“Good Lord, I could never ask my priests to do that!” This was the response by one bishop during discussions about part of the document Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship (USCCB, November 14, 2007). While the comment reveals this bishop’s hesitancy about his priests’ ability to respond to the document’s expectations, it also indicates how clearly the document identifies the demands made on the clergy not so much by this document as by the Order of Mass itself. Indeed, the bishops acknowledge that “no other single factor affects the Liturgy as much as the attitude, style, and bearing of the priest celebrant . . . . The importance of the priest’s participation in the Liturgy, especially by singing, cannot be overemphasized” (Sing to the Lord [STL], 18–19).

Following the lead of the bishops, therefore, the National Association of Pastoral Musicians is devoting major parts of this year’s convention to the role of priests and deacons in sung worship, as we look carefully at Sing to the Lord, offered by the Latin Church members of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops as a way to “draw all who worship the Lord into the fullness of liturgical, musical prayer” (STL, Foreword).

**Plenum Addresses**

This year, the plenum presentations highlight, directly and indirectly, aspects of the clergy’s leadership role as spiritual leaders, presiders, and preachers; those responsible for preparing communities for the new Roman Missal; those who help to direct young people in ministry and toward mature Christianity; and those who lead congregations that are increasingly multicultural. Four of the six plenum speakers this year are clergy. Although they are not speaking directly to the ritual requirements for ordained celebrants, they bring sensitivity to those requirements and expectations to their sessions because they themselves serve as leaders of congregational worship.

So in his keynote address, Father Ronald Rolheiser, om, will set the scene by exploring the various types of spirituality present in American society and in the Catholic Church in the United States, focusing on the ways that liturgical celebration can spur or inhibit spiritual development. Then, getting very practical, Father Paul Turner, a pastor in the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, Missouri, and a facilitator for the International Commission on English in the Liturgy, will look at the catechetical, musical, and liturgical tools that we need to help our communities prepare for the revised Roman Missal. (Many of these tools will be useful right now in developing the liturgical spirituality and practice of our parishes.) And Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo, NPM’s episcopal moderator, will reflect from a bishop’s perspective on the ways in which pastoral ministry fosters the “common, sung expression of faith within liturgical celebrations that

“The importance of the priest’s participation in the Liturgy, especially by singing, cannot be overemphasized. The priest sings the presidential prayers and dialogues of the Liturgy according to his capabilities, and he encourages sung participation in the Liturgy by his own example, joining in the congregational song.”

*Sing to the Lord,* 19
strengthens our faith when it grows weak and draws us into the divinely inspired voice of the Church at prayer” (STL, 5).

The other two plenum addresses enrich our understanding of the liturgy’s role—and the role of ordained leaders—in our context in the United States. Ms. Kate Cuddy and Dr. Kathleen DeVries will look at practical ways to nourish the spiritual hunger of today’s teens and young adults. These young people, current members of our congregations and pastoral ministers, are also the people to whom we will hand over the Church’s leadership. How do we nourish them now and help them develop a healthy and liturgy-centered life of witness? Finally, Rev. Monsignor Raymond G. East will examine the gift and challenge of ministering to and with multicultural congregations. