y muerto en la cruz esposo: que se dignase de también dar la bendición a las religiosas todas de aquella clausura." Pardo, *Vida y virtudes heroicas de la Madre María de Jesús*, 193r.

[6] Colleen Reardon notes that Sienese nuns flagellated themselves in order to imitate Christ's suffering as well. See Reardon, *Holy Concord within Sacred Walls*, 106. On the history of religious people's practice of self-flagellation see Rachel Fulton, *From Judgment to Passion: Devotion to Christ and the Virgin Mary, 800–1200* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 99–104. St. Thomas Aquinas points out the etymological relationship between chastity (*castidad*) and to chastise (*castigar*) or to punish concupiscence specifically. See *Summa Theologica, Volume 4 (Part III, First Section)*, translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province (New York: Cosimo, Inc., 2013), 1796.

[7] The tradition of communal mortification seems to have fallen by the wayside in some convents, such as the *Jesús María* in Mexico City. Góngora tells that sometime during the reign of Archbishop Payo Enríquez (1668–1680), the zealous Sor María de la Antigua reintroduced the practices of public penitence (*penitencias públicas*)—likely communal mortification—that were commonly exercised by the Carmelites and Jesuits. See *Paraíso occidental*, folio 198v.

day.[8] While performing their mortification exercises, the nuns were required to say (*decir*) the psalm *Miserere mei* and the antiphons *Christus factus est* and *In Conceptione tua* along with a verse and prayers.[9] Even though the psalm and antiphon were spoken and not sung, their inherently musical texts associated mortification with music in Conceptionist convents, although not in the explicit way with which some nuns in Italy may have used music as a form of mortification, for example.[10]

Chastity was often characterized as an object as fragile as crystal and as delicate as a white lily; it could wilt if exposed to the slightest heat, according to Torres.[11] Indeed, Sor Barbara's practice of mortification was essential for overcoming thoughts which contradicted her vow of chastity. Torres thus described her efforts in gendered terms similar to those used in the Conceptionist rule and like Sor María de Jesús's flagellation exercises discussed in Chapter 3. The common word employed in the rule and Sor Barbara's biography is "masculine" (*varonil*), which Torres employed specifically to articulate the force with which Sor Barbara beat herself, both in communal discipline and in private flagellation after her meals. In fact, Sor Barbara was known to fast more than eat in order to fight off sins against chastity.[12] In these passages, Torres once again presents the Dominican St. Catherine of Siena as Sor Barbara's role model, despite the fact that Francis was her patron saint. He notes that Catherine was the saint who fought the strongest battles to overcome sins against chastity.[13] And so imitating Catherine's mortification practices, "invigorated by her ⌜Barbara's⌝ masculine force" (*confortada con su varonil esfuerzo*), reportedly helped her to triumph over visions of obscene character.[14]

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[8] Manso, *Regla y ordenaciones de las religiosas de la Limpia e Inmaculada Concepción*, 43–44.
[9] Ibid., 44.
[10] Monson, "Le pene sofferte per Te son glorie, vittorie d'un'Alma ch'ha fe": Bodily Mortification in Convent Choir Lofts," typescript 2013; On convent music affiliated with martyrdom see Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, 383–387.
[11] Ibid., 156.
[12] Ibid., 154–155.
[13] Ibid., 155.
[14] Ibid.

Torres comments on Sor Barbara's exceptional adherence to chastity in a chapter also dedicated to her enclosure. Enclosure was believed to help nuns maintain their vow of chastity. Arguably these were the two most difficult vows to keep. On the other hand, as a reward for her adherence to her vows, Sor Barbara was granted a transcendent vision, in which God spoke to her as she was nailed to a cross:

> "Child, this is the cross of the religious life: all nuns that take up the cross, and embrace it with joy are consoled by it. Take it with great love, and tell your sisters to resign themselves to it, and they will live a joyous life, and they will be rewarded when they die." With such divine instruction, Sor Barbara remained crucified joyfully on her cross….[15]

This is indeed the type of literature which would inspire novices and other nuns to become devoted to and to imitate Christ's Passion.[16] However, Torres avoided the erotic undertones that were implicit in accounts of nuns' crucifixions across the early modern period by noting that Sor Barbara envisioned herself crucified on the cross by herself and not together with the body of Jesus. After all, such imagery might hinder the beatification process.

Juana de la Cruz' autobiographical account of being crucified, "hand-against-hand, feet-against-feet, body-against-body," with Christ, was one impediment to her canonization.[17] Yet, when beatification was not itself an issue, the "body-against-body" image prevailed. Later in the century, the funeral sermon of Sor María Ignacia, a Capuchin abbess from the *San José de Gracia* convent in Queretaro, dated 18 April 1792, includes an image of a nun—presumably Sor María Ignacia—crucified on top of Christ while wearing the crown of thorns (see Figure 5.1).

[15] Ibid., 163–164.
[16] On the devotional literature read by Milanese nuns, see Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, 169–171.
[17] Surtz, *The Guitar of God*, 78–79.

Figure 5.1 Image of Nun Crucified with Christ, in *Christ Our Lord represented through the life, virtues, and death of the Venerable Mother Sor María Ignacia*, folio 19r.[18]



[18] Reproduced with permission from AGN.

This image was a visual representation of the latter part of the sermon's title *Christ Our Lord Represented through the Life, Virtues, and Death of the Venerable Mother Sor María Ignacia…* (*Christo Señor Nuestro retratado en la vida, virtudes, y muerte de la Ve. Me. Sor María Ignacia…*).[19] Above the image appears an appropriate citation from Galatians 2:19, "With Christ I am nailed to the cross." Below the image there is a four-line poem, whose opening appears to quote from Venatius' *Crux fidelis*: "Sweet nails, my love you hold crucified; I see myself on the cross with him, because with him I am to die." It is difficult to envision how convent nuns may have contemplated this image and its poetry given its placement in a handwritten sermon. Nuria Salazar's study of the images of crucified nuns indicates that the *San José de Gracia* convent had two manuscript copies of this funeral sermon, but that they were banned in the early nineteenth century.[20]

Nevertheless, the image of Sor María Ignacia resonates with Sor María de Jesús's Passion prayer, taught at the *Purísima Concepción* convent during her tenure as abbess:

> May my hands be nailed with yours, my heart pierced by the lance that penetrated yours, my feet penetrated like yours with nails: I die, Jesus, with you on your cross, and may I die from your holy love.[21]

Sor María de Jesús was likewise not canonized, although there is little in the existent literature to explain why her sainthood did not come to fruition.

We know that Torres, for his part, was not opposed to erotic rhetoric in Sor Barbara's biography. Yet where erotic language does not take precedence in the text, he often uses a musical metaphor instead. What followed Sor Barbara's vision of being crucified, in fact, was Torres' explicit association of music-making with the nun's adherence to the vows and devotion

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[19] AGN/ Historia/ 39308/ Volumen 77, folio 14r.
[20] Nuria Salazar, "El Papel del cuerpo en un grabado del siglo XVIII," *Cuerpo y religión en el México barroco*, ed. Antonio Rubial García and Bieñko de Peralta (México: INAH, 2011), 133–136.
[21] "Sean mis manos enclavadas con las vuestras, mi corazón traspasado con la lanza, que penetró el vuestro, mis pies penetrados, como los vuestros, de clavos: muero yo Jesús con vos en vuestra cruz, y muera de vuestro santo amor." Jesús María, *Vida, virtudes y dones sobrenaturales de la venerable sierva de Dios Sor María de Jesús*, 111.

to the Passion. Torres specifically cites Sor Barbara's reception of a cithara following her crucifixion vision. This is not the only instance in which Torres mentions this elusive instrument in his biography. But whereas his use of the anagram *Cithara Iesu/Eucharistia* was associated with Christ's body and does not refer to figures from classical antiquity (see Chapter 4), here Torres symbolizes Christ as Apollo[22]—not Orpheus, surprisingly—and the cithara as the cross:

> And since through the heavenly cross the true Apollo gave his beloved [Sor Barbara] the best cithara, after having plucked her with the spirit, he filled her with the inspiration that allowed her to sing these verses, congratulating herself because of her crucifixion.[23]

Before discussing the language of the verses to follow, it is worth elaborating on this richly musical scene. Monson, for instance, notes that the mention of a cithara in a motet by Lucrezia Vizzana was a way for the composer to imitate Christ, because of the cithara's association with Christ's cross and suffering.[24] In Sor Barbara's biography, Torres describes the cithara, or music more broadly, as a type of prize. Barbara, not formally trained in music, becomes a musician upon satisfying her vows perfectly—and this is not the only instance in which she is described as performing music, albeit metaphorically, as will be shown below.

Torres' use of the word plucked (*pulsó*) is likewise metaphorical—maintaining the sense that, like the cithara, a stringed instrument played by plucking its chords, so too Sor Barbara's crucifixion was equivalent to the Holy Spirit having played her as if in the midst of a performance. This performance, of course, would only occur on a musical instrument which

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[22] Presumably Apollo Helios, like Orpheus, a precursor of Christ, illustrated in early mosaics at St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. See Gregory S. Aldrete and Alicia Aldrete, *The Long Shadow of Antiquity: What Have the Greeks and Romans Done for Us?* (London: Continuum International Publishing, 2012), 257.

[23] "Y como en la cruz del cielo le dio la mejor cithara [sic] a su amada el verdadero Apolo, luego que la pulsó con el espíritu, le infundió numen con que pudo cantar congratulándose Bárbara en su crucifixión estos versos." Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 164.

[24] Monson, *Disembodied Voices*, 109–110.

represented a chaste body, as described by St. John Chrysostom.[25] Gone, then, are the painful feelings described by Juana de la Cruz when she was "performed on" by God (see Chapter 4); here, Sor Barbara's joyous crucifixion elicits the following song, which Torres includes in his biography for nuns to recite:

1. A la sombra de la cruz, vuela ya mi corazón; porque de la religión halló en su sombra la luz.	Toward the shade of the cross, my heart soars; because through the religious life, it has found light in its shade.
2. En la cruz Jesús exalta su obediencia; y si se funda en humildad mas profunda, será obediencia mas alta.	On the cross Jesus exalts his obedience; and if it is founded upon profound humility, it will be the highest obedience.
3. Vid es con racimos de oro la cruz; pero esta riqueza, se disfraza en la pobreza, porque es oculto tesoro.	A grapevine with a cluster of gold is the cross; but this richness, disguises itself in poverty, because it is a hidden treasure.
4. Claro espejo es mi Jesús en la cruz, de la limpieza; si el trono de su pureza estuvo al pie de la cruz.	A clear mirror of cleanliness is my Jesus on the cross since the throne of purity was at the foot of the cross.[26]
5. En la cruz fijo mi amado, aquel claustro me labró, en donde mi alma se entró por la puerta del costado.	Attached to the cross, my beloved built me that cloister, in which my soul entered through the door on the side.
6. Así la cruz me figura en su extremada grandeza la obediencia, y la pobreza, la castidad, y clausura.	In this way the cross shapes me at its ⌈four⌉ great extremes, obedience and poverty, chastity and enclosure.

The strophes here are in *redondilla* form, common to many villancicos. The form consists mostly—but not exclusively—of octosyllabic lines, a quatrain, in ABBA rhyme scheme.[27] Moreover, this will not be the last time that Torres incorporates a Passion hymn

[25] Ibid., 109
[26] i.e. Mary.
[27] Tenorio, *Los villancicos de Sor Juana*, 74.

without including musical notation. The absence of music suggests that such pieces might have been sung to a familiar tune or to an improvised melody.

The first strophe functions as an introduction to the poem and the final and sixth one as the conclusion, the two together confirming the Passion devotion theme of the poem as a whole. The first strophe paints an optimistic view of the darkness produced by the shade of the cross. The foot of the Cross becomes a space for comfort by way of the convent life and the four vows—the promised road to salvation in the Cross. The last verse then summarizes the four vows. It foreshadows a vision that Sor Barbara was said to experience later in her biography, an episode in which she witnesses Christ on the cross as a judge on Judgment Day, and is reminded that the four wounds on Christ's extremities are a symbol of her four vows.[28]

The fourth strophe is somewhat more elusive. Its topic seems to be the vow of chastity without explicitly stating it in the way that strophes two, three, and five recall obedience, poverty, and enclosure, respectively. Curiously, however, the summary in strophe six does list chastity among the four vows. Strophe four replaces this word with purity (*pureza*), maintaining the *redondilla* form whereby *pureza* of verse three rhymes with *limpieza* (cleanliness) in verse two. But there is more to the word choice than just rules of poetics: the strophe also salutes the Immaculate Conception. Because each strophe expounds on the ways in which individual vows derive from Christ's death on the cross, this strophe indicates that Christ indeed was a mirror of purity because the Virgin Mary, who accompanied Christ on his Passion, was at the foot of the cross, in the "shade." This depiction of Mary had in fact developed its own cult in the twelfth century, a cult which spread across the Catholic world as the devotion to the Virgin of Sorrows which the Franciscans strongly supported.[29]

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[28] Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 359–360.

[29] Thomas H. Bestul, *Texts of the Passion: Latin Devotional Literature and Medieval Society* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), 113. The *Stabat Mater*, the famous sequence about the Virgin Mary's distress over Christ's Passion, for example, is attributed to the Franciscan Jacopo da Todi. See Marina Warner, *Alone of all Her*

Furthermore, any references to Mary as the throne of Christ's purity, according to Nicolas Roure, points directly to Immaculate Conception devotion, because Mary's Immaculate Conception was said to enable her pure gestation of the Son of God who redeemed the world by his death on the cross.[30] This combination of Passion and Marian devotion thus seems to suggest that the Virgin Mary was an essential source of redemption, or a type of co-redeemer, which was suggested in Chapter 1 through discussion of her Office recitation. This poem is thus all the more appropriate when conceived for Conceptionist nuns—these models of the Immaculate Conception in their blue cloak and white habit.

Meanwhile, the fifth strophe, relating to the vow of enclosure, is the most purely symbolic. It describes Christ the nuns' beloved (*amado*) as the builder of the cloister, the physical manifestation of the vow of enclosure. And yet, Christ's crucified body is also symbolized in the very convent cloister itself. This construction is indicated in the final verse, in which a nun's soul enters through the door on the side—that is to say, Christ's side pierced by the lance. The typical word for side is *lado*, but in this case the poem uses the word *costado*, which is an anatomical term for the side of the body and always used to describe Christ's pierced side.[31]

Cruel and Fierce Fate: Music for Widowed Virgins

While nuns' imitation of Christ's Passion via their own vows was often reported to yield great joy and transcendence, the brutal reality of the Passion of Christ was also supposed to

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Sex: The Myth & the Cult of the Virgin Mary (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 217. In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century New Spain, the Jesuits also had a hand in promoting this devotion in their churches through visual art. See Clara Bargellini, "Jesuit Devotions and *Retablos* in New Spain," *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540–1773*, vol. 1, edited by John W. O'Malley, S.J., Gauvin Alexander Bailey, Steven J. Harris, and T. Frank Kennedy, S.J. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 687–689.

[30] Nicolas Roure, *El soberano cedro de María, en el excelso Líbano de su pureza* (Barcelona: Rafael Figuero, 1697), 3.

[31] The Milanese nun composer Chiara Margarita Cozzolani wrote the motet *O quam bonum o quam jocundum* with similar Eucharistic-Passion rhetoric, including a line about entering through Christ's side wound, "*intrate per latus Salvatoris.*" See Kendrick, *Celestial Sirens*, 174.

move the brides of Christ to sadness and to weeping. And so these emotions were likewise present in convent music.

Si el hado cruel (If cruel fate) (CSG.110), an anonymous villancico from Puebla's *Santísima Trinidad* convent, locates the devotee weeping at the foot of the cross. The piece's extant second tiple part, marked *andante moderato*, reveals two sections of poetry differentiated by meter and implied tonality; no other part of the score survives. Musical Example 5.1 illustrates a first section (mm. 1–45) in duple meter and G major, and a second part (mm. 46–76) in triple meter and in the relative minor, E minor. The multiple bars of rests in this voice part indicate that a significant portion of music and text was interspersed among (and before) the following words:

Part 1

Si el hado cruel y fiero,	If cruel and fierce fate
rompe de amor el velo,	rips the veil of love,
será mas mi dolor.	my pain will be greater.
Si el hado cruel y fiero,	If cruel and fierce fate
rompe de amor el velo, ay Dios,	rips the veil of love, oh God,
será mas mi dolor, pesar y pena.	my pain, sorrow, and pity will increase.

Part 2

Que al pie de la cruz constante,	At the foot of the cross constantly
que me anego en mi llanto,	I inundate myself in tears,
con tanto padecer.	with so much suffering.

These missing portions—likely an accompaniment and perhaps a first tiple for a duo—might provide a clearer context for the piece. For their part, the rests suggest musical interludes, as was typical of eighteenth-century devotional music.[32] This musical manuscript, however, supplies enough information to call this a *da capo* aria. The large "DC" written at the end of the section is indicative. Indeed, even if such an indication had been missing, the fragment's florid lyricism and its harmonic progression are characteristic of an aria: the second section is in the

[32] Drew Edward Davies, "The Italianized Frontier: Music at Durango Cathedral, Español Culture, and the Aesthetics of Devotion in Eighteenth-Century New Spain" (PhD diss. University of Chicago, 2006), 323.

relative minor, E-minor, which ends on its minor dominant B minor, itself the relative minor of D major, the first section's dominant (see mm. 46–76 in Example 5.1).

Musical Example 5.1 Anonymous, *Si el hado cruel* (CSG.110), Andante moderato, second tiple



In *da capo* arias, the B section also tends to clarify or contrast with the text of the A section. Accordingly, in *Si el hado cruel*, the second section, with its poetry on weeping at the foot of the cross, confirms that the piece functioned as Passion devotional material specific to nuns. The text of the second section, meanwhile, illustrates that the cruel and fierce fate of part 1 refers to Christ's death, which, as the Bible maintains, caused the veil of the temple to be torn (Matthew 27:51). Here, veil could also contain a double meaning and refer to nuns' veils being torn at the pain and sorrow over Christ's death—a Holy Week reference, indeed, since St. Matthew's Passion was sung on Palm Sunday.

The tuneful G major tonality covering what I have labeled as part 1 does little to convey pain, sorrow, and pity as do other features of the music, such as the piece's ornaments and rhythm. For example, the first utterance of pain (*dolor*) in mm. 20–21 expands the word with a short melisma. The immediate repetition of *dolor* in mm.21–22 is set to the leap of a ninth resolving to D5. This moment begins a series of musical ornaments and embellishments on emotionally charged words. The word *dolor* is once again highlighted in mm. 29–31 through a dotted sixteenth-note melisma—creating a sobbing gesture and suggesting possible Italian influence—on beats two and three of m. 29. The melisma continues further with a four-beat chain of rhythmic figures consisting of an eighth note and two sixteenth notes.

Later, at m. 33, there is a rhetorical shift in the poetry marked by the interjection, "*ay Dios.*" Up until this point, the repeated text alluding to Christ's death, the phrase "torn veil," serves as the only cause of devotees' pain. After this moment, however, sorrow and pity (*pezar y pena*) are added to pain. Very little is done to embellish the word *pezar*, though the music here, from m. 36 on, gives way to a melisma on the word pity (*pena*)—only now with rhythmic alterations following the change in rhetoric. Where as in m. 29 the ornament was used consecutively in beats two and three, its deployment on the word *pena* is non-consecutive, with

one melisma on beat three of m. 36 and another on beat one of m. 37. These are interspersed among eighth notes. Furthermore, the rhythm of the ornament itself is altered by means of a switch in the position of the dotted-sixteenth-note with the thirty-second note; in m. 29 the dotted-sixteenth-note arrives before the thirty-second, giving the long-short rhythm of the melisma, whereas in mm. 36–37 the thirty-second now precedes the dotted-sixteenth. These minor changes in rhythm give this moment an audibly jagged effect, a kind of musical intensification. Later, in mm. 40–41, *dolor* is set to a melisma which takes on the same nuanced rhythm.

Si el hado cruel might also have functioned as a devotional piece for the Virgin of Sorrows—the Virgin Mary at the foot of the Cross. As the Passion poetry on the four vows in Sor Barbara's biography indicates, the Virgin Mary was principally a symbol of perpetual purity, but, in addition, her presence at Christ's crucifixion also made her a model for mourning Christ's suffering and death. Therefore, sorrow, pain, pity, and weeping at the foot of the cross are all commonplace in the poetics of villancicos composed for the Virgin of Sorrows.[33]

The feast of the Virgin of Sorrows was traditionally celebrated on the Friday before Palm Sunday (although the Marian invocation was venerated throughout Holy Week). Later, in 1737, a non-movable feast was established on 15 September for the Spanish church whose readings and responsories differed from the Passiontide celebration.[34] There were, in any case, many alternative names for the Virgin of Sorrows. She was often known as the Compassionate Mary, because of the compassion—sometimes described as a co-passion—which she experienced for her suffering son. She was also known as the Virgin of Solitude, a title which

[33] Davies, "The Italianized Frontier," 234.

[34] For a comparison of the readings and responsories of the two liturgies for the Virgin of Sorrows see Davies, "The Italianized Frontier," 392–393. In addition to the liturgies, there was a literary tradition in Italy associated with the Virgin of Sorrows' lament. See Emanuela Zanotti Carney, "Enselmino da Montebelluna's Plainte de la Vierge. The Literary Tradition of Italian Vernacular Laments of the Virgin from the 12th to the 15th Century" (PhD diss. University of Chicago, 2011).

focused on the loneliness that Mary experienced after the death of Christ on Good Friday.[35] But the Virgin of Sorrows became an especially popular devotion in Western Catholicism, particularly in Spain, where, in sixteenth-century iconography, the Virgin was depicted in a distinctive black gown inspired by the dress of the early-widowed Queen Joanna the Mad.[36] This devotion continued among Spaniards in the Americas. Pamela Voekel has shown that several early modern Mexico City citizens requested burials in churches with chapels dedicated to the Virgin of Sorrows; in some cases, they even wanted to be buried as close to the Virgin's statue as possible—under her feet, for instance.[37] The devotion was also well received among indigenous populations, according to Louise Burkhart,[38] who notes that it was easier for devotees to empathize with the sorrowful Virgin Mary than to take up Christ's cross and metaphorically join his Passion steps.[39]

As both spiritual mothers and brides of Christ, nuns took on the all-encompassing role of widow, martyr, and sorrowing mother in response to the Passion. This multifaceted task for nuns intertwines with the view of the Virgin Mary as both mother and mourner at the cross in *Ay, afligida madre* (Oh, sorrowful mother) (CSG.125) by Pedro de Ardanaz Valencia (ca. 1638–1706). The narrative in his villancico unfolds in a similarly rhetorical manner to the poetry of the *Stabat mater*, in which the sorrowful Virgin receives direct address in the early verses, and the language then later yields to first-person reflection and imploration for salvation. The text

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[35] On Mary's compassion see Fulton, *From Judgement to Passion*, 211–214. On the Virgin of Solitude, see Jesús de la Torre Briceño, "Algunos datos historicos sobre la Virgen de la Soledad patrona de Arganda del Rey," *Anales Complutenses* vol. 13 (2001), 129–154. The Virgin of Solitude had a large cult following during the eighteenth century in the parish of *Santa Veracruz* in Mexico City. See Pamela Voekel, *Alone Before God: The Religious Origins of Modernity in Mexico* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002), 24.

[36] Torre Briceño, "Algunos datos historicos sobre La Virgen de la Soledad," 131.

[37] Voekel, *Alone Before God*, 37–38.

[38] Burkhart, *Holy Wednesday*, 28. Also see Burkhart, *Before Guadalupe: The Virgin Mary in Early Colonial Nahuatl Literature* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2001), 87–97. On the music and devotion for the Virgin of Sorrows in eighteenth-century northern New Spain, specifically in the Diocese of Durango and its cathedral, see Davies, "The Italianized Frontier," 386–409.

[39] Burkhart, *Holy Wednesday*, 28. Outside the Hispanic tradition, Rachel Fulton has argued that the Virgin's spiritual pain and sorrow while observing the crucifixion were so great that it was as if she too were to have been crucified with Christ, hence her co-passion. See Fulton, *From Judgment to Passion*, 202.

of the first and penultimate verses of the *Stabat mater* will suffice to demonstrate its parallels with the villancico:

Stabat mater dolorosa	The sorrowful mother was standing
Juxta crucem lacrimosa	in tears beside the cross on which
Dum pendebat filius;	her son was hanging;
Christe, cum sit hinc exire,	When it is time, Lord Christ, for
Da per Matrem me venire	me to leave this world, give me
Ad palmam victorae.	Through your mother's prayers the palm of victory.[40]

Neither the *Stabat mater* nor the villancico *Ay, afligida madre* are in the so-called *planctus* (complaint) genre.[41] In this form, the Virgin Mary traditionally speaks directly—in fact, laments—about her pain and suffering. Nonetheless, this villancico does refer to Mary's *planctus* indirectly. Formally, it is set as a tiple duet, where the two voice parts split the text of the *estribillo* between soloists. I have coded the text sung by tiple 1 in italics and tiple 2 is underlined; the text sung together by both voices simultaneously is in bold:

Estribillo
Ay afligida madre que así te quejas,
Ay tortolita amante que así lamentas,
las duras ansias, las crueles penas **que en ti se encierran,**
con los puros dolores que a ti te cercan.

Estribillo translation
Ah afflicted mother how you complain so,
Ah loving turtledove how you lament so,
the harsh anxieties, the cruel pains **that are enclosed within you,**
with the pure sorrows that surround you.

The manuscript is not in the best condition to permit a full transcription of the music save for the instances in which both voice parts come together. These consist primarily of parallel thirds (Musical Example 5.2). The key is A minor and thus, like *Si el hado cruel*, does not follow the

[40] Translated in Avery Thomas Sharp, "A Descriptive Catalog of Selected, Published Eighteenth- through Twentieth-Century Stabat Mater Settings for Mixed Voices, with a Discussion of the History of the Text" (PhD diss., University of Iowa, 1978) 27–28.
[41] Burkhart, *Holy Wednesday*, 24–25.

common later eighteenth-century European and Novohispanic convention of setting music for the Virgin of Sorrows in flat-key tonalities.[42]

Musical Example 5.2 Ardanaz, *Ay, afligida madre* (CSG.125), *estribillo*



In case the reference to sorrows (*puros dolores*) in the *estribillo* insufficiently convinced listeners that this piece was about the Virgin of Sorrows,[43] the text of the *coplas* reveals more:

Afligida tortolita,	Afflicted turtle dove,
que al pie de la cruz demuestras,	at the foot of the cross you demonstrate
que en las lagrimas que lloras,	that within your weeping,
se escuchen tus voces tiernas,	your sweet notes can be heard,
si es mi Dios la causa que bien te quejas.	since my God is the reason for which you so lament.
Ay dueño del alma mía,	Ah, keeper of my soul,

[42] Davies asserts that the flat pitches contained in the medieval soft hexachords were reminiscent of Mary's "sweetness," in "The Italianized Frontier," 398.

[43] The villancico likely would have been sung during her feast or throughout Holy Week. The overall presence of villancicos for the Virgin of Sorrows indicates that it was an important local devotion in the *Santísima Trinidad* convent of Puebla, though it was not the only Conceptionist house in New Spain that celebrated this image of the Virgin Mary with extra care. A record in AGN informs us that in 1789 Sor María Felipa del Santísimo Sacramento, of the *Purísima Concepción* convent in Mexico City, requested that the interest of 2,000 pesos she had donated (*dispuso*) be used for the expenses for one day in the nine-day (*novena*) celebration of the Immaculate Conception and for the festivities of the Sorrows (*Festividades de los Dolores*). See AGN/ Instituciones Coloniales/ Bienes Nacionales (014)/ Volumen 145/ Expediente 66, folio1. This document provides further information on the vital role that convents, especially Conceptionist convents, played as bank-like institutions in New Spain owing to the massive amounts of properties that they owned in the cities. For more on this topic see Lavrin, "The Role of the Nunneries in the Economy of New Spain in the Eighteenth Century," *The Hispanic American Historical Review* 46 no. 4 (Nov., 1966), 371–393.

que en esas duras afrentas,	who in these difficult affronts
os contempla como madre	I contemplate, like a mother
entre angustias y tristezas,	surrounded by anguish and sadness,
viuda y sola e quedado, que dura pena.	widowed and left behind, what a harsh pity!

The first *copla* conflates the afflicted mother (*afligida madre*) and the loving turtledove (*tortolita amante*) from the *estribillo*'s first two verses into one, becoming as a result the afflicted turtle dove (*afligida tortolita*).[44] The *coplas* are set as a solo for tiple 1; at the last verse of each *copla* the second tiple joins in to complete the *coplas* as a duo, indicated by the emboldened text above. The afflicted turtledove weeping at the foot of the cross mentioned in the first *copla* must then be none other than the afflicted mother of Christ herself, the Virgin (Mary) of Sorrows.

This piece is rich with layers of meaning. In tone, it becomes more personal as the *coplas* go on, until the poetry switches completely into first-person voice by the end. In fact, it completes a total reflexive turn to the voice of the devotee. By conflating the afflicted mother and the loving turtledove in the first *copla*, *Ay afligida madre* obfuscates the identity of the afflicted mother, the Virgin Mary, in the *estribillo*. It is possible here that the two tiple parts, sung by two nuns, instead represent two female characters—perhaps Christ's mother Mary and Christ's spiritual mothers, as would be suggested by the phrase "widowed and left behind" (*viuda y sola he quedado*) in the final verse of the second *copla*. In the Passion, the Virgin Mary is both mother and a type of widowed wife of Christ—God and Holy Spirit, the undivided Trinity. Indeed, referring to the Virgin Mary as a widow in the villancico resonates with late-medieval traditions which associated the Virgin Mary with the bride (*sponsa*) in the Song of Songs.[45]

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[44] On the familiar poetic simile of the turtle dove crying in classical antiquity see Leofranc Holford-Strevens, "Poetic Humanism and Music in the Fifteenth Century," *The Cambridge History of Fifteenth-Century Music*, edited by Anna Maria Busse Berger and Jesse Rodin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 287.

[45] Ann W. Astell, *The Song of Songs in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), 44. Timothy Mitchell has also reflected on the "mystical/erotic" tones in poetry about the Virgin of Sorrow's "com-passion" at the foot of the cross in his extensive study on Holy Week rituals in Andalusia. He attributes this rhetoric to the

Another Virgin of Sorrows villancico from the *Santísima Trinidad* convent also includes the turtle dove and confirms that it was not unusual to refer to the Virgin of Sorrows as the sorrowing wife of Christ. Or, perhaps, as indicated by the second *copla* of the anonymous *Corazón de dolor traspasado* (Heart pierced with sorrow) (CSG.024), dated 1718, it was not unusual to refer to Christ as the Virgin of Sorrows' husband:

Estribillo	
Corazón de dolor traspasado,	Heart pierced with sorrow,
en tiernos motetes festejas el dolor,	you celebrate the sorrow with sweet motets,
al llorar con gran primor,	as you weep fervently,
a este dolor inflamado.	over this aggravated pain.
Llega a tenerlo, no temas,	Accept [the pain], do not fear [it],
que a su dueño inmaculado	may the heart weep and cry,
gima y llore el corazón,	over its immaculate owner, [the Lord],
que ya contrito llorando,	since a heart pierced with sorrow
corazón de dolor traspasado.	is already contrite by weeping.
1. Virgen la mas dolorosa,	Virgin most sorrowful,
que entre los hombres se vio,	among humans,
pues es tu dolor medido	your sorrow is as great
al tamaño de tu amor.	as your bountiful love.
2. Blanca paloma, que lloras	White dove who weeps for
de tu esposo la pasión,	the Passion of your husband,
cuya severísima muerte,	whose cruel death,
es tu tormento mayor.	torments you severely.
3. Dolorosa madre y pura,	Sorrowful pure mother,
cuyo triste corazón,	whose sad heart,
en medio de un mar de penas,	surrounded by a sea of pity,
se alimenta de dolor.	is nourished on sorrow.
4. Tórtola mas solitaria,	Most solitary turtle dove,
cuyo sagrado candor,	whose sacred nature,
te eleva aun con las penas	elevates you despite the woes
viendo padecer a un Dios.	of seeing God die.
5. Sagrada madre que gimes	Sacred mother who bemoans
la dolorosa pasión,	the sorrowful passion,
del hijo de tus entrañas	of the fruit of your loins,
que en una cruz padeció.	who died on the cross.

work of twelfth-century Franciscans and other monastic orders, yet none of the poetry that he discusses specifically refers to the Virgin Mary as wife or Widow. See Mitchell, *Passional Culture: Emotion, Religion, and Society in Southern Spain* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990), 166–168.

6. Si tus tormentos alivian	If your torments relieve
una humana compasión,	human compassion,
admite por compañero	receive my sorrow as a partner
de tus penas mi dolor.	of your pity.

This villancico shares much in common with the poetry of the *Stabat mater* as well, not least because of the villancico's reference to the piercing of Mary's heart as foretold by prophets. Here is the exact topic of the *Stabat mater's* second verse:

Cujus animam gementem,	Her grieving soul,
Contristatam et dolentem	anguished and sorrowful,
Pertransivit gladius.	the sword pierced.

The *estribillo* recalls the *coplas* of *Ay afligida madre*, in which weeping for the sake of God is likewise considered musical. In this case, it is described as a sweet motet.[46] The opening measures of the *estribillo* give a clue as to how the celebration of sorrow might be achieved musically, that is, mainly through a G minor harmony, little independence in the voices (though not strictly imitative), a prevalence of parallel thirds (although not strictly homophonic), and a melismatic word painting on the word "motet" (mm.5–7) (see Musical Example 5.3).

The identity of the Virgin of Sorrows once again is blurred in the *estribillo*. Indeed, why would the pure Virgin Mary need to be contrite? After all, her own Immaculate Conception paved the way for Christ's Immaculate body, signaled in the *estribillo's* sixth line. The *estribillo* thus evinces a combination of Marian devotions. It is also a penitential work, as the phrases about weeping and contrition recall Diego de Cáseda's *Pajarito que en el aire elevado* (Little Bird Raised in the Air) (CSG.151), whose text alluded to spiritual communion (see Chapter 4).

[46] On the term *motete* in the context of villancicos see Pablo L. Rodriguez, "The Villancico as Music of State in 17th-century Spain," *Devotional Music in the Iberian World*, 189. The allegorization of Mary as a turtle dove was also inherently musical and had a medieval precedence. It was well suited to the Virgin of Sorrows: these types of birds are known for fostering pair bonds and remaining single when one of the partners dies; they are also called mourning doves because of their sad cooing. See Kimberly S. Jack, "Costume Rhetoric in the Works Attributed to the *Pearl*-Poet" (PhD diss., Loyola University Chicago, 2008), 167.

The *coplas* in *Corazon de dolor traspasado* refer back to the devotion of the Virgin of Sorrows by invoking her specifically and symbolically in every first verse ("Virgin most sorrowful", / "White dove who weeps," / "Sorrowful pure mother," etc.). The final *copla* then gives the definitive purpose for each of the preceding *coplas*' invocations to the Virgin. It becomes the voice of the devotee and speaker, asking the Virgin Mary if she would be joined in sorrow.

Musical Example 5.3 Anonymous, *Corazón de dolor* (CSG.024), *estribillo*



The similarities between the villancicos and the *Stabat mater* are to be expected since, as Drew Davies points out, most villancicos for the Virgin of Sorrows tended to trope the *Stabat mater* in some fashion.[47] Having worked with the most extensive collection of Novohispanic villancicos dedicated to the Virgin of Sorrows, Davies, like Burkhart, argues that the cult of the Virgin of Sorrows was easy for worshipers to embrace, because society implicitly understood the mother-child relationship central to this emotional Marian devotion.[48]

So how could cloistered nuns participate in that sorrow if throughout their religious life, they were supposed to forget about their secular families? Therein lies the reason behind the less than usual use of the term "widow" in the second *copla* of *Ay afligida madre*, as well as the reference to Jesus as a husband on the cross in the second *copla* of *Corazon de dolor traspasado.* Neither the *Stabat mater* nor the representative Virgin of Sorrows villancicos transcribed by Davies uses this marital terminology, which suggests that these particular villancicos could have been composed specifically for nuns.

Explicit mention of the Virgin Mary as God's wife is rare. Furthermore, such language is also absent in villancicos for the Immaculate Conception and for the Assumption of Mary in the *Santísima Trinidad* collection. And yet, these marital references appear in two existing villancicos for the Virgin of Sorrows which have come to us from a convent, because, to quote from the fifteenth verse of the *Stabat mater*, Mary was a "Virgin without equal among virgins." No one, not even Christ's spiritual brides, could be conceived immaculately as the Virgin Mary had been; nor could they be assumed into heaven as she had been. Nuns, however, might still be weeping widows—metaphorical widows of Christ—at the foot of the cross. If these nuns were to live their lives imitating Jesus's Passion and death on the cross, then the nuns related to Mary as spiritual brides of Christ and the Trinity, mourning the death of their spiritual

[47] Davies, "The Italianized Frontier," 323.
[48] Ibid., 409.

husband. As a final parallel, Torres notes that one Good Friday, the Virgin of Sorrows appeared to Sor Barbara and revealed to her a thorn that had pierced her heart saying: "My daughter, look at this thorn, one of the hundreds that my son had around his head. You must always have it in mind for relief of your tribulations."[49] She then felt a piercing in her heart.[50] Conversely, though the Virgin Mary was said to experience Christ's Passion, it was not common to depict her crucified; that part of the Passion seems only to have been reserved for the brides of Christ in devotional art and literature.

Although celebrating sorrow through music was a key act of contrition—at least if the Virgin of Sorrows is any indication—moving nuns to contrition was but one aspect of Passion devotion. Contemplating Christ's humiliation during the Passion presumably offered further instruction in humility and obedience. For instance, Torres recounts that Sor Barbara experienced a vision of Jesus imprisoned by the Jews (*preso de los Judios*, as he puts it), with his face spit upon and beaten.[51] According to Sor Barbara, the vision revealed that Christ was upset with nuns' attending performances of plays (*coloquios*), presented in the *coro bajo* by the young girls of the *Santísima Trinidad* convent, instead of attending the Divine Office.[52] Jesus, Torres recounts, then spoke to Sor Barbara as follows:

> Your sisters have me suffering like this again, because they are mingling with the laity of the world out of which I took them. Oh what a terrible offence to my eyes, before my tabernacle: weep, daughter, and entreat my eternal father for the many who are punishing me in my own temple. My wives will be punished, just as they are punishing me; having missed much of the Divine Office because of these vain entertainments, they now come to profane my temple, with disorders that are making me appear as you now behold me.[53]

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[49] "Hija mira esta espina, que mi hijo santísimo tuvo en una cien de su sagrada cabeza: siempre la haz de traer en la tuya para alivio de tus tribulaciones." Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 257.
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid., 189–191.
[52] Ibid.
[53] "Tus hermanas me tienen así nuevamente, padeciendo, por contemplar a los seglares del mundo, de donde yo las saqué. O que ofensas tan terribles a mis ojos, delante de mis sagrarios: llora hija, y pide a mi eterno padre por tantos, como son los que me están castigando de nuevo en mi templo. Mis esposas serán castigadas, como ellas me

This admonition is similar to the vision in which Christ commanded Sor Barbara to stop enjoying the villancicos that the choir was singing to please the laity on Corpus Christi, as discussed in Chapters 2 and 4. Here, however, Passion devotion is completely turned upside down: rather than imitating Christ, his brides are charged with causing his humiliation, that is, their misbehaviors were responsible for his tortures and pain through their misbehaviors. Thus, the Passion also served as a model for proper convent behavior in itself. Proper obedience resulted in the nuns being accompanied by Christ and the Virgin Mary in their pain and in sorrow, whereas misbehavior put the nuns in the same position as those who crucified Christ.

Perhaps as a form of atonement for these minor affronts to God, one particularly ambitious nun at Mexico City's *Purísima Concepción* convent attempted to establish a devotion to Christ mocked and humiliated at the beginning of Luke's Passion narrative discussed below.

Imitating Franciscans, Humilities, the Body of Christ, and Stations of the Cross

One of the most remarkable texts penned by a Conceptionist nun testifies not only to an unusual Passiontide devotion to Christ's humility, but also to a type of spiritual entrepreneurship in the convent. It was this spirit that a group of Conceptionists and their chaplain sought to spread throughout the Americas. The document is undated, but its handwriting is consistent with mid-eighteenth-century script, and some details help place it around the 1760s. Sor Marina de San Francisco, abbess of the *Purísima Concepción* convent, signed the petition along with five of her assistant convent administrators. The title of the source is *Instancia presentada por la abadesa y religiosas del Convento de la Purísima Concepción de Nuestra Señora la Virgen María* (*Petition presented by the abbess and religious of the Convent of the Pure Conception of Our Lady the Virgin Mary*). It is preserved in the AGN. (See Example 10 in

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castigan a mi; pues habiendo faltado tanto tiempo en el coro por estos vanos entretenimientos, llegan ahora a profanar mi templo, con los desordenes, que me están poniendo, como tu me ves." Ibid., 191–192.

the Appendix for full transcription). I will provide a summary translation of the lengthy petition to the Pope, with the most important information highlighted in bold (the underlined words are not my addition):

> 1. Blessed Father: **The abbess and nuns of the royal and oldest Convent (throughout this Kingdom of New Spain in the West Indies) of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady the Virgin Mary, of the Order of St. Francis**…are prostrate with all veneration from afar before the greatness of Your Holiness and say: That it is true…that Br. Joaquín Niño de Cordova,…since before becoming our convent chaplain, had brought to light, and founded a pious devotion and celebration in honor of Our Holy Jesus the Redeemer in the church of the Jesús María convent of this court: making reparation to His Majesty [Jesus Christ] with **devotion and adoration over that cruel offense, and dark insult with which Herod disrespected, mocked, and tried [Our Lord] like a <u>lunatic</u>**: dressing him in a white robe before his court….
>
> 2. We know that **on Holy Wednesday morning, this feast and devotion is celebrated with a solemn Mass and sermon, the use of a sumptuous altar of costly silver on which is placed an image of the said Jesus Christ, that is venerated in the Jesús María convent church, that it is well attended by secular and regular priests, and by people of both sexes** (*uno y otro sexo*), that with all devotion, humility, and reverence attend this tender pious devotion and celebration.
>
> 3. We are aware that **Br. Joaquín Niño de Cordova has written (as we have seen) an Office and Mass, particularly for this celebration and devotion, with the effective desire…to spread this devotion**, thus we know that the **Procurators of the Jesuits of New Spain**, have been charged, so that with all veneration, [this petition] may be placed in the giving and pious hands of Your Holiness, seeking approval and concession for all this New World of the West Indies, with other graces, and Indulgences as requested.
>
> 4. And from these remote lands with strong humble prayers and supplications rendered, we ask Your Holiness to hear us **if only because we are religious women**, your daughters, although unworthy, and **grant that all this Kingdom of New Spain in the West Indies may pray as a double rite of the second class** the said Office and Mass of the Scorn and Derision of the Redeemer dressed in white like a <u>lunatic</u>: in third Friday of Lent, or the fourth when the third is prevented by the celebration of a greater feast…or **any other unimpeded day in Lent, as this is an Office of the <u>Passion</u>**….
>
> 5. Deign to grant: plenary indulgence as a Jubilee indulgence for the day of the feast and devotion…lasting from first Vespers until sunset of this important day, **with permission to expose the Most Divine Sacrament of the Eucharist**, or **lasting from the First Vespers until sunset of another day…or only at the**

> **time of the sung Mass**…so that through confession and communion and prayers… **all the faithful of both sexes may receive this indulgence by way of Jubilee**…and make this new feast and tender devotion popular throughout all of America.
>
> 6. Similarly may the piety, zeal, and charity of Your Holiness grant all this for each and every one of the churches of this Kingdom of the West Indies for relief and repose of the souls of the faithful departed in Purgatory, and may these indulgences apply…for all priests, secular and regular, that celebrate the Mass of this devotion to Our Lord Jesus Redeemer presented and mocked as a lunatic by Herod.
>
> 7. May all these graces and indulgences and privileges **be perpetual and universal across this empire of North America so the poor little Indians (*pobrecitos Indios*), living in their remote villages, can participate and enjoy them [as well], since they lack year-around Jubilees, and lack the joy of frequent exposition of the Sacramental Redeemer for public adoration**.
>
> 8. To Your Holiness we ask and beg…that you attend to our pious prayers and supplications, having repeated them many times, that you give your apostolic permission granting what we ask in honor and glory of God, Our Lord and of the Passion of his Son Jesus Christ, whose memory and remembrance we want, through this medium, to remain always among the faithful children of his and Your Holiness, so that our desires will come to fruition in their hearts….

There is no evidence to conclude whether or not a copy of this petition was in fact delivered to the Pope, nor to a more likely recipient of such requests, the Prefect of the Congregation of Rites. No other sources have come to light confirming whether or not this feast and particular devotion to Christ mocked by Herod became widespread. In any case, the document suggests in the second paragraph that it was already a popular devotion in Mexico City, attracting many citizens and clergy to the prominent *Jesús Maria* convent on Wednesday in Holy Week. This would have been the same day that the Passion Gospel according to Luke (the only Passion Gospel which included the scene of Jesus tried before Herod) was performed during Mass.[54] The devotion might ultimately have taken place in the *Purísima Concepción* convent, given that the author of the Office and Mass for this feast was the convent chaplain. In the fifth paragraph,

[54] Frank J. Matera, *Passion Narratives and Gospel Theologies: Interpreting the Synoptics through Their Passion Stories* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001), 177.

Sor Marina petitioned for the feast to be held on the third or fourth Friday of Lent, perhaps in order not to conflict with the thriving festivities for the devotion at *Jesús María* and the ritually loaded Holy Week. Were it to take place on the fourth Friday, its potentially festive atmosphere would lead appropriately well to the (mid-Lent) celebration of *Laetare* Sunday.

Sor Marina's tone emanates supplication and flexibility, especially in terms of the date on which the feast would take place and regarding the time within which participants could receive an indulgence. She underlines the fact that the feast was a Passion devotion, and therefore could take place any time during Lent, if not on the days she requested.

In other instances, the petition raises the concern of the Conceptionists' wider devotion to Christ's Passion in mid-eighteenth-century New Spain and within male-female religious networks. Sor Marina's relationship with the Jesuit Procurators in paragraph 3 suggests that the petition had to have been written before the Society of Jesus' expulsion from New Spain in 1767.[55] Furthermore, Sor Marina's identification with the royal and oldest convent in the opening line of the letter sets the stage for exaggeration and embellishment. She claims to be a nun of the Order of St. Francis—even though Conceptionists did not refer to themselves as Franciscans in other sources. This and other details discussed below suggest that she was currying favor with the Franciscans or a cleric affiliated with the Franciscans, perhaps Cardinal Flavio Chigi (1711–1771), Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Rites (1759–1771) and Protector of the Order of the Friars Minor (1765–1771).[56] Br. Joaquín Niño de Cordova, the convent chaplain who developed the Office and Mass in the petition, is also mentioned in a later

[55] The Jesuits were at the forefront of helping establish new devotions, especially Christological devotions, up to the time when they were expelled from the Spanish empire. See Voekel, *Alone Before God*, 58–59.
[56] Steven E. Plank, "A Seventeenth-Century Franciscan Opera: Music for a Chigi Princess," *Franciscan Studies* 42 (1982), 188.

AGN text from 1774.[57] Thus, all of these details lead to the likely conclusion that the petition dates from 1765–1767, a time when, in the eyes of an ambitious nun and chaplain, the Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Rites might have been most sympathetic to Franciscan petitions. Given that the Novohispanic church was about to enter its phase of "Enlightened Catholicism," the feast and indulgence of the petition may never have taken hold beyond the *Jesús María* convent and potentially the *Purísima Concepción* as well.[58]

The devotion itself is somewhat unusual because of its unique account in Luke's gospel. However, the image of Christ mocked before Herod might have been familiar to Conceptionists from Juan Sebastian de la Parra's Passion meditation hymn assigned to the Office of Prime:

Salve hora sacra,	Hail blessed Hour,
In qua Domine Iesu Christe,	in which the Lord Jesus Christ
Mane ad Pilatum, & Herodem ductus es	was led before Pilate and Herod in the morning,
Reductus veste alba illusus,	dressed in a white vestment, mocked,
Fortiter accusatus tacuisti,	accused, keeping silent.
Domine iesu Christe,	Lord Jesus Christ,
Has omnes affictiones tibi offero,	I offer you these affections.
Pro illis gratias ago,	For them I give thanks,
Pro illis miserere mei & Ecclesiae totius.	Because of them have mercy upon me and the entire Church.[59]

Antonio Nuñez recommended Parra's book in his *Distribución de las Obras Ordinarias* (1712), as a guide for nuns to commemorate the Passion at each Office.[60] It is worth recalling that *Distribución* was sponsored by the *Jesús María* convent sisters and intended for nuns' devotional enrichment and as an aid for achieving perfection (see Chapter 4). In his explanation for the *Salva hora sacra* meditations, Parra noted that, "just as all the mysteries of the Mass are a living

[57] The Jesuit connection to the *Purísima Concepción* convent still remains unclear, as it is unlikely that Br. Joaquín Niño de Cordova was a Jesuit. See AGN/ Instituciones Coloniales/ Indiferente Virreinal/ Caja 4310/ Expediente 005, folio 1.
[58] The official decline of New Spain's elaborate Baroque devotional practices began with the Fourth Provincial Council of 1771. See Voekel, *Alone Before God*, 55.
[59] Juan Sebastián de la Parra, *De el bien, excellencias y obligaciones, de el estado clerical y sacerdotal* (Sevilla: Matias Clavijo, 1615), 729–730.
[60] Nuñez, *Distribución de las obras ordinarias*, 77.

representation of the Passion of Christ our Lord, so too were the canonical hours instituted in its memory."[61] Parra's message about the Office was relevant to nuns seeking to imitate Christ's Passion throughout their daily lives. Here, imitation is said to be achieved by constant recollection of the way to the cross throughout the day. Because Parra's prayer book was generally intended for religious men, Nuñez was keen to select the specific chapters for nuns to focus on in order to encounter these meditations in Parra's large volume.[62] They consist of seven short Latin hymns to be sung at the beginning of each Office. Nuñez indicated these seven, although he provided no musical notation.[63] Each hymn invoked a moment for reflection within Christ's Passion, as the example from the Office of Prime with Jesus at the feet of Pilate and Herod elucidates.

Sor Marina's petition recalls a number of cults surrounding images of Christ during his Passion. This includes the widely venerated *Ecce homo*, inspired by Pontius Pilate's declaration to the crowds, "Behold the man" (*Ecce homo*, John 19:5). In this image, Christ comes before the masses after having been flogged and crowned with thorns—the scene would become a popular subject for sculptors in the late fifteenth century and peaked in the Baroque period.[64] It also found its way into many Novohispanic altar retables. The Confraternity of Humility and Patience (*Humildad y Paciencia*), made up of silver merchants and coffin builders (*cajeros*), was established in the late sixteenth century to honor the *Ecce homo* with processions of the statue on Good Friday.[65] This confraternity was based in the Conceptionist *Regina Coeli* convent of

[61] "Así como todos los misterios de la Misa son una viva representación de la Pasión de Cristo Nuestro Señor, así también todas las horas Canónicas se instituyeron principalmente para memoria de ella." Parra, *De el bien, excelencias y obligaciones*, 729.
[62] Nuñez, *Distribución de las obras ordinarias*, 77.
[63] Ibid., 79.
[64] James Clifton, *The Body of Christ in the Art of Europe and New Spain, 1150-1800* (Houston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1997), 80.
[65] On the miracles associated with the *Ecce homo* in the *Regina Coeli* convent see Cayetano Cabrera y Quintero, *Escudo de armas de Mexico: celestial proteccion de esta nobilissima ciudad, de la Nueva España y de casi todo el nuevo mundo* (México: Viuda de D. Joseph Bernardo de Hogal, 1746), 158–168.

Mexico City, where the *Ecce homo* functioned as patron saint along with the Virgin Mary.[66] The *Ecce homo* statues of polychrome wood often depicted Christ in a gown of royal purple either standing or sitting, as in the example from Puebla's *Santísima Trinidad* convent (see Figure 5.2). The *Santísima Trinidad* also held a painting of Christ carrying the cross, known as *Jesús Nazareno* (Jesus the Nazarene), which attracted many devotees throughout the convent's history.[67] Both of these devotional images testify to the convent's enthusiasm for Passion scenes.

Figure 5.2 *Ecce homo, Santísima Trinidad* Convent, Puebla



Though less dramatic than the gory statues of the *Ecce homo*, whose pathos engaged the attention of more sensitive Passion devotees, Christ dressed in white as described in Sor

[66] Pérez Puente, 59.

[67] See Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 243; Luz del Carmen Jimarez Caro, *Tipología de los templos conventuales poblanos*, 104. An even stranger image of Christ was venerated at Puebla's *Merced* parish church, known as *Christo del Rescate* (the Rescued Christ), short for *Redentor y mejor cautivo, Cristo, rescatado en su sagrada y milagrosa imagen del poder de un judío, que estaba en Argel prisionero de los moros* (Redeemer y best captive, Christ, rescuer, through his sacred and miraculous image, of a Jew who had been captive by Mores in Algeria). It was a copy of a similar image venerated in Madrid's *Nuestra Señora de la Merced* convent. See José Toribio Medina, ed. *La imprenta en la Puebla de los Ángeles: (1640–1821)* (Santiago de Chile: Imprenta Cervantes, 1908), 170. Torres claims that many Puebla citizens received indulgence for praying the *camandula*, a type of litany using a rosary of thirty-three beads to represent the years that Christ lived, every Friday before the image of the Rescued Christ in the *Merced* parish. See Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 253.

Marina's petition nevertheless lured a reader's focus on Christ's humiliation through frequent repetition of the feast's lengthy title in almost every paragraph. It draws the eyes to the term lunatic (*loco*) that is underlined for emphasis. The isolation of this moment in Luke's gospel as a way to spread Passion devotion in New Spain differs from the very personal, private, and especially local convent devotions analyzed thus far. In fact, it qualifies as the first time that a Conceptionist attempted to foster a devotional feast on such a scale. Each paragraph of the petition swells with inclusivity—including both religious and lay, men and women, all of North America even (*América Septentrional*). In this way, the whole of America would benefit from the devotion's indulgence, even the indigenous people. This latter demographic seems to have been added as an afterthought, as if through a final gesture to the Franciscan concern for the evangelization of the natives in New Spain, the petition would somehow be accepted. In fact, this was never a specific priority for these religious women.[68]

The suspicious inclusion of the provincial indigenous at the end of Sor Marina's petition nonetheless provides some insight into the natives' devotional insufficiencies. As she claimed in paragraph 7, the indigenous communities lacked Jubilee indulgences and frequent exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Whether or not Sor Marina and the Conceptionists had a legitimate concern for these people, their mention does not detract from her plea to establish a Passion devotion. It would specifically include Eucharistic adoration through the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, which she first mentions in paragraph 5.

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[68] Sor Barbara's Passion meditation on Christ's pierced side suggests concern for a more distant evangelization effort also tied with Passion devotion: "Here sweet love of mine, here, Lord, may all souls come: Come to this beautiful wound, all my sisters, all sinners, all the Moors, and make all the unfaithful, Lord, convert to you, so that they may confess your bountiful goodness" ("Aquí dulcísimo amor mío, aquí Señor vengan todas las almas: Vengan a esta llaga hermosa todas mis hermanas, todos los pecadores, todos los Moros, y todos los infieles hacer Señor que todos se conviertan a vos, para que confiesen tanto bien"). Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 259. The Moors would have been a greater problem for Iberian citizens, rather than the local indigenous people who, although converted to Christianity, still held on to ancient beliefs and traditions and were thus in constant need of prayers and re-evangelization. See Diego Durán, *The Aztecs: The History of the Indies of New Spain* (New York: Orion Press, 1964), XXI.

In the end, the petition rings less as a devotion to humility than as a sign of ambition. In fact, much like the earlier discussion regarding crucified nuns, the quintessential image to contemplate the Passion was typically Christ on the Cross. This makes a devotion to Christ at the start of the Passion—without even having been flogged, as with the *Ecce homo*—all the more unusual.

In general, the image of Christ crucified was so important that in Sor María de Jesús' daily Passion meditations she "saw…Jesus Christ inside her heart, sometimes tied to the column, sometimes carrying the cross on his back, and other stations of the sacred Passion, but usually she saw him crucified."[69] Christ on the cross was the ideal that every nun sought to obtain, spiritually speaking, constantly recalling the image and the rituals of Holy Week leading to Good Friday. Every Friday throughout the year, Sor María de Jesús was said to have felt the constant prick from the crown of thorns more severely than on other days. According to Felix de Jesús María, this prick from the thorns emphasized the importance of Good Friday to nuns throughout the year.[70]

Lastly, the image of Christ on the cross would also instill humility. On one occasion, Sor Barbara prayed before a crucifix directing her attention to the two wounds on his feet, "asking them to guide her through the path of humility."[71] She was instantly rewarded for this by being lifted up by St. Michael to drink from Christ's side wound.[72] The image alludes to Eucharistic and Trinitarian devotion, because Sor Barbara's faith in the Trinity was said to have been reassured after drinking from this wound.[73] This instance, however, is not in the biography's

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[69] "Veía…a Jesucristo dentro de su corazón, unas veces atado a la columna, otras con la cruz a cuestas, y en otras diferentes representaciones de su sacratísima Pasión, pero más ordinariamente le veía crucificado." Jesús María, *Vida, virtudes y dones sobrenaturales de la venerable sierva de Dios Sor María de Jesús*, 112.
[70] Ibid.
[71] "Postrada a los pies de un santo crucifico hacía oración a las dos sacratísimas llagas de sus pies, pidiendo la guiase por el camino de la humildad." Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 259.
[72] Ibid., 260.
[73] Ibid.

chapter about Sor Barbara's excellent Eucharistic devotion, but in two separate chapters dedicated to her Passion devotion, where it is revealed that, like Sor María de Jesús, she too had a weekly Friday ritual with which to commemorate Good Friday throughout the year. She performed the stations of the cross weekly (*via Crucis*),[74] while imagining herself watching the Passion in person through to the end. At last, seeing the dead Christ in the Virgin's arms, she asked Mary to hand her son over to Sor Barbara.[75] A nun poet (*religiosa musa*) later set the words she recited to her dead spouse into the Spanish lament meter, known as *endechas.*[76] According to Torres, the poem is included in his biography so that it might be sung at the convenience of any devotee, although, as will be shown, the text seems more appropriate for female devotees to sing:

Endechas.	Laments.
Divino Jesús mío	My divine Jesus,
acerico de mirra entre mis pechos:	pincushion of myrrh between my breasts:
tanto el rigor impío	so much ungodly rigor
Tu beldad ha deshecho, con sus hechos,	has dissolved Your beauty with its deeds,
que en toda figura	that in this entire figure
ni especie me dejó de tu hermosura.	not a trace of your loveliness remains for me.
Quien (bellísimo esposo)	Who (beautiful husband),
siendo tu de los Cielos embeleso	dared decompose so extremely
ese compuesto hermoso	your beautiful composure,
osó descomponer con tanto exceso?	since you are an astonishment from heaven?
Que sola tu paciencia	Your patience alone
excede á la crueldad de su inclemencia.	exceeds the cruelty of its severity.
Quien majestad divina	Who, divine majesty,
esa piedra angular, esa cabeza	dared to bash sharply
de oro, preciosa mina	that cornerstone, that head of gold,
presumió penetrar con agudeza?	that precious mine?
Yo fui, que aunque tan ruda	It was I, who, though smooth,
solo para picarte me hice aguda.	became sharp only to stab you.
Tus ojos eclipsados!	Your eyes eclipsed!
Quien se atrevió mi luz, a hacerles sombra?	Who dared darken them, my light?
Mis azotes pecados;	It was my lashing sins;

[74] Ibid., 263–274. Commemorating the Passion through prayers and meditation every Friday of the year was not unique to nuns in Novohispanic convents. For examples of the Bolognese convent composer Lucrezia Vizzana's weekly Friday Passion commemorations, see Monson, *Divas in the Convent*, 84 and 212.
[75] Ibid., 272.
[76] The *endecha* was a poetic form for expressing sadness. See M. Rosa Álvarez Sellers, *Literatura portuguesa y literatura española: influencias y relaciones* (València: Universitat de València, 1999), 354.

que en mi maldad, aun tu bondad se asombra,	your goodness is amazing, despite my evil,
luego que abrí los ojos	for when I opened my eyes,
fue para darte mi Jesús enojos.	it was, my Jesus, only to aggravate you.
Tus sagradas mejillas	Your sacred cheeks,
ya azucenas, ya rosas, y granadas;	now lilies, now roses, now pomegranates;
como son maravillas	as they are marvels,
en la mano de un necio están ajadas.	they wilt in the hands of a fool.
Por no verlas me postro,	I fall to the ground so as to not see them, for I
que fui yo ingrata la que te di en rostro.	was the ungracious one who hit your face.
La nariz afilada	Your nose is sharp
para partir los duros corazones;	for slicing hearts of stone;
a mi me huele a espada,	to me it seems like a sword,
que ha de vengar, aun mis respiraciones;	that will take revenge even on my breath;
porque muerto me adviertes,	because you, dead, show me
que en las ventanas te cause mil muertas.	that in your nostrils I caused you a million deaths.
La sangre de los labios	**The blood of Your lips**
se retira a su centro acibarada	**fades to its center, embittered**
de mis muchos resabios;	**because of my many vices;**
pero otra puerta miro ensangrentada,	**but I see another bloody opening**
que a beber desafía	**pouring out sweetness and cool water,**
sangre, que vierte dulce, y agua fría.	**and drinking from it, the blood is obscured.**
Como esposa tus manos	As a wife, I seek your hands,
pretendo dulce dueño, y horadadas	sweet master, which are pierced by
de hierros inhumanos	inhumane iron,
rotas las miro, y aun apedazadas;	I see them broken and torn apart;
pero mas dolorosa	but this misguided wife went to your hands
te fue a las manos esta errada esposa.	most sorrowfully.
A tus plantas divinas	To your divine feet, my soul aspires
como a mas alto trono aspira mi alma;	as if they were the highest throne.
porque son sin espinas	only through your sinless body
plantas, en que se logra eternal palma:	can one obtain the eternal palm:
o los claveles rojos	oh those red nails of your feet,
de tus dos pies se rieguen con mis ojos.	may they be washed with my tears.[77]

This type of lament to the dead Christ is not unique to New Spain. Indeed, it resonates with and follows a rhetorical scheme similar to Heinrich Schütz's Passion motets from *Cantiones sacrae* (1625) based on the Pseudo-Augustine *Meditations*. The motets include an interrogation of Christ (*Quid commisisti, O dulcissime puer*), the sinner's self-blame (*Ego sum tui plaga doloris* and *Ego enim inique egi*), and repentance, forgiveness, and redemption through the Eucharist (*Ego enim inique egi* and *Calicem salutaris accipiam*). The text employed by Schütz, however, lacks

[77] Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 273–274.

the explicit carnal nature of the Eucharist in Torres' lament and does not include the Marian devotion, prefaced by Torres, or the sensuality of the Song of Songs.

Torres' lament sums up many issues discussed thus far. The Song of Songs continues to be a relevant poetic source here, recalling, at the start of the hymn, Bernard of Clairvaux's meditation on the passage, "myrrh between my breast" (Song of Songs 1:12), in which he associated myrrh's bitterness with the Passion's rigor.[78] In addition, the conflation of the Virgin of Sorrows with the brides of Christ comes to life as one could imagine Sor Barbara taking the Virgin Mary's son into her arms and then addressing him several times as her husband, taking the blame for each death-inflicting injury in an obvious plea to humility.

After six stanzas of self-deprecation, the seventh, highlighted in bold, changes the mood of the lament to one of forgiveness. It alludes to drinking from Christ's side—the other bloody opening. After receiving the cool sweet waters of redemption from Christ's side wound, his spiritual bride then sings of reaching out to Christ's extremities. The singer sorrowfully extends her hand toward his in the eighth stanza. Finally, she humbles herself at his feet in order to wash away his blood with her tears, acknowledging that for this, the lowliest of positions on earth, she would later obtain a palm of victory in heaven, the symbol for martyrs (see Chapter 3).

This chapter has now come full circle to the topics of the previous chapter. Spiritual communion, recalled by the thought of the sweet blood of Christ's side wound in the seventh stanza of the lament, helps the convent devotee to turn back to the righteous path. This path, naturally, is made up of her four vows, symbolized here with the reward of the palm of glory or martyrdom. Passion devotion thus shows a clear connection to Eucharistic devotion, not least because the Eucharist was established in Holy Week on Maundy Thursday, the day when

[78] E. Ann Matter, "Lectio Divina," *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Mysticism*, 151. The bitterness in Schütz/Pseudo-Augustine comes from gall (*tu fellis gustasti amaritudinem*) rather than myrrh.

Christ washed his disciples' feet and shared his last supper with them.[79] Now I will consider a villancico which continues the theme of Christ's last days on earth and which parallels the events of Holy Week, beginning with Christ's arrival in Jerusalem to the waving of palms.

Jácara for the Most Valiant One and His Female Imitators

Oigan la jacarilla (Listen to the *jacarilla*) (CSG.150), attributed to Diego de Cáseda, opens with an *estribillo* that hails a valiant man in heaven. This image makes it slightly reminiscent of Eucharistic devotion music:

Estribillo	
Oigan la jacarilla,	Listen to the jacarilla,
oigan que va con donaire	listen to its fineness
al valiente mayor de los siglos,	for the most valiant one of the centuries,
que admiraron y admiran edades.	who was and is admired by the ages.
Téngale Dios en el cielo	May God keep him in heaven
para verle y alabarle.	**to see and praise him.**
Oigan la jacarilla	Listen to the jacarilla,
oigan que va con donaire.	listen to its fineness.

The extant parts of the piece consist of music for tiple, tenor 1, tenor 2, and *violón* accompaniment. A fourth voice, likely an alto part, is missing. The *estribillo*'s opening measures reveal that the accompanying music follows standard compositional techniques for *jácaras*, such as the setting of the text to D-minor harmony and triple meter, as well as a rhythmic emphasis on the first, fourth, and seventh or sixth syllable of each poetic line (see Musical Example 5.4).[80] Thus the underlined syllables are stressed with longer note values beginning in m. 3: *Oigan la jacarilla, oigan que va con donaire/ al valiente mayor de los siglos/ que admiraron y admiran edades.* Furthermore, the opening bars speak directly to the audience, exhorting them strongly to listen, which is accomplished musically by setting the word listen (*oigan*) to two lengthy whole

[79] Rubin, *Corpus Christi*, 215.
[80] On the compositional features of *jácaras*, see Álvaro Torrente, "¿Cómo se cantaba al 'tono de jácara'?," *Literatura y música del hampa en los siglos de oro*, edited by María Luisa Lobato and Alain Bègue (Madrid: Visor Libros, 2014), 157–178.

notes and isolating it with a pause before the music continues. This exhortative opening is characteristic of many villancicos, although here it commands that devotees listen to the *jácara*,

Musical Example 5.4 Diego de Cáseda, *Oigan la jacarilla* (CSG.150), *estribillo*



whose text focuses on Christ's Passion.[81] The entire *estribillo* text is sung solo before other voices join in to harmonize the repeated text. In the *coplas* only the final stanzas are sung in three voices—or more likely four, with the absence of a fourth voice part preventing definitive confirmation.

As discussed in the previous chapter, some Eucharistic villancicos (labeled *Para el Santísimo*), incorporated key moments of the Passion. However, the text of this *jácara* as a whole, including the extant text of the *coplas*, lacks any typical object symbolism—such as the sun, a ship at sea, or a vihuela (see Chapter 4). *Oigan la jacarilla* likewise lacks the enigmatic language of Eucharistic villancicos. Even in the *estribillo*, the reference to seeing Christ in the sixth bold-texted line is at odds with the texts for villancicos for Corpus Christi, which usually emphasized belief in Christ's presence *without* actually seeing him. Villancicos with specific indications for Holy Week are practically non-existent. Andrew Cashner notes that Miguel de Irízar, active in seventeenth-century Segovia, composed Passion villancicos for Holy Week.[82] This, along with the fact that a number of scholars have challenged the notion that villancicos were only sung in place of the Matins responsories, suggests that *Oigan la jacarilla*—so clearly appropriate for Passion devotion—might have been sung paraliturgically during Holy Week. [83]

Otherwise, the scenes of Christ's Passion in *Oigan la jacarilla* were interspersed with texts of well-known moments in Christ's life. This includes *copla* 2a, with its reference to the "fishers of men" motif from Matthew 4:19 and Mark 1:17:

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[81] Tenorio, *Los villancicos de Sor Juana*, 19.
[82] Cashner, "Faith, Hearing, and the Power of Music in Hispanic Villancicos, 1600–1700," 298–300.
[83] Knighton and Torrente, *Devotional Music in the Iberian World*, 57, 100, 138–140, and 156. Villancicos were not sung in place of the responsories during Holy Week in New Spain, according to Davies, "The Italianized Frontier," 210. The specific repertory set to music for the Offices in Holy Week has been discussed at length in Robert L. Kendrick, *Singing Jeremiah: Music and Meaning in Holy Week* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2014), 1–20. In German-speaking convents, the singing of *Trauer-Gesänge* (sacred vernacular songs about death) with themes about the Passion of Christ took place on Good Friday and Holy Saturday. These songs were primarily meant to instil Passion devotion among commoners rather than people of the court. See Page, *Convent Music and Politics*, 48.

Coplas

1a Vaya de jácara nueva	Onward with that new *jácara*
al valiente mas brillante,	for that most brilliant, brave man,
aquel que a toda la plebe	the one that made all the people
hizo en palmas le llevase.	bring him palms.
2a Con doce amigos andaba,	He was with twelve friends
que como la suya hallase	turned fishers of men, like himself,
a mas peces mas ganancia	and they gained more fish
la tendían al instante.	at an instant.

Estribillo

Oigan la jacarilla que va con donaire.	Listen to the jacarilla with its fineness.

3a De cenar les dio una noche,	One night he gave them for dinner
un manjar tan agradable	a feast so pleasant
que no hubo mas que comer	that all the food ran out,
porque mas no pudo darles.	and he could not give them more.
4a [...]	
perdieron las amistades.	they were no longer friends.

Estribillo

Oigan la jacarilla que va con donaire.	Listen to the jacarilla with its fineness.

1b Al prenderle cierta ronda	When they surrounded him for the capture,
solamente con nombrarse	simply by mentioning his own name,
basto para que cayesen	they fell to the ground in shock,
en quien era el personaje.	because of his Person.
2b Azotáronle crueles	He was whipped vigorously
conociendo aun que arrogantes,	knowing that arrogantly
que el volverles las espaldas,	turning away his back
en el no era de cobarde.	was not cowardly.

Estribillo Interlude

Oigan la jacarilla que va con donaire.	Listen to the jacarilla with its fineness.

3b Como cansado al suplicio,	Tired of the tortures,
en gran manera llegase,	there arrived in grand fashion
vino al punto de refresco,	refreshing wine
con la bebida un vinagre.	that tasted like vinegar.
4b [...]	
quien deja de granjearle.	who lets him win.

Estribillo

Oigan la jacarilla que va con donaire.	Listen to the jacarilla with its fineness.

1c Abriole el pecho un soldado,	A soldier opened his side,
desmayo el mundo en el lanze [sic]	he made the world faint with his stab,
tanto que los sacramentos	so much so that it was necessary
fue luego preciso darle.	to give him the sacraments.

The clumsy translation of *copla* 2a demonstrates the challenge of interpreting the cryptic metaphors in the *jácara* subgenre into modern language. *Jácaras* are often complicated with metonyms and synecdoche. These rhetorical devices in fact stem from *Siglo de Oro* poetry about heroes, thieves, gangsters, laborers, and members of all sorts of marginalized social strata.[84] Even the term "friends for the twelve apostles," although used in John 15:15, resonates with *jácaras* as colloquial jargon. Given that Christ was treated like a criminal and executed among thieves, the genre seems appropriate for a musical display of the Passion.[85] The brutal severing of Malchus's ear by St. Peter during Christ's arrest in the Garden of Gethsemane was also rhapsodized at length in *jácara* form.[86] The extensive but incomplete list of *jácara* topics and themes derived by César Hernández Alonso gives a clue to how the "fisher of men" motif in *copla* 2a fits within the *jácara* form. According to Hernández, references to fishermen were often associated with stories of thieves, or as he put it, "friends of others' property" (*amigos de lo ajeno*), gained by means of a picklock (*ganzúa*).[87]

Jácaras also tend to have a narrative structure, and thus the *coplas* follow the story of the Passion chronologically. The narrative concludes with Christ's death marked by the piercing of his side. This then results in the spewing of his blood, or the giving of "his sacraments," as *copla* 1c describes it—subtly referring to the Eucharist. The lowercase letters (abc) in the manuscripts show how the *coplas* were split among voice parts. They were set as solos with the

[84] César Hernández Alonso, "Introducción a la lengua de las jácaras," *Literatura y música del hampa en los siglos de oro*, 13–27.
[85] Drew Davies has proposed that a villancico for St. Dismas, the good thief crucified with Jesus, from the Durango Cathedral repertory would have been appropriate for Holy Week, though he does not propose when. In Davies, "The Italianized Frontier," 376–77.
[86] Tenorio, *Los villancicos de Sor Juana*, 124.
[87] Hernández Alonso, "Introducción a la lengua de las jácaras," 16–17.

exception of their last stanza, set to four-voice polyphony. Thus each voice part contains the last stanzas of the missing fourth voice part. Given the chronology of the narrative, the surviving text of *copla* 4a ("they were no longer friends," *perdieron las amistades*) could be part of a *copla* on Judas' betrayal of Jesus. Likewise, "who lets him win" (*quien deja de granjearle*) may have ended a *copla* on the soldiers' gambling for Christ's clothing after the crucifixion.

Coplas labeled 1 were sung by tenor 1, *coplas* labeled 2 were sung by the tiple, and *coplas* labeled 3 were sung by tenor 2. This is the most logical organization of the voice parts and their texts for the Passion chronology. *Copla* 1b, for its part, is particularly remarkable. It tells how Jesus's presence shocked the soldiers in the Garden of Gethsemane so much that they fell to the ground when they came to arrest him—a story only told elsewhere in John's Passion Gospel sung on Good Friday.[88]

Holy Week

As appropriate as the narrative in this *jácara* would have been for Holy Week, it is difficult to situate this piece in a week so occupied with richly musical services and acts of piety that included a multitude of processions on the city streets. Given the piece's homage to the sacrament, it could have been appropriate for the Blessed Sacrament vigils after the Maundy Thursday service, when the consecrated host was placed in a temporary altar of repose, colloquially called a monument.

A 1785 account of monks from Mexico City's *Santo Domingo* monastery, nuns from the *Purísima Concepción*, and the guild of silversmiths, gives a sense of how men and women religious and lay alike occupied themselves with devotional gestures during these final days of Lent. These three groups were involved in a Good Friday tradition in which a statue of Jesus's dead body was taken by the monks and guild from *Santo Domingo* to the *Purísima Concepción*;

[88]John Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 489.

they petitioned to move the procession to the morning of Holy Saturday.[89] It is not clear what role the nuns would have played from within their cloister, but the abbess of the *Purísima Concepción*, Sor María Teresa Feliciana de Cristo, together with five other witnessing nuns, apparently told the scribe who penned the document that this was "the most serious procession of those that stimulate the devotion of the faithful during Holy Week."[90] They also referred to the statue in a manner typical of female Spanish Passion devotion: "our beloved deceased husband, Jesus."[91] They confirmed the monks' insistence that Maundy Thursday and Good Friday were oversaturated with rituals, and that moving this procession to the following morning of Holy Saturday would benefit all of the participants:

> It is true that because the participants are fatigued from attending to the Blessed Sacrament on Holy Thursday, from visiting churches, in which tender recollections of our Savior's suffering are performed, and with each individual's devotionally inspired activities...they will have insufficient energy to endure the actual distance [it takes to walk] to this convent….[92]

These sacred processions were also accompanied by celebratory masses of onlookers of various social categories (*pelotones de gente vulgar*),[93] who, much to the dismay of Church and civic leaders, often behaved indecorously: this led to the eventual ban on Holy Week processions altogether by 1793.[94] It is unclear whether music was performed inside the churches in order to welcome these paraliturgical events during Holy Week as was done for Corpus Christi (see Chapter 4).

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[89] AGN/Templos y Conventos/Volumen 320/Expediente 6, 1785, folios 1r–8v.
[90] "La procesión más seria de cuantas exita [sic] la devoción de los fieles, en la semana santa…." In AGN/Templos y Conventos/Volumen 320/Expediente 6, 1785, folio 6v.
[91] "Nuestro amado esposo Jesús difunto," in Ibid., folio 6r.
[92] "Es cierto que fatigados los concurrentes, ya con las visitas del Santísimo el Jueves Santo, ya con la asistencia en las iglesias, en que se hacen tiernas memorias de lo que padeció nuestro Salvador, ya con los demás ejercicios que a cada uno le inspira su devoción…se reconocerán todos sin fuerza para sufrir la competente distancia, que hay a este convento." Ibid., folio 7r.
[93] Ibid., 4r.
[94] Joel Morales Cruz, *The Mexican Reformation: Catholic Pluralism, Enlightenment Religion, and the Iglesia de Jesus Movement in Benito Juarez's Mexico (1859-72)* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2011), 51.

Music specific to the Holy Week liturgies, however, suggest that at the *Encarnación* and *Santa Inés* convents in Mexico City the nuns employed polyphony for the Lamentations, Misereres, and Passions.[95] Table 5.1 shows the surviving convent polyphony for the Lamentations and psalm Miserere for Triduum Matins and Lauds, respectively. The settings are for four to six voices for some parts of the liturgical text. These polyphonic sections would have been interspersed within chant for the remainder of the liturgical text, and they date from the beginning of the seventeenth century and earlier, as suggested by the presence of the works by Victoria and Franco, who became the chapel master of Mexico City Cathedral in 1575.[96]

According to Schleifer, the anonymous Lamentations for Holy Thursday Matins Lesson III date from a later period because they are based on the Roman chant of the Lamentations, in sixth psalm tone and mode of F; this chant was not introduced in New Spain until the second half of the seventeenth century.[97] Except for Victoria's *Miserere*, containing tenor and bass text underlay, as well as the *Cogitavit Dominus* of Lesson I for Good Friday Matins containing a texted tenor part that descends to a D below middle C, the manuscripts provide text underlay for the high tiple and alto voices exclusively. The multiple copies of these pieces across the choirbooks suggest the possibility of a large ensemble at the *Encarnación*. Robert Kendrick and Tess Knighton note that in other regions of the early modern world, nuns were known for their outstanding musical performances during the Triduum.[98] Kendrick suggests that successful performances of the Lamentations could even make devotees weep.[99] Similarly, Knighton

[95] On the *Encarnación* repertory, see Schleifer, "The Mexican Choirbooks," 241–274. On the *Santa Inés*, see Jesús Bal y Gay, 161–185 and 212–222.
[96] Schleifer, "The Mexican Choirbooks," 69.
[97] Ibid., 262.
[98] For a global perspective on convent Triduum music, see Kendrick, *Singing Jeremiah*, 159–162. On Holy Week in convents in Lima, Peru see Tess Knighton, "Music and Ritual in Urban Spaces: The Case of Lima, c. 1600," 26.
[99] Kendrick, *Singing Jeremiah*, 57.

Table 5.1 Lamentations and Miserere Polyphonic Settings, *Encarnación* and *Santa Inés* Choirbooks[100]

***Encarnación* Convent Choirbooks**	
Juan de Lienas **Holy Thursday Matins Lesson I a5** *Incipit Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae* *Aleph* *Quomodo sedet etc....tributo* *Beth* *Plorans....inimici* (a5 texture begins at Omnes amici etc. Previous text only a4) *Jerusalem Convertere etc.* **Choirbook 3, folios 126v–129r and Choirbook 6, folios 105v–109r**	**Anonymous** **Holy Thursday Matins Lesson III a4** *Jod* *Caph* *Jamed* *Mem* *Jerusalem Convertere etc.* **Choirbook 2, folios 124r–125v** **Copies:** **Choirbook 3, folios 127v–129r** **Choirbook 5, folios 129v–130r** **Choirbook 6, folios 108v–110r**
Anonymous **Good Friday Matins Lesson I a4** *De Lamentatione Jeremiae Prophetae* *Heth* *Cogitavit Dominus etc...murus pariter dissipatus est.* *Jerusalem Convertere etc.* **Choirbook 2, folios 4v–7r**	**Tomás Luis de Victoria** **Holy Saturday Matins Lesson III a6** **(copy from *Officium hebdomadae sanctae*, 1585)** *Incipit Oratio Jeremiae Prophetae* *Recordare Domine etc.....dabatur requies.* *Jerusalem Convertere etc.* **Choirbooks 2 and 5, folios 1v–4r**
Victoria **For Lauds (copy from *Officium hebdomadae sanctae*, 1585)** *Miserere* a4 **Odd verses, and verse 2** **Choirbooks 2 and 5, folios, 8v–12r**	**Hernando Franco** **For Lauds** *Miserere* a4 **Verses 1, 5, 9, 13, 17** **Choirbook 1, folios 110v–113r**
***Santa Inés* Convent Choirbook**	
Juan de Lienas **Holy Thursday Matins Lesson I a5** *Incipit Lamentatio Jeremiae Prophetae* *Aleph* *Quomodo sedet etc....tributo* *Beth* *Plorans....inimici* (a5 texture begins at Omnes amici etc. Previous text only a4) *Jerusalem Convertere etc.* **Pages 199–207**	**Anonymous** **Good Friday Matins Lesson I a4** *De Lamentatione Jeremiae Prophetae* *Heth* *Cogitavit Dominus etc...murus pariter dissipatus est.* *Teth* *Defixae...visionem a Domino.* *Caph* *Defecerunt...in plateis oppidi.* *Jerusalem Convertere etc.* **Pages 191–197**

[100] Schleifer argues that much of the polyphony for the Lamentations was built on Iberian Tones. See "The Mexican Choirbooks," 168–179 and 241–264.

recalls the *Miserere*'s frequent performance throughout the year during burials and at the Office of the Dead. Its Holy Week performance was said to move the affections of listeners with a keen musical memory by associating the music for Christ's death with the music for the death of a loved one.[101]

These types of reactions to the repertory for Holy Week music and rituals in Novohispanic convents have been poorly documented. However, the extant convent polyphony and Sor María Teresa Feliciana's statement about the procession to her convent suggest that it was important for Conceptionists, and likely for all other nuns, that their husband's Passion be honored as solemnly as possible. That convent music and devotional activities increased for Holy Week can also be determined from the accounts of Archbishop Payo Enríquez's visits to various Mexico City cloisters between 1672–1675, here gathered in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Holy Week References in Archbishop Payo Enríquez's Visits to Mexico City Convents, 1672–1675[102]

***Purísima Concepción* Convent**
1672
And the chaplains of said convent are obliged to sing the Passions during Holy Week, and not having a [good] voice nor the necessary [musical] skill, they should find someone to sing them and pay them out of their own salary…. twenty pesos every year for this purpose. (*Ytem, sean obligados los capellanes de dicho convento a cantar las pasiones [sic] en la semana Santa, y no teniendo voces ni la inteligencia decente que conviene, busquen quien las cante pagándoles de sus salarios…. con veinte pesos cada año para dicho efecto.*)

And the administrator will give the convent singers, during Holy Week, twenty-four pesos so that they may be compensated for the work they have on said days. (*Ytem, dará dicho mayordomo a las madres cantoras, la Semana Santa, veinticuatro pesos para que gocen de algún alivio en el trabajo que tiene dichos días.*)

And the said [administrator] will give eight *arrobas* of candles for the [Holy Week] monument, taking care that what is leftover is given and accounted to the sacristan to be spent on replenishing the sacristy conveniently if necessary. (*Ytem, dará el susodicho ocho arrobas de será para el monumento, teniendo especial cuidado de que la que sobrase se entregue con cuenta y razón a*

[101] Knighton, "Music and ritual in urban spaces," 35.
[102] Pérez Puente et al., 33, 58, 63, 67, 92, 148, 172, 205, 239. Also see Kendrick, *Singing Jeremiah*, 160–161.

Table 5.2, continued

la madre sacristana para que se gaste en la sacristía convenientemente renovándola si fuere necesario.)

And because it is superfluous to pay others to build the said monument, considering that the monastery has servants that are well paid, he [the archbishop] commanded that the servants be placed in charge of said task, and that the administrator may only pay a carpenter to help out in order for the monument not to be damaged. (*Y porque es superfluo que teniendo sirvientes el dicho convento se hagan gastos en pagar otros que armen el dicho monumento, mandaba y mandó que sea a su cargo lo referido, pues ganan salarios competentes y solo se permite que el mayordomo pague un carpintero para que asista a ello sin que se maltrate.*)

1675
For help singing the Passions, twenty pesos to the convent singers for their work on Holy Week, twenty-four pesos a year. (*Para ayuda de cantar las Pasiones, veinte pesos a las madres cantoras por el trabajo de la semana santa, veinticuatro pesos al año.*)

For the master carpenter to put together and take apart the monument, twenty pesos. (*A el maestro de carpintero por armar y desarmar el monumento, veinte pesos.*)

***Regina Coeli* Convent**
1672
Plus, every year fourteen candles of twelve-ounce wax and one of one pound for the hearse, and one [candle] that is called the Mary for Holy Saturday...eleven pesos. (*Más se dan cada año para el tinieblero catorce velas de a doce onzas y una de a libra, y otra que llama la María para el sábado santo…once pesos.*)

And give to those who sing the Passions in Holy Week and to the one who blesses the paschal candle forty-two pesos for every two Passions and six pesos for the blessing of the Paschal candle…. In case they do not have a good voice or sufficient training for the task, they should seek somone to do the task in their place…. (*Ytem se dan a los que cantan las pasiones las semanas santas [sic] y al que hace la bendición del sirio, quarentaidos pesos a seis pesos cada pasión, de dos que se cantan, y seis pesos por la bendición del sirio…. En caso que no tengan voces y suficiencia para lo referido, pongan personas por su cuenta que suplan por los susodichos….*)

And, for putting together and taking apart the monument, and putting it in storage, thirty-five pesos each year. (*Ytem, se dan por poner y quitar el monumento y guardarlo en la parte donde está, treintaicinco pesos cada año.*)

The convent has not been [financially] responsible for any feast, because the patron feast, which is of the Nativity of Our Lady, is sponsored by the Confraternity of the Holy Ecce homo of the coffin builders. The candles for the monument are sponsored by the brotherhood of humility and patience, based in the convent.... (*El dicho convento no tiene fiesta ninguna a su cargo porque la titular del convento, que es de la Natividad de Nuestra Señora, está a cargo de la cofradía del Santo Ecce homo de los cajones. La cera del monumento está a cargo de la cofradía de la humildad y paciencia, citas en dicho convento….*)

Table 5.2, continued

1675
For installing and removing the monument and expenses of the Passions of Holy Week, forty pesos. (*Por poner y quitar el monumento y gastos de las Pasiones de la semana santa, cuarenta pesos.*)

For the Paschal candle and the Mary candle, ten pesos. (*Para el cirio pascual y candela María, diez pesos.*)

***Jesús María* Convent**
1672
To install and remove the monument, twenty pesos. Palms for Palm Sunday, six pesos. Oranges for the monument, two pesos. (*De poner y quitar el monumento, veinticuatro pesos. De palmas para el domingo de ramos, seis pesos. Otros dos pesos de naranjas para el monumento.*)

The chaplains are required to sing the Passions, and not having sufficient training for it they should pay to have them sung, helping the convent save twenty pesos. Likewise, the chaplains should be in charge of blessing the Paschal candle. (*Los capellanes sean obligados a cantar las Pasiones y no teniendo suficiencia para ello sean a su costa, ayudando el convento con veinte pesos. Y así mismo, a de ser a cargo de dichos capellanes la bendición del cirio.*)

Give twenty pesos to be divided equally among the convent singers in compensation for their work during Holy Week…. (*A las cantoras se den veinte pesos que se les repartan con igualdad para alivio de el trabajo que tienen la semana santa….*)

For the donation for the Passion sermon preached on the night of Holy Thursday, ten pesos. (*En la limosna del sermón de la Pasión que se predica el jueves santo en la noche, diez pesos.*)

For eight *arrobas* worth of candles for the monument and for the Paschal candle at the present market price, [the cost] amounts to one-hundred seventy pesos. (*De la cera para el monumento, ocho arrobas, y para le cirio pascual que al precio común que hoy corre, monta ciento sesenta pesos.*)

***San Jerónimo* Convent (Hieronymite order)**
1673
And he ordered and commanded that singing the Passions be the duty of the convent chaplains, and if they lack the skills in music for this task, they should find a substitute at their expense … twenty pesos. (*Ytem, ordenó y mandó que el cantar las Pasiones sea a cargo de los capellanes de dicho convento, y si por razón de no tener la habilidad que conviene en la música para dicho efecto, busquen quien supla su falta a su costa…veinte pesos.*)

***Encarnación* Convent**
1673
And he [the archbishop] ordered that twenty pesos be given to the craftsman that installs and takes apart the monument and covers the altars. (*Ytem, mandó se den al maestro que arma y desarma el monumento y cubre los altares veinte pesos.*)

Table 5.2, continued

And he orders that the convent chaplains be given thirty pesos for singing the Holy Week Passions as part of their ministry, including the blessing of the Pascal candle. And likewise, six pesos to the sacristan for the monument's aromatics and Pascal candle nails. (*Ytem, ordena se den a los capellanes de dicho convento para sus ayudantes, treinta pesos por el trabajo que han de tener en cantar las Pasiones la semana santa, como cosa que toca a dichos capellanes con la bendición del cirio a que deben acudir por el ministerio en que se hallan. Y así mismo, se den a la madre sacristana seis pesos para olores del monumento y piñas del cirio.*)

And the administrator should purchase one hundred pesos worth of candles, more or less four *arrobas*, or its equivalent value for the monument…. (*Ytem, se compren por dicho mayordomo y administrador cien pesos de cera, que hacen cuatro arrobas o más o menos, lo que correspondiere a su valor para el monumento….*)

***Santa Inés* Convent**
1673
Forty pesos for the priests who sing the Passions and for the blessing of the Pascal candle; and another forty for he who installs and removes the monument. (*Cuarenta pesos a los sacerdotes que cantan las Pasiones y bendición de el cirio; y otros cuarenta a quien pone y quita el monumento.*)

***San José de Gracia* Convent**
1673
And the convent administrator will buy six pesos worth of palms for Palm Sunday and give them to the vicar mother to be distributed to the nuns. (*Ytem, comprará el mayordomo seis pesos de palmas en el domingo de ramos y las entregará a la madre vicaria para que se repartan a dichas religiosas.*)

And the said administrator will receive forty pesos to give to the chaplains of the said convent in payment for their help in singing the Passions and blessing the Pascal candle and for payment of the deacons and subdeacons as is customary for Holy Week. (*Ytem, se darán por dicho mayordomo cuarenta pesos a los capellanes de dicho convento por razón de ayuda de costa, para los ayudantes que hubieren en el canto de las Pasiones y bendición del cirio y demás asistencias de diáconos y subdiáconos en la semana santa como ha sido costumbre.*)

***San Bernardo* Convent**
1673
And on Holy Thursday the administrator will receive six pesos for the apostles, which are some poor nuns among whom the reverend mother will distribute. (*Ytem, se dará y entregará [a] dicho mayordomo el jueves santo seis pesos para los apóstoles que son unas religiosas pobres entre quienes los distribuirá la dicha madre priora.*)

And, as customary, the said administrator will give eight pesos for the installation and removal of the monument. (*Ytem, se darán por dicho mayordomo, como ha sido costumbre, ocho pesos para armar y desarmar el monumento.*)

And it is declared obligatory for the chaplains to sing the Passions in Holy Week, either sung by the chaplains themselves or by people appointed by them, and for said expense the

Table 5.2, continued

administrator will give ten pesos a year. (*Ytem, se declara ser obligación de los capellanes el cantar las Pasiones de la semana santa, por si o por personas que lo hagan en su nombre, para cuya ayuda de costa dé el dicho mayordomo diez pesos en cada un año.*)

For Conceptionist and other houses, including the *Purísima Concepción*, *Regina Coeli*, *Jesús María*, *Encarnación*, *Santa Inés*, *San José de Gracia*, and *San Bernardo*, the bishop allowed a number of expenses for the enhancement of the liturgies. For instance, he approved extra candles for the hearse (*tinieblero*), which was a large triangular-shaped candleholder for fifteen candles used in the Triduum Matins and Lauds. [103] Lauds followed Matins during the Triduum, with a total of fourteen psalms sung throughout the two offices.[104] *Tinieblero* comes from *tiniebla*, meaning darkness. Thus the candleholder was itself the "maker of darkness," because after each psalm, a candle was snuffed out, leaving the church in darkness by the end of the fourteenth psalm. The fifteenth candle, however, was left lit,[105] and the sources above indicate that it was known as the Mary candle (*candela María*) and an obvious symbol of her loneliness after Christ's death.

The installation and removal of the Holy Week monument was also addressed in these accounts.[106] The number of candles used to illuminate the Blessed Sacrament and other decorative offerings, including oranges at the *Jesús María* convent and aromatics at the

[103] On the hearse see Kendrick, *Singing Jeremiah*, 2–4.
[104] Ibid., 4.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Given the need in some convents to have carpenters come and install these, one might consider whether they were as large and imposing as the catafalques (*túmulo*) placed temporarily in churches to honor the memory of distant Spanish royalty and nobles when they died. Thomas Naylor describes the eighteenth-century altar of repose in Northern New Spain in a manner that resembles the *túmulo*: "a terraced construction…with candles and vessels of flowers placed on the ascending steps and the host, as the body of Christ, at the apex." In *The Presidio and Militia on the Northern Frontier of New Spain* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1986), 435. Studies on ephemeral architecture in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Italy differentiate between "object" apparatuses that involved the decoration of large spaces, as in the hanging of banners around a city, versus "backdrop" apparatuses to be seen from afar, such as a funerary catafalque or a firework machine. The altar of repose could be added to the latter group. See Martha Feldman, *Opera and Sovereignty: Transforming Myths in Eighteenth-Century Italy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 153–154.

Encarnación, were listed and appropriately budgeted for as well. The amount of money spent on such accessories for these altars of repose, may give an idea of individual convents' wealth: one hundred pesos and higher at *Jesús María* and the *Encarnación*, forty pesos at *Regina Coeli* and *Santa Inés*, but only a humble eight pesos at *San Bernardo*.

Remarkably, however, the *San Bernardo* convent seemed to accept poorer women than what might have been typical in other Conceptionist convents. This notion is indicated by the archbishop's approval of six pesos to be distributed to the poorest nuns, referred to as apostles (*apóstoles*), on Holy Thursday. No other convent had this expense in the accounts. Calling them apostles suggests that these women were benefactors of the Holy Thursday customary almsgiving, and that they may have had their feet washed during the Washing of the Feet ceremony, recalling Christ's washing of the apostles' feet at the last supper.[107]

Polyphonic Passions

The archbishop's visitation documents also raise the issue of musical performance during Holy Week. These sources give the impression that Holy Week was perhaps exhausting for musicians, and not the least for convent singers, who were specifically compensated in the for their work (*alivio en el trabajo*). No other feast, save for Christmas, seems to demand that convent singers receive monetary reimbursement. The administrators of the *Purísima Concepción*, *Jesús María*, *Santa Inés*, and *San José de Gracia* were each instructed to pay the convent singers (*madres cantoras*, "singing mothers/sisters") for their hard work during Holy Week. The archbishop, for his part, was especially concerned with the proper singing of the

[107] On long tradition of almsgiving on Holy Thursday see Diane Watt, *Medieval Women in Their Communities* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 193; and Jennifer Ward, *Women in Medieval Europe: 1200-1500* (London: Routledge, 2014). Urban elite almsgiving (*limosnas*) on Holy Thursday in New Spain has been less documented than almsgiving in parishes that ministered to indigenous people. Typically, the provincial churches were known for feeding the poor on Holy Thursday and for selecting twelve people to play the part of the apostles (*los que hacen de apóstoles*) presumably for the Washing of the Feet. See Gabriela Solís Robleda, *Entre la tierra y el cielo: religión y sociedad en los pueblos mayas del Yucatán colonial* (México: CIESAS, 2005), 250; Dorothy Tanck Estrada, *Pueblos de indios y educación en el México Colonial, 1750-1821* (México: El Colegio de México, 1999), 319. Nelly Sigaut, *La iglesia Católica en México* (Morelia: El Colegio Michoacán, 1997), 354.

Passions. He frequently stipulated that convent chaplains be held responsible for the adequate performance of the gospel settings. He thus insisted that either the chaplains sing the Passions themselves or, if they lacked a decent voice or adequate musical training, pay someone to replace them. However, the sources do not specify whether the chaplains had to assign other priests or simply male singers to perform the Passions.

The 1675 *Purísima Concepción* convent entry indicates that the convent singers (*cantoras*) were to be given twenty to twenty-four pesos divided among the singers for their performance of the Passions. It was the very same amount allotted to the chaplains—twenty pesos per Passion. That nun could take part in singing the Passion Gospels thus explains the presence of polyphonic Passion settings among the repertory of the *Encarnación* (St. Mark and St. Luke Passions) and *Santa Inés* (St. Matthew and St. John Passions) convents.[108]

Indeed, the inclusion of women—or musically trained nuns—in performances of the Gospels was not an every-day occurrence; this privilege was usually reserved for priests. The Passions had been sung in chant since the ninth century, but it was not until the fifteenth century, notes Grey Brothers, that Holy Week Passion music was divided among three people, thus requiring extra performers and affording the Passions a more dramatic character.[109] The three main groups in the Passion narrative included a narrator (*cronista* or Evangelist), Jesus himself, and characters other than Jesus were grouped into what was called the *synagoga* or

[108] Kendrick notes that polyphonic music was less often performed between Palm Sunday and Holy Thursday, and that musicians used the extra time to practice in the interim. See Kendrick, *Singing Jeremiah*, 26. The presence of polyphonic Passions for Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week in these and other Novohispanic and Iberian sources, though rare, suggests that in some Spanish-speaking religious institutions musicians must have had little time to practice or rest during Holy Week. See Lothar Siemens Hernandez, "Las pasiones polifónicas tradicionales en la catedral de Las Palmas," *Revista de Musicología* 1, no. ½ (1978); José-Vicente González Valle, "La tradición del canto litúrgico de la Pasión en España: estudio sobre las composiciones monódicas y polifónicas del 'cantus passionis' en las catedrales de Aragón y Castilla," *Monumentos de la música española* XLIX (Barcelona: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1992); Robert J. Snow, ed., *A New-World Collection of Polyphony for Holy Week and the Salve Service: Guatemala City, Cathedral Archive, Music MS 4 (Monuments of Renaissance Music)*, 1st ed. (Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 1996). Antonio Rodríguez Mata, *Passions*, edited by Grey Brothers (Middleton, WI: A-R Editions, Inc., 2012). Javier Marín also indicates that St. Mark Passions set to polyphony were rare in "Música y músicos entre dos mundos," vol. 2, 18. Brothers, "The Polyphonic Passions in Seventeenth-Century Mexico," (PhD diss., University of California, Santa Barbara, 2001), 14–15.

[109] Brothers, "The Polyphonic Passions," 30–31.

turba, sometimes assigned to a whole choir.[110] The fifteenth century also saw the Passions set polyphonically, alternating between chant and polyphony across the three groups of characters.[111] Thus musical Passion settings took on either responsorial form, alternating between chant and polyphony, or through-composed form, in which the text was entirely set to polyphony.[112] Italian and Spanish composers tended to compose responsorial Passions.[113] In Spanish and Novohispanic polyphonic Passions from the sixteenth century onward, the bulk of the polyphony is for the *turba*.

Also set polyphonically were the opening exhortation and conclusion sung by the narrator as well as some of the most emotional scenes and cathartic utterances of Christ (His last words, for instance, and a description of Peter weeping after having denied Christ) (see Example 11 in the Appendix).[114] Christ's words typically received special emphasis. Traditionally, the vocal texture for Christ was reduced in order to draw listeners' attention and compassion.[115] The question remains as to whether or not it was possible for nuns to sing these parts. Soterraña Aguirre Rincón notes that the Franciscan nuns at the *Santa Clara* convent in Carrión de los Condes, Spain sang the Passion *turba* sections to four-part homophonic texture that was typical of the time, but in this convent's manuscripts Christ's words were not set to polyphony.[116]

Similarly, in the Novohispanic Conceptionist sources the words of the *turba* make up the bulk of the polyphonic settings. The *turba* could consist of any number of characters from the

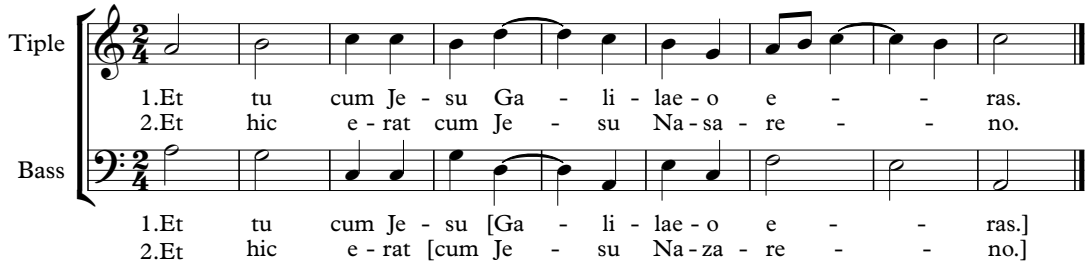
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[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid.
[112] Ibid.
[113] Kurt von Fisher, "Passion," *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), accessed January 22, 2016, http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/ music/40090.
[114] See Fisher, "Passion;" Also see Siemens Hernandez, "Las pasiones polifónicas tradicionales en la catedral de Las Palmas," 234–242; Gonzalez Valle, "La tradición del canto litúrgico de la pasión en España," 60–72; Rodríguez Mata, *Passions*. Brothers associates the emotionally laden Passion parts with Hispanic piety and specifically with Andalusian traditions. See Brothers, "The Polyphonic Passion," 32–37.
[115] Brothers, "The Polyphonic Passion," 47.
[116] Aguirre Rincón, *Un manuscrito para un convento*, 167.

Passion narrative, as Example 11 in the Appendix indicates, including dialogue from the large crowd of Jews and their chief priests who had accused Jesus, from soldiers who mocked Him and divided His clothes, from the disciples, or—and here most conspicuously—from the maid's interrogation of Peter. The polyphony in the *turba* consists of a four-part texture (tiple, alto, tenor, bass), commonplace in many other Spanish and New World Passions.[117]

Much like in the music setting Christ's words, texture change emphasizes the maid's interrogation of Peter—and his subsequent denial of Christ thrice before the rooster crows. Alto, tenor, and bass voices were used in the *Encarnación's* St. Mark Passion, while a duet (tiple, bass) was used in the St. Matthew and St. John Passions in the *Santa Inés* Choirbook (see Musical Example. 5.5 acd). The earliest of the polyphonic Passions, the anonymous sixteenth-century St. Mark Passion, is unusual among the others precisely because it does not reduce the vocal texture for the maid's query or any other sections.[118] It is the only Passion which includes most of the text underlay for the tenor part (see Musical Example 5.5 b).

Musical Example 5.5 a Anonymous, St. Matthew Passion, Maid's Interrogation of Peter



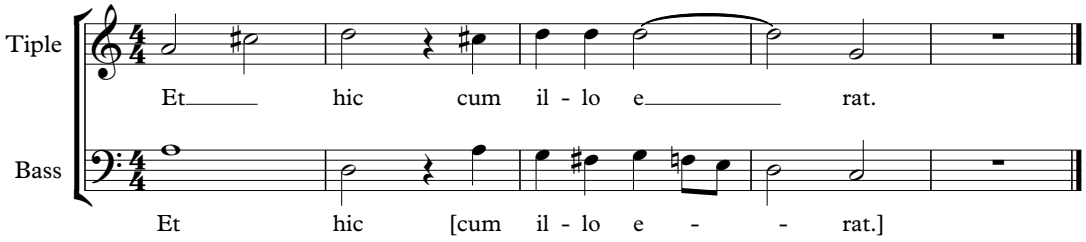
[117] Guerrero did compose his St. Matthew, St. Luke and St. John Passions for five voices, according to Fischer, and there is one six-voice example among the various four-voice Spanish Passions in Gonzalez Valle, 127–219. All examples from Guatemala are in four-voice polyphony. See Snow, *A New-World Collection of Polyphony for Holy Week*, 155–252. For other Novohispanic cathedral Passion settings a4, see Marín López, "Musica y Musicos Entre Dos Mundos," vol. 2, 7–15.

[118] Schleifer notes another unusual feature of this Passion, which helped him attribute it to the sixteenth century: it includes texts that predate the standardized 1592 Vulgate. See Schleifer, "The Mexican Choirbooks," 266.

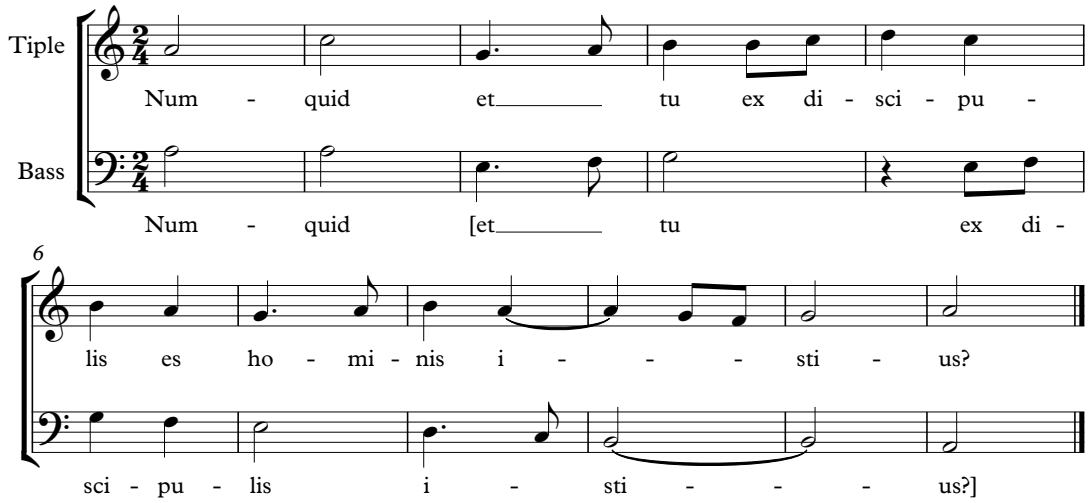
Musical Example 5.5 b Anonymous, St. Mark Passion, Maid's Interrogation of Peter



Musical Example 5.5 c Antonio Rodríguez Mata, St. Luke Passion, Maid's Interrogation of Peter



Musical Example 5.5 d Anonymous, St. John Passion, Maid's Interrogation of Peter

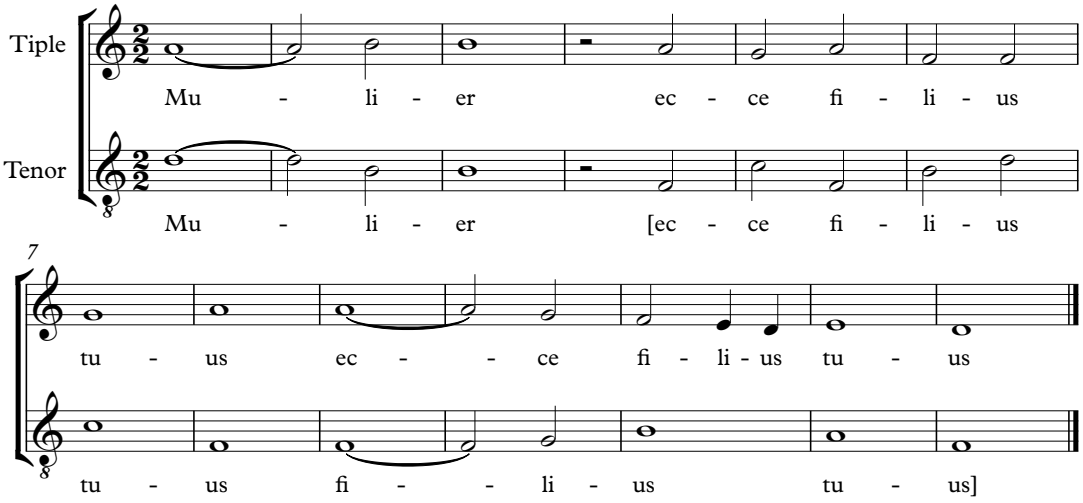


The setting of the maid's words to polyphony was unique to Mexico City and Puebla, according.[119] Javier Marín uses Mata's St. Matthew Passion from the Mexico City cathedral as the primary example of this phenomenon. In this piece, the maid's interrogation of Peter is set to a tiple-bass duet.[120] And yet, Mata's St. John Passion, also preserved in the cathedral, does not include the maid's query in polyphony. All four of the convent Passions include the maid's words.[121] Speculating on these compositional choices, Brothers suggests that the composers may have purposely included the maid's query in all the convent sources in order to make use of the female voices residing in the cloisters.[122] But Mata's St. Matthew Passion, preserved in the cathedral, which includes the maid's voice set to polyphony, complicates this notion. Brothers' argument makes more sense when considering Mata's relationship with the *Encarnación* nuns discussed in Chapter 1. In this way, knowing that Mata actively composed for and lent his music to the *Encarnación* nuns might shed some light on the original performers intended for his St. Matthew Passion.[123]

[119] Marín López, "Música y músicos," vol. 2, 13; Rodríguez Mata, *Passions*, ix–x.
[120] Ibid., ix–x.
[121] Rodríguez Mata, 63–84.
[122] Ibid., ix–x.
[123] AGN/Indiferente Virreinal/Caja 2524/Expediente 16, 1610, folios 1–2.

In the *Santa Inés* choirbook, the anonymous St. John Passion composer made the rare compositional decision of setting Christ's second to last words to a tiple-tenor duet (see Musical Example 5.6). The text is from Christ's declaration to Mary and John as they stood at the foot of the cross watching him die. John is told to behold his mother, and Mary to behold her son (*Mulier ecce filius tuus*).[124] These words precede Christ's equally dramatic pronouncement, "It is finished" (*Consumatum est*), also set polyphonically in the anonymous Passion. Christ's torture was finished only after having fulfilled the prophetic drinking of vinegar, according to Psalm 68, and after having installed the Virgin Mary as the mother of John—or, symbolically speaking, as the mother of all.

Musical Example 5.6 Anonymous, St. John Passion, *Mulier ecce filius*, Santa *Inés* Choirbook



Given the nuns' devotion to the Passion and to the Virgin Mary of Sorrows weeping at the foot of the cross, this must have been a particularly moving passage for the *Santa Inés* convent sisters who had the uncommon task of performing such a short but salient phrase during the liturgy for one of the most holy of days for them, Good Friday.

[124] In Gonzalez Valle's edition of various Spanish Passion settings, only two Passions contain this particular moment. See Gonzalez Valle, 61–64.

Epilogue: The Passion of the Brides of Christ

Sor María de Jesús longed for her last day on earth daily, "with a burning longing of love" (*Con encendidas ansias de amor*).[125] Given the delight with which nuns were supposed to approach their own physical death according to the devotional literature, it is not surprising that portraits of deceased nuns would inspire the subsequent art of painting profession portraits of living nuns, as discussed in Chapter 3 (see Figure 5.3).[126] Indeed, the placement of the crown of flowers on the head of the deceased recalled the profession ceremony, where nuns metaphorically married Christ by professing the four vows.[127] After living a life devoted to fulfilling those vows, nuns were then guaranteed to meet their spiritual spouse in heaven. But role model nuns such as Sor María de Jesús and Sor Barbara Josepha de San Francisco were

Figure 5.3 Anonymous, Death Portrait of Conceptionist Nun, ca. 18th century[128]



[125] Jesús María, *Vida, virtudes y dones sobrenaturales de la venerable sierva de Dios Sor María de Jesús*, 320.
[126] Córdova, *The Art of Professing*, 32–34.
[127] Ibid., 33.
[128] Reproduced with permission from the Museum of the Viceroyalty, Mexico City.

honored further with the art of rhetoric. Descriptions of their deaths recalled exemplary Passion devotion.

Sor María de Jesús was bedridden during the last days of her life, with an affliction that rendered her incapable of attending the Office in the *coro.*[129] The nuns who took care of her reported that she was inconsolable when the convent bell tolled for the liturgies, and, "deprived of such comfort" (*privación de tanto consuelo*), she wept when she heard the nuns singing.[130] On 11 June 1637, at the start of second Vespers for the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, she died peacefully, shortly after having received communion.[131] The nuns who prepared her body attempted to fix her eyes closed with a bit of candlewax, but shortly afterward, she opened them for a time amounting to three recited *Credos*, wider than anyone had ever observed in the convent. She fixed them on an image of Veronica's Sudarium hanging on a nearby wall.[132]

Miraculously, Sor Barbara also died on a feast associated with the Passion. Ailing and bedridden on Passion Sunday 14 March 1723, she experienced a "burning desire to see and enjoy her husband eternally."[133] Then she requested her confessor to hear her last confession, in which she asked him to be the spiritual father of the children she was leaving behind: her daughter was a nun in the same *Santísima Trinidad* convent, and her son Pedro was a local Puebla priest.[134] As a nun and as a mother, Sor Barbara did her part and then entrusted her children to her spiritual leader, in a manner similar to Christ's *Mulier ecce filius*:

> For Christ our Lord gave on the Cross the example of this pious recommendation to all parents of families when he, as a loving son, being in his final agonies entrusted his sorrowing mother to his beloved disciple, and in him all people of the world were adopted by our mother and lady….[135]

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[129] Jesús María, *Vida, virtudes y dones sobrenaturales de la venerable sierva de Dios Sor María de Jesús*, 323.
[130] Ibid.
[131] Ibid., 330.
[132] Pardo, *Vida y virtudes heroicas de la Madre María de Jesús*, 213r.
[133] "Con ardentísimos deseos de ver, y gozar eternamente a su Esposo." Torres, *Vida ejemplar y muerte preciosa de la Madre Barbara*, 503.
[134] Ibid., 93 and 504.
[135] "Pues Cristo Señor Nuestro les dio en la Cruz el ejemplo para esta recomendación piadosa a todos los padres de familias cuando su majestad como tan amante hijo estando en sus ultimas agonías encomendó a su dolorísima

After her confession, the nuns came in to sing the *Credo*, and, as Sor Barbara fixed her eyes on the crucifix held by her confessor, she beat her breast three times invoking Jesus, Mary, and Joseph and then meditated on the Litanies and Deprecations before dying.[136] And so, Sor Barbara died peacefully surrounded by music on the third day of the Novena for the Virgin of Sorrows.[137]

Just as the *Credo* marked the central part of the Mass, preparing believers to reflect on the mystery of Christ's body in the Eucharist and to receive him through communion, so too did it prepare nuns' souls to be received by Christ in heaven at the moment of their death.

madre a su discípulo amado, y en él a todos los hombres del mundo para que los adoptase por hijos suyos como lo hizo nuestra madre y señora…." Ibid.

[136] Ibid., 504–505.

[137] Ibid., 505–506.

Conclusion

"Neither alive nor dead would she return to the world," remarked Maza, in regards to the profession of a nun into the convent life.[1] This phrase captures the seemingly grave reality of becoming a cloistered nun—a bride of Christ—and leading a life of strict enclosure, dedicated to praying for salvation of the self and secular world. When a nun's life came to an end, she was buried under the floor of the *coro bajo*. According to Salas Contreras's archeological excavations at the *Encarnación* convent in Mexico City, the dead nun's body was buried with her head—adorned with a crown of flowers—positioned toward the east, the direction facing the place where Christ redeemed the world by his own death, and her feet opposite facing west, where the light of Christ appeared and guided his loving wife's soul to heaven.[2] Burial in the *coro bajo* was the crowning glory of the cloistered life.

Throughout this dissertation, I have shown a less grim portrayal, one in which sacrifice and suffering were balanced with and inspired by the joy of sacred music and the arts in Conceptionist convents. By examining the spaces for and networks of sacred music making in the convents, I have contributed to ongoing studies intended to fill the gaps in history about the soundscapes of early modern New World cities. Moreover, I give voice to the little studied musical practices of women in New Spain. I have shown that sacred music contained themes and rhetoric that were reproduced in other art forms, sacred literature, and historical accounts, while some topics were exclusively reserved for music, as demonstrated with the widowed-virgin poetry in some of the villancicos discussed in Chapter 5.

That music, art, and devotional texts were created—and sometimes sponsored by the nuns themselves—in order to provide an environment in which religious women could live

[1] Translation: Neither alive nor dead did she return to the world. "Ni viva ni muerta volvía al mundo." In Maza, *Arquitectura de los coros de monjas*, 11.
[2] Salas Contreras, *Arqueología del ex Convento de la Encarnación*, 119.

their vows perfectly is neither unique to the Conceptionists nor to convents of this region of the world. However, the significance of the order remains in its prestigious history in New Spain, its wealth, and—consequently—its connections to the urban elite. These circumstances led to the fostering of polyphonic singing in the *Encarnación*, *Santa Inés*, and *Santísima Trinidad*—and probably in most other Conceptionist convents as well. The fact that the only extant convent polyphonic music sources from New Spain came from Conceptionist convents made it both practical and necessary to frame this project around this fascinating group of women.

Through this study of the musical lives of Conceptionist nuns, I also provide the unheard stories of marginalized women of color, who served the elite nuns by cleaning the *coros*, pumping the organ bellows, or sounding the convent bells throughout the day, thus allowing the convents to resound inside and outside. The musician nuns discussed at length in Chapter 3 also made it possible for the music in the manuscripts to inspire the prayers of their convent sisters and lay citizens who gathered in the convent churches to pray—and sometimes simply to enjoy—the music.

The convent life was an "old-fashioned" lifestyle, completely at odds with the liberal tenets of independent Mexico in the 1860s. Under the leadership of President Benito Juarez, the separation of church and state became the law, and the wealthy convents' properties were seized by the government as the religious orders were disbanded. Much of the archival material, as a result, has either been destroyed, lost, or dispersed, as evidenced by the location of the *Encarnación* choirbooks outside of Mexico in Chicago's Newberry Library, to name only one example.

And yet, in the early twentieth century, when women's convents were allowed to be re-established in Mexico, one woman from the old days of the *Jesús María* convent, having kept her vows, came back to reestablish the cloister. On my visit to the present-day *Jesús María*

convent in 2012, the abbess described their second founding mother with symbolism similar to some of the rhetoric in the devotional literature discussed throughout this project. She called her a lone flame—like that of the *candela María* of the Triduum *tinieblero*—that kept the spirit of the order alive by salvaging the convent's illuminated profession books (discussed in Chapters 1 and 3) and passing them on so that they could be used to this day.

The reestablishment of cloistered convent life in the midst of "enlightened" modernity demonstrates that for some women these spaces provided an exceptional and desirable lifestyle—a "beehive" of female activity in a pious world filled with music and the arts yet hidden from the gaze of lay citizens. Contemporary women still reside in cloistered convents, as in the early modern period, but they are no longer subject to the racial politics so pervasive in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century New World, as described in the profession acts and dowry waiver process.

Scholars of various disciplines must continue to work toward piecing together New Spain's sonic map. It remains crucial to investigate more fully the social status of (women) musicians in New Spain. Thus far, it would appear that musicians in New Spain were of humbler backgrounds as in Spanish and Italian convents. On the other hand, it is well known from Janet Page's research that nuns from elite families were among the most gifted musicians in Viennese convents, and that connections with the Imperial family yielded particularly luxurious music composed by and for nuns. As more archival material becomes available, searching for specific connections between the Novohispanic Viceroys and convents might evince a musico-political situation for comparison, especially in the periods when the bishops of Mexico City and Puebla held interim Viceroy positions. The *Jesús María* convent, under royal patronage, and so admired by Góngora, would be a good point of departure for such a project, as will a number of the convents of the Conceptionist order.

This order of nuns is also the basis for thinking about an early modern New World perspective on the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. Yet, it is well known that nuns of other orders were wholeheartedly dedicated to this Marian devotion, not least the famous Hieronymite Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, who late in the seventeenth century vowed to defend this doctrine. An analysis of her Immaculate Conception villancico texts together with an examination of the numerous Immaculate Conception villancicos from the Sánchez Garza collection could reveal a Hieronymite-Conceptionist theological approach to the doctrine that is not readily apparent from the mere fact that these distinct orders shared the same profession and funeral rites in New Spain. To be clear, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz was a poet, and, so far, there is no evidence to suggests that she notated her villancicos musically.

No Novohispanic women composers seem to have resided in the convents as in Italy and in Vienna. The question remains as to why the social conditions in New Spain created this vacancy. And yet, the Puebla *Santísima Trinidad* convent repertory represents the largest collections of vernacular sacred music copied for the use of female musicians. These villancicos raise other gender-specific issues: to what extent were the gendered devotional practices discussed in this dissertation, such as references to Christ as a nun's husband, fostered at the level of the girls' music schools where future musician nuns were trained? The influence of girls' music schools (*colegios*) and music lessons given privately in homes merit further research in order to demonstrate how far early modern New Spain's soundscape spread beyond the churches. The social-religious environment to which early modern Novohispanic women belonged would predictably push such an investigation back to the convents. Considering the Viceregal palace and *colegio* sources might aid convent music scholars in listening ever more clearly through the crannied walls of the Novohispanic convents and would help us to understand and appreciate the nuns' songs further.

Appendix

Example 1 Anonymous, *Tonada sola a lo divino para la muy reverenda Madre Clara Gregoria de la Ascensión* (CSG.113)

Estribillo

Si el dulce metro de mis ansias busca por remontarse, por remontarse en alas del deseo, no se fatigue por subir.
Pues logro que a mis manos se venga todo un cielo, no se fatigue por subir, no se fatigue por subir, no se fatigue no, no, no, pues logro que a mis manos se venga se venga todo un cielo, ay dulce dueño ay amor que en ti el alma busca su centro.

If the sweet rhythm of my anxiety flies d to climb, flies to climb with wings of desire, may it not fatigue to rise. Thus I accomplish that an entire heaven will come to my hands, may it not fatigue to rise, may it not fatigue to rise, not fatigue no, no, no. Thus I accomplish that an entire heaven will come to my hands, oh sweet master, oh love that in you the soul searches for its center.

Coplas

1. Hoy por buscar al esposo, se oculta en el casto velo la que amante solicita en sus finezas el centro; Ay dulce dueño, ay amor que en ti el alma busca su centro

Coplas

1. Today in search for the husband, the one who lovingly solicits a center within its fineness occults herself in a chaste veil; oh sweet master, oh love that in you the soul searches for its center.

2. La libertad que consagra, es ultima del deseo que dichosamente arde de puro amor en el fuego; Ay dulce dueño, ay amor que en ti el alma busca su centro

2. The liberty that consecrates is the last of desire, which happily burns from pure love in the fire; oh sweet master, oh love that in you the soul searches for its center.

3. Las voces con que se ofrece, son cadenas de su cuello, dándole a precios el oro, del mas amoroso incendio; Ay dulce dueño, ay amor que en ti el alma busca su centro

3. The voices with which she offers herself, are necklaces given at the price of gold from the most loving passion; oh sweet master, oh love that in you the soul searches for its center.

4. Por unirse al dulce esposo, a el mundo ponen en desprecio, y llamándole amoroso, repite con dulces ecos; Ay dulce dueño, ay amor que en ti el alma busca su centro

4. In order to unite herself with the sweet husband, she despises the world, and calling him loving she repeats with sweat echoes; oh sweet master, oh love that in you the soul searches for its center.

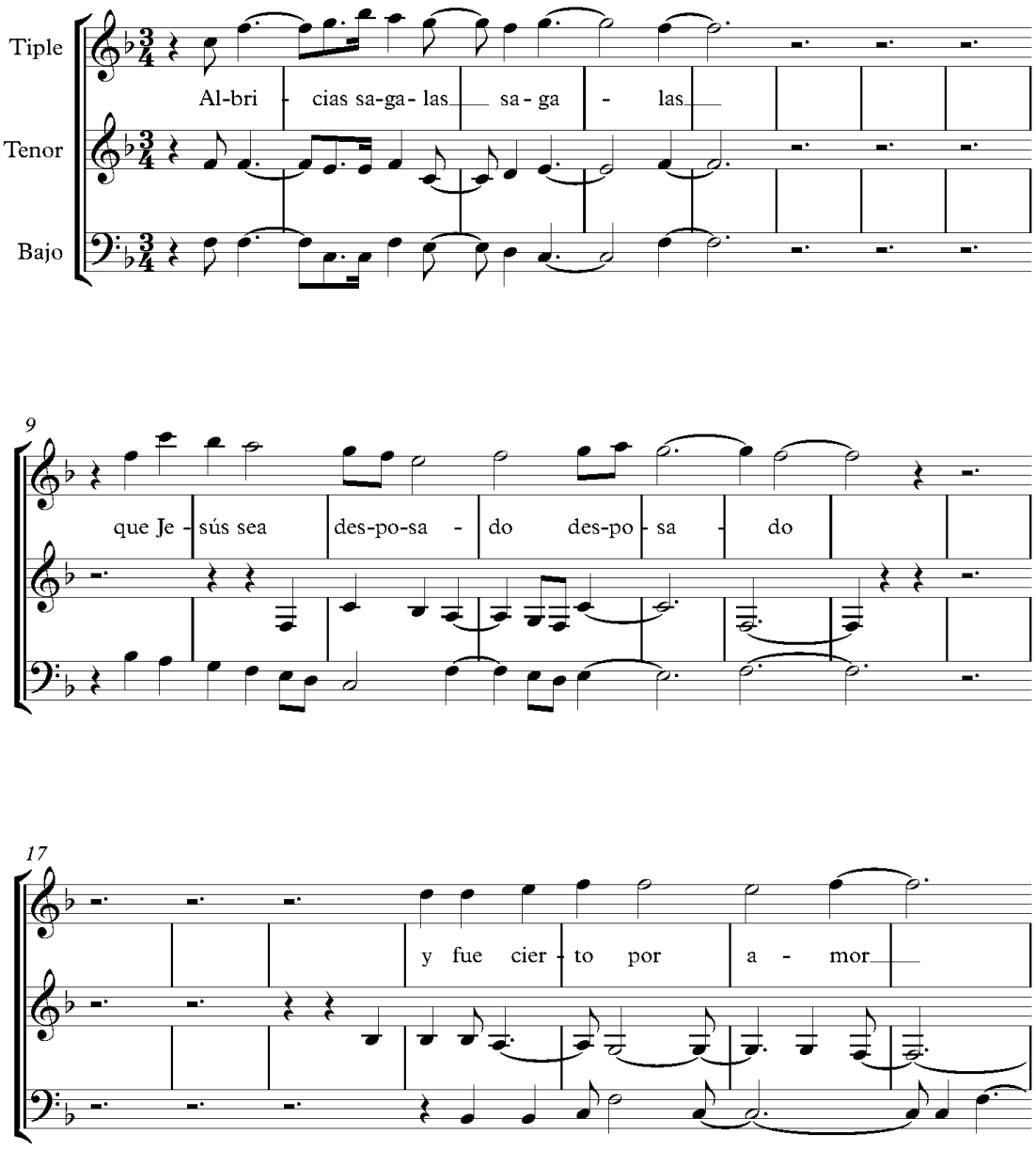
Example 2 Anonymous, *Las vírgenes prudentes* (CSG.304)

1. Las vírgenes prudentes	The prudent virgins,
con lámparas ardientes	with flaming lanterns,
reciben reverentes	receive reverently
al esposo mejor	the best husband.
Pues eres amorosa	Indeed you are loving,
electa para esposa	elected to be a wife,
de su luz mariposa	a butterfly of his light.
triunfe la dicha y muera el traidor	May joy triumph and the traitor die.
2. Encienden las estrellas	The stars ignite
con sus luces mas bellas	with the most beautiful lights,
las fulgentes centellas	the dazzling sparks
de tan limpio fulgor	of such a pure brilliance.
Los celestes zafiros	May the sapphire heavens,
donde el sol hace giros	where the sun turns,
llenen de amor los tiros	fill the rays with love.
triunfe la dicha y muera el traidor	May joy triumph and the traitor die.
3. Al triunfo se aperciba	Triumph warns
de la palma y oliva	the palm and olive,
La rama mas esquiva	the most evasive branches,
I la mas tierna flor	and the most tender flower.
Porque de tu persona	May your being,
que amor puro aprisiona	which imprisons pure love,
prevenga la corona	anticipate the crown.
triunfe la dicha y muera el traidor	May joy triumph and the traitor die.
4. Si del mundo olvidada	If being forgotten from the world
pretendes animada	you desire with high spirits, truly
buscas enamorada al soberano Amor	you seek for the sovereign lover.
Tu pecho siempre amante	If your heart is always loving,
con afecto constante	with constant affection,
será justa que cante	it will be just for you to sing.
triunfe la dicha y muera el traidor	May joy triumph and the traitor die.
5. Del mundo y sus enemigos	Of the world and its enemies,
que alaga con sus daños	which flatters with its malaise,
triunfen tus tiernos años	may your youth triumph.
Y del divino Amor	And of the divine lover,
de puestos los aliños	who offers you dressing,
responde a los cariños	respond to the affections
con los blancos armiños	with the finest garments.
triunfe tu dicha y muera el traidor	May joy triumph and the traitor die.

Example 2, continued

6. Amor es quien te obliga	Love is who obliges you,
que con dulce fatiga	with sweet fatigue,
su pura senda siga	to continue his sweet path.
El claro resplandor	The clear radiance
veras con evidencia	you will see as evidence,
que sube la apariencia	as its appearance rises
del monte la eminencia	out of the hill as eminence.
triunfe tu dicha y muera el traidor	May joy triumph and the traitor die.

Example 3 Anonymous, *Albricias sagalas, estribillo*, first choir, mm. 1–47



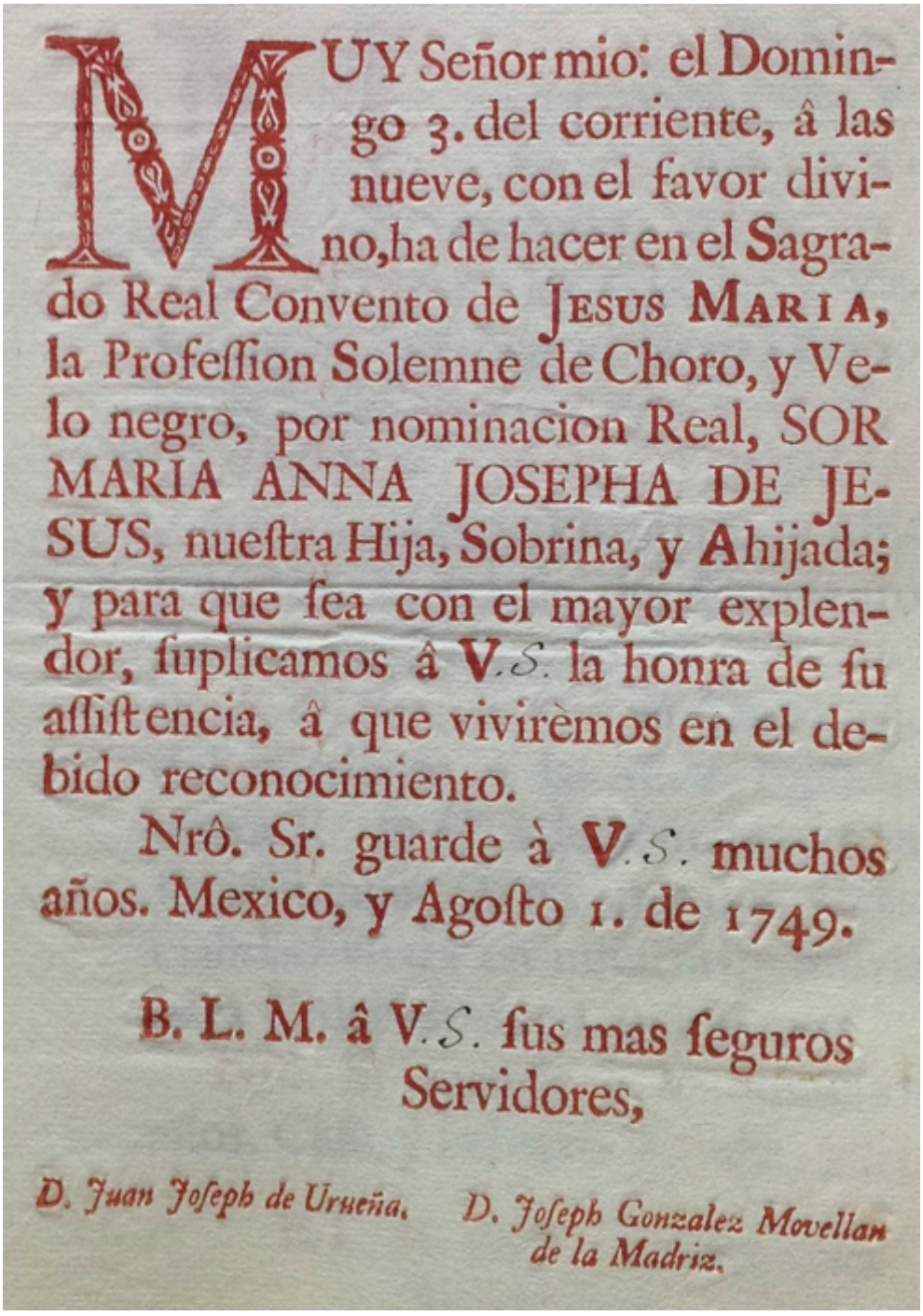
Example 3, continued



Example 4 Anonymous, *Albricias sagalas*, tiple, first choir, facsimile



Example 5 Invitation to Solemn Profession, ACCMM, Correspondencia, 1617–1789, Rollo 1288–1290, Legajo: 25, Caja: 0, Exp: 0, U: 92



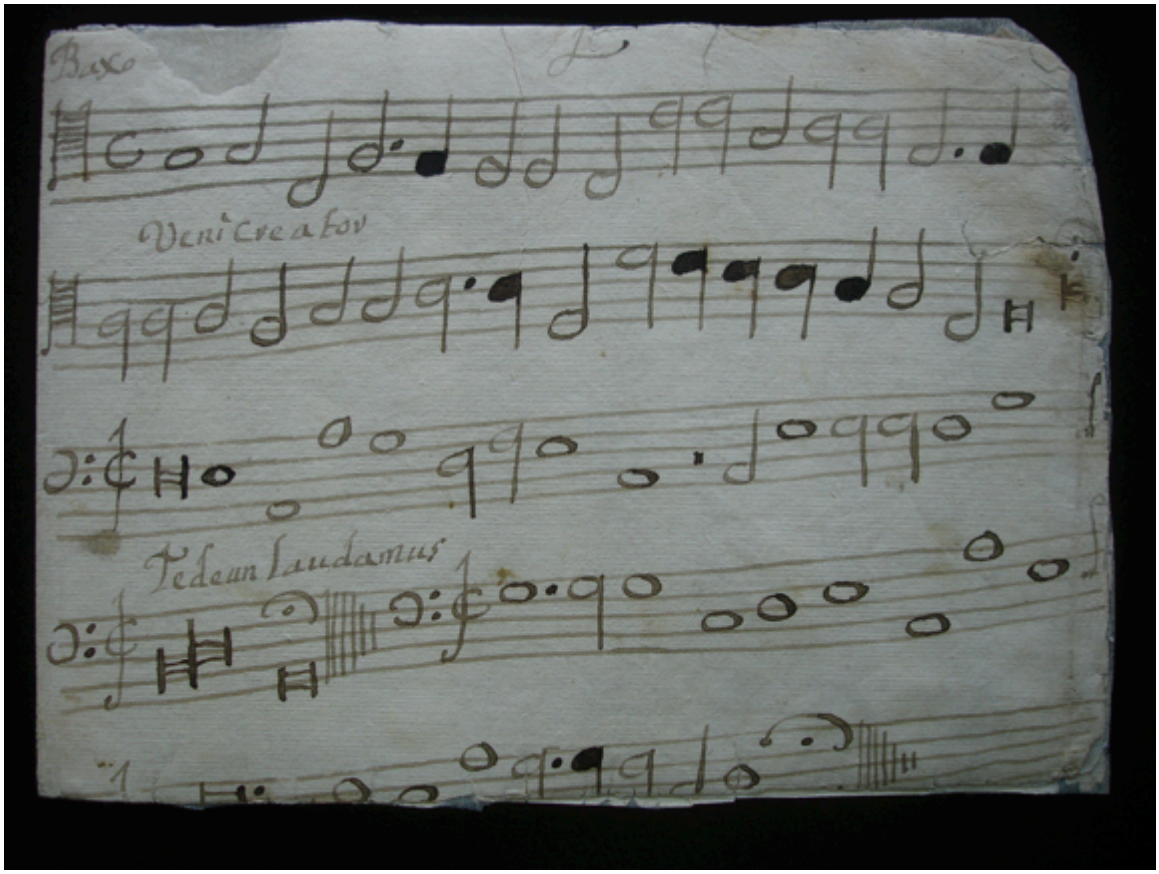
MUY Señor mio: el Domingo 3. del corriente, â las nueve, con el favor divino, ha de hacer en el Sagrado Real Convento de JESUS MARIA, la Profeſſion Solemne de Choro, y Velo negro, por nominacion Real, SOR MARIA ANNA JOSEPHA DE JESUS, nueſtra Hija, Sobrina, y Ahijada; y para que ſea con el mayor explendor, ſuplicamos â V.S. la honra de ſu aſſiſtencia, â que vivirèmos en el debido reconocimiento.

Nrô. Sr. guarde à V.S. muchos años. Mexico, y Agoſto 1. de 1749.

B. L. M. â V.S. ſus mas ſeguros Servidores,

D. Juan Joſeph de Urueña. *D. Joſeph Gonzalez Movellan de la Madriz.*

Example 6 Anonymous, *Veni Creator Spiritus* and *Te Deum* (CSG.118), bass



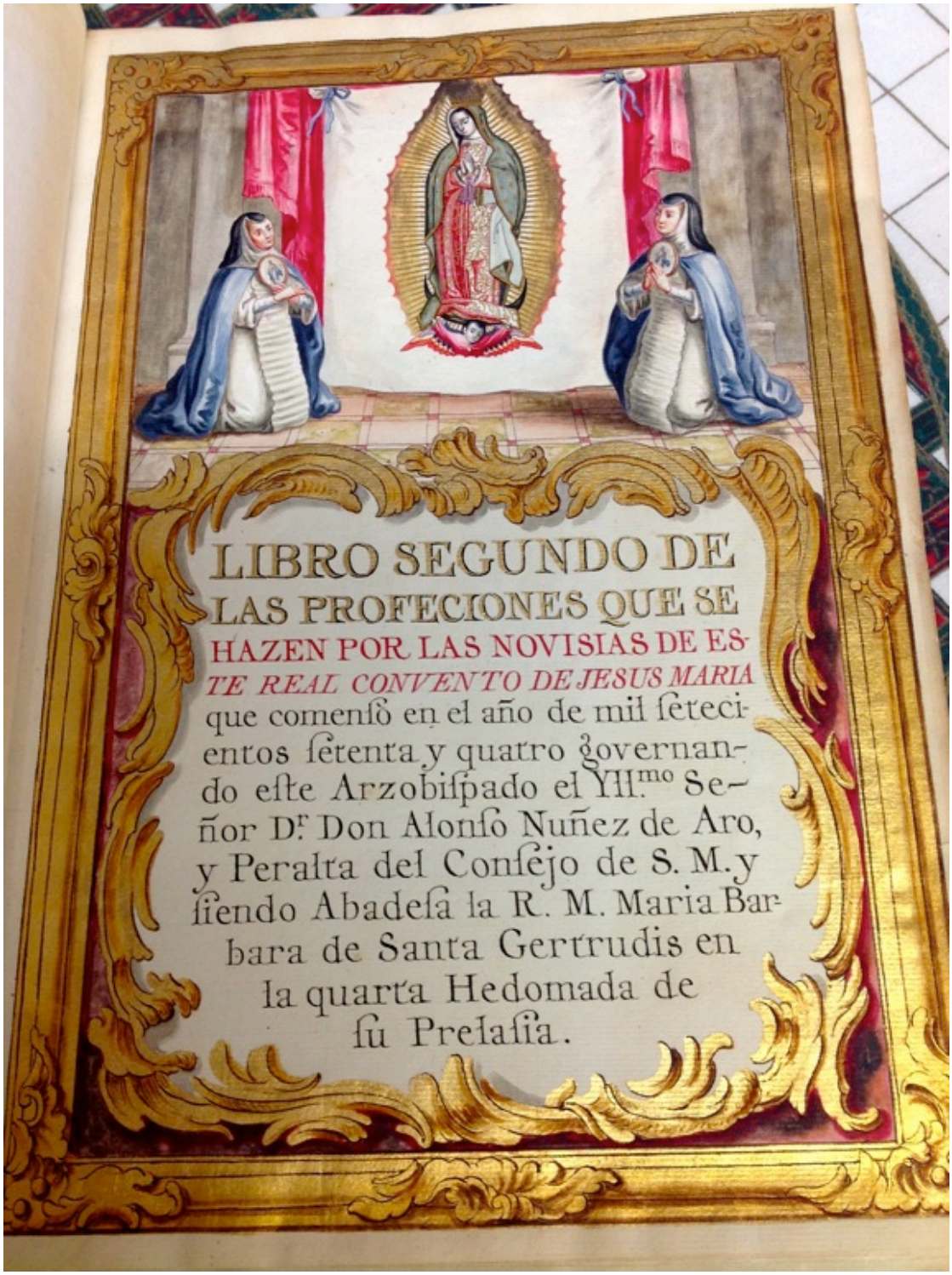
Example 7a *Immaculate Conception, Jesús María* Convent Profession Book, ca. 1553, folio 3



Example 7b *The Boy Jesus in the Temple*, *Jesús María* Convent Profession Book, ca. 1553, folio 4



Example 7c *Frontispiece, Jésus María* Convent Profession Book, ca. 1774, folio 2



Example 7d *The Boy Jesus in the Temple*, *Jesús María* Convent Profession Book, ca. 1774, folio 4



Example 8 Juan de Baeza, *Chansoneta a4 a la profesión de Theresica la chiquita*, first tiple (*Estribillo* covered over with new text)



Example 9 Diego de Cáseda, *Pajarito que en el aire elevado* (CSG.151)

Estribillo

En el aire pajarito,
en el aire elevado con dulces motetes
festeja tu amor al cantar con gran primor
a este Dios sacramentado.
Llega a comerle no temas a este divino
bocado. No te engañe el corazón
Come contrito y llorando,
en el aire pajarito elevado

In the air little bird,
in the air raised with sweet motets,
your love celebrates, as it sings with
great skill, to this Sacramental God.
Come and eat it of it, do not fear this
divine morsel. Let not your heart
deceive you. Eat with remorse and [eat
while] weeping, little bird raised in the
air.

Coplas

1. Dulce armonía, armonía de plumas,
que con sonora atención hoy rindes,
tantos gorjeos a solo un trino que es
Dios.

1. Sweet harmony, harmony of feathers,
that with sonorous attention you yield
today, so many chirps to one trinity that
is God.

Example 9, continued

2. No cantes porque te importa para rendirle a tu amor. Mas la firmeza en el pecho, que la mudanza en la voz.	Do not sing because you care to perform for your love. Firmness [of faith] in the heart is greater than the flux of the voice.
3. Si el dolor de amante times, no cantes sonora. Mira que la destemplanza hace armonía al dolor.	If you fake the pain of being a lover, do not sing sonorously. Realize that distemper harmonizes with pain.
4. Llora pues con los ojos. Retorico el corazón que esta en lo mudo del llanto, lo elocuente del amor.	Cry then with your eyes. Rhetorical is the heart that is mute from weeping, the eloquence of love.
5. Mas si quieres con dulzura de esa forma cantar hoy, forma bien tu voz los puntos. Por que está en los puntos Dios.	But if you want to sing in such a sweet form today, conform your voice well to the notes. Because in the notes is God.
6. Tu pesar no se suspenda de esa dulce elevación, ni tu dolor haga pausas, aun que haga pausas tu voz.	May your weight not suspend from that sweet elevation, nor your pain pause, even if your voice pauses.

Example 10 *Instancia presentada por la abadesa y religiosas del Convento de la Purísima Concepción de Nuestra Señora la Virgen María*, AGN/ Instituciones Coloniales/ Indiferente Virreinal/ Caja 0565/ Expediente 023, undated

Beatísimo Padre

La abadesa, y religiosas, del real y mas antiguo Convento (en todo este Reino de la Nueva España, en las Indias Occidentales) de la Purísima Concepción de Nuestra Señora la Virgen María, del Orden de San Francisco, como mejor halla lugar por derecho, parecemos postradas con toda veneración desde aquí ante la grandeza de Vuestra Santidad y decimos: Que es cierto y nos consta por relación, y por la publica voz que el Br. Don Joaquín Niño de Córdova, Presbítero de este Arzobispado de México, nuestro capellán, o párroco claustral: desde antes que fuese señalado por la sagrada mitra para nuestro tal capellán ya había sacado a luz, y fundado una piadosa devoción, y fiesta en honra de Nuestro Santo Jesús Redentor en la Iglesia del Monasterio, también real, de religiosas de Jesús María de esta corte: desagraviando a su Majestad con cultos de adoración y reverencia, de aquel cruel agravio, y negro improperio con que Herodes lo desprecio, lo burlo, y trato como loco: vistiéndolo de una vestidura blanca delante de toda su corte, y con ella juntamente.

Sabemos que el Miércoles Santo por la mañana, se celebra esta fiesta, y devoción, con Misa solemne, y sermón que se dispone un suntuoso altar de costosa plata en que se

Example 10, continued

coloca, una imagen del mismo Jesucristo Redentor Nuestro que se venera en dicha iglesia de religiosas de Jesús María, que ay mucha asistencia de eclesiásticos, seculares y regulares, y de pueblo de uno y otro sexo: que con toda devoción, humildad, y reverencia asisten a tan tierna como piadosa devoción, y fiesta.

Nos consta también que dicho Br. Don Joaquín Niño de Córdova ha compuesto (como lo hemos visto) un Oficio y Misa, propios de esta fiesta y devoción, con el deseo eficaz, y santo fin de que esta devoción se extienda, para lo cual sabemos que por medio de los Reverendísimos Padres Procuradores de la Compañía de Jesús de esta Provincia de Nueva España, lo despacha, para que con toda veneración, sea puesto en las liberales y piadosas manos de Vuestra Santidad, pretendiendo su aprobación, y concesión para todo este nuevo mundo de las Indias Occidentales, con otras gracias, e Indulgencias que se pide.

Y nosotras desde estas remotas tierras con humildes ruegos fuertes, y rendidas suplicas, pedimos a Vuestra Santidad nos oiga siquiera por que somos mujeres religiosas sus hijas, aunque indignas, y nos conceda que en todo este Reino de la Nueva España en las Indias Occidentales, se rece bajo el rito doble de Segunda Clase, el Citado oficio, y Misa del desprecio y burla del Redentor vestido de blanco como loco: en viernes tercero de Cuaresma, o en el de la Semana Siguiente que es el cuarto, cuando el tercero estuviere impedido con fiesta de mayor rito, o de igual a este, pero, intransferible por de precepto de oír Misa, o en otro cualquier día de la cuaresma no impedido, por ser este oficio de Pasión.

Que se digne Conceder Indulgencia plenaria a todos eclesiásticos, seculares y regulares, de uno y otro sexo, que obligados a rezar las horas canónicas la que hayan y consigan, solo con la diligencia de rezar este propio oficio de Nuestro Señor Jesús Redentor despreciado y burlado vestido de una vestidura blanca como loco: y los que no pudieren por legitimo impedimento rezarlo todo, como recen la parte que pudieren. Por ejemplo los Laudes solos, o solo las horas, o las Vísperas con Completes, también que hallan y consigan dicha Indulgencia plenaria.

Que se digne conceder: Indulgencia plenaria por modo de Jubileo para el día de esta fiesta, y devoción, que es como dicho es el viernes tercero de cuaresma (y otro a que se traslade cuando este, o el siguiente cuarto estuvieren impedidos) desde las primeras Vísperas hasta puesto el sol de este señalado día, con facultad así mismo de exponer a la adoración publica de los fieles el Divinísimo Sacramento de la Eucaristía, o desde las primeras Vísperas hasta puesto el sol de otro día, o solo este día mismo de la fiesta: o solo al tiempo de la Misa cantada, según la posibilidad de las Iglesias: en que confesando y comulgando y habiendo la oración que se acostumbra y se señala: todos los fieles de recepto de uno y otro sexo hallan y consigan dicha Indulgencia por modo de jubileo, de suerte señor que se haga celebre este día de esta fiesta nueva y tierna devoción en toda esta América.

Que así mismo se digne la piedad, celo y caridad de Vuestra Santidad de conceder todo lo dicho para todas y cada una de las Iglesias de este Reino de las Indias Occidentales

Example 10, continued

con mas que pedimos para el alivio y descanso de las almas de los fieles difuntos del Purgatorio, y es que estas Indulgencias se les puedan aplicar por modo de sufragio y que en este día esta fiesta (ahora sea en el; ahora para en el que se traslade) todos los altares de todas y cada una de las Iglesias de esta América Septentrional, sean de privilegio de alma para todos los sacerdotes, seculares y regulares que celebrasen la propia Misa de esta devoción a Nuestro Señor Jesús Redentor presentado y burlado como loco por Herodes.

Que todas estas gracias e Indulgencias y privilegios sean perpetuos, y universal a todo este imperio de la América Septentrional para que los pobrecitos Indios que viven en sus remotos pueblos participen y gocen también de ellos ya que carecen de Jubileo circular, y de gozar a menudo la presencia de Jesús Redentor Sacramentado expuesto a la adoración publica.

Por tanto: A Vuestra Santidad pedimos y suplicamos postradas con toda humildad y reverencia ante Sus SS. PP. se sirva decir nuestros piadosos ruegos y atender a nuestras rendidas suplicas teniéndolas por repetidas una y muchas veces para el fin de despachar y dar sus Apostólicas letras concediendo en ellas cuanto le pedimos a honra y gloria de Dios Nuestro Señor y de la Pasión de su hijo Jesucristo, cuya memoria y recuerdo queremos que por este medio permanezca siempre entre todos los fieles hijos suyos y de Vuestra Santidad para que en sus corazones haga el fruto que deseamos.

Marina de San Francisco, Abadesa
María Gertrudis de San José, Vicaria
María Gertrudis de Guadalupe, Maestre de Consejo
Juana Estefanía del Señor San José, Definidora
María Hipólita de San José, Definidora
María Lucía del Señor San José, Definidora

Example 11 Organization of *Encarnación* and *Santa Inés* Convent Polyphonic Passion Settings

Anonymous, St. Matthew Passion for Palm Sunday

***Santa Inés* Convent Choirbook pp. 244–252**
Voice Parts and Clefs: Tiple, C1; Alto, C3; Tenor, C4; Bass, F4
Four-part texture and clefs consistent unless noted otherwise
No text underlay for tenor and bass parts in phrases longer than three words except for text incipit

Narrator Exordium: *Passio Domini Nostri Jesu Christi secundum Matthaeum.*
In illo tempore.

Turba
Priests and Scribes *Non in die festo.*
Disciples *Ut quid perditio haec? potuit enim unguentum istud venumdari multo, et dari pauperibus.*
Disciples *Ubi vis paremus tibi comedere Pascha?*

Christ (Alto, C2; Alto, C3; Bass, C4; B flat added) *Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem.*

Turba
Crowd *Hic dixit: Possum destruere templum Dei, et post triduum reaedificare illud.*
Crowd *Reus est mortis.*
Captors *Prophetiza nobis, Christe, qui est qui te percussit?*
Maids (Tiple, Bass) *Et tu cum Jesu Galilaeo eras; Et hic erat cum Jesu Nazareno.*
Bystanders *Vere et tu ex illis es: nam et loquela tua manifestum te facit.*

Narrator *Et egressus foras, flevit amare.*

Turba
Priests and Elders *Quid ad nos? tu videris.*
Priests *Non licet mittere eos in corbonam: quia pretium sanguinis est.*
Crowd *Barabbam.*
Crowd *Crucifigatur.*
Crowd *Sanguis ejus super nos, et super filios nostros.*
Soldiers *Ave Rex Judaeorum.*
Bystanders *Vah qui destruis templum Dei, et in triduo illud reaedificas: salva temetipsum: si Filius Dei es, descende de cruce.*
Priests, Scribes, and Elders *Alios salvos fecit, seipsum non potest salvum facere: si rex Israel est, descendat nunc de cruce, et credimus ei: confidit in Deo: liberet nunc, si vult eum: dixit enim: Quia Filius Dei sum.*

Christ (Alto, C2; Alto, C2; Tenor, C3; B flat added) *Eli, Eli lamma sabacthani?*
Christ (Alto, C2; Alto, C2; Tenor, C3; B flat added) *Deus meus, Deus meus, ut quid dereliquisti me?*

Example 11, continued

Turba
Bystanders *Eliam vocat iste.*
Bystanders *Sine, videamus an veniat Elias liberans eum.*
Bystanders and Centurion *Vere Filius Dei erat iste.*

Anonymous, St. Mark Passion for Tuesday of Holy Week

***Encarnación* Convent Choirbook 3, folios 134r, 136r–138v; Choirbook 5 (copy), folios 12v–15r**
Voice Parts, Clefs: Tiple, C2; Alto, C3; Tenor, C4; Bass, F4;
Accidentals: B flat and E flat in key signature
Four-part texture and clefs consistent throughout
No text underlay for tenor and bass parts in phrases longer than three words except for text incipit unless noted otherwise

Narrator (Includes Text underlay for Tenor, range G3–D4) Exordium: *Passio Domini Nostri Jesu Christi secundum Marcum.*
In illo tempore.

Turba (Includes Text underlay for Tenor, range G3–D4)
Priests and Scribes *Non in die festo.*
Disciples *Ut quid perditio ista unguenti facta est? poterat enim unguentum istud venundari plus quam trecentis denariis, et dari pauperibus.*
Disciples *Quo vis eamus, et paremus tibi ut manduces Pascha?*
Disciples *Numquid ego?*
Bystanders *Quoniam nos audivimus eum dicentem: Ego dissolvam templum hoc manu factum, et per triduum aliud non manu factum aedificabo.*
Crowd *Prophetiza.*
Maid *Vere ex illis es: nam et Galilaeus es.*

Narrator (Alto notated but untexted; Tenor descends to E3) *Et coepit flere.*

Turba
Crowd *Crucifige eum.*

Narrator/Soldiers *Ave Rex Judaeorum.*

Turba (Includes Text underlay for Tenor, range G3–D4)
Bystanders *Vah, qui destruis templum Dei, et in tribus diebus reaedificas, salvum fac temetipsum descendens de cruce.*
Priests and Scribes *Alios salvos fecit; seipsum non potest salvum facere. Christus rex Israel descendat nunc de cruce, ut videamus, et credamus.*

Narrator *Jerosolymam.*

Example 11, continued

Antonio Rodriguez Mata, St. Luke Passion for Wednesday of Holy Week

Encarnación **Convent Choirbook 2, folios 115v–118r; Choirbook 5 (copy), folios 122v–**
125r
Voice Parts and Clefs: Tiple, C1; Alto, C3; Tenor, C4; Bass, F4
Four-part texture and clefs consistent unless noted otherwise
No text underlay for tenor and bass parts except for text incipit

Narrator Exordium: *Passio Domini Nostri Jesu Christi secundum Lucam.*
In illo tempore.

Turba
Disciples *Ubi vis paremus?*
Disciples *Nihil.*
Disciples *Domine, ecce duo gladii hic.*
Maid (Tiple, Bass) *Et hic cum illo erat.*

Narrator *flevit amare.*

Turba
Captors *Prophetiza, quis est, qui te percussit?*
Elders, Priests and Scribes *Si tu es Christus, dic nobis.*
Elders, Priests and Scribes *Tu ergo es Filius Dei?*
Elders, Priests and Scribes *Quid adhuc desideramus testimonium? ipsi enim audivimus de ore ejus.*
Crowd *Hunc invenimus subvertentem gentem nostram, et prohibentem tributa dare Caesari, et dicentem se Christum regem esse.*
Crowd *Commovet populum docens per universam Judaeam, incipiens a Galilaea usque huc.*
Crowd *Tolle hunc, et dimitte nobis Barabbam.*
Crowd *Crucifige eum.*
Rulers *Alios salvos fecit, se salvum faciat, si hic est Christus Dei electus.*
Soldiers *Si tu es rex Judaeorum, salvum te fac.*

Christ (Alto, Tenor, Bass) *Pater, [in manus tuas commendo spiritum meum.]*

Narrator *haec videntes.*

Example 11, continued

Anonymous, St. John Passion for Good Friday

***Santa Inés* Convent Choirbook pp. 237–243**
Voice Parts and Clefs: Tiple, C1; Alto, C3; Tenor, C4; Bass, F4
Four-part texture and clefs consistent unless noted otherwise
No text underlay for tenor and bass parts except for text incipit

Narrator Exordium: *Passio Domini Nostri Jesu Christi secundum Joannem.*
In illo tempore.

Turba
Soldiers *Jesum Nazarenum.*
Soldiers *Jesum Nazarenum.*
Maids (Tiple, Bass) *Numquid et tu ex discipulis es hominis istius?*
Priests *Numquid et tu ex discipulis ejus es?*
Crowd *Si non esset hic malefactor, non tibi tradidissemus eum.*
Crowd *Nobis non licet interficere quemquam.*
Crowd *Non hunc, sed Barabbam.*
Soldiers *Ave Rex Judaeorum.*
Crowd *Crucifige, crucifige eum.*
Crowd *Nos legem habemus, et secundum legem debet mori, quia Filium Dei se fecit.*
Crowd *Si hunc dimittis, non es amicus Caesaris. Omnis enim qui se regem facit, contradicit Caesari.*
Crowd *Tolle, tolle, crucifige eum.*
Crowd *Non habemus regem, nisi Caesarem.*
Priests *Noli scribere: Rex Judaeorum: sed quia ipse dixit: Rex sum Judaeorum.*
Soldiers *Non scindamus eam, sed sortiamur de illa cujus sit.*

Christ (Tiple, C2; Tenor; B flat added) *Mulier, ecce filius tuus.*
Christ (Tiple, C2; Tenor; B flat added) *Consummatum est.*

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Abbreviations

ACM	Archivo de la Casa Madre Concepcionista, Toledo, Spain
ACCMM	Archivo del Cabildo Catedralicio de la Ciudad de México
AHSS	Archivo Histórico de la Secretaría de Salud, Mexico City
BNAH	Biblioteca Nacional de Antropología e Historia
BNM	Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid, Spain
BNMFR	Biblioteca Nacional de México Fondo Reservado, Mexico City
CSG	CENIDIM Colección Jesús Sanchéz Garza
CEHM	Centro de Estudio de Historia de México, Fundación Carlos Slim
CENIDIM	Centro de Nacional de Investigación, Documentación e Información Musical Carlos Chávez, Mexico City
MEX	MUSICAT Project Digitized Transcriptions
NYPL	New York Public Library
PAL FAXCT	Biblioteca Palafoxiana, Puebla, Mexico

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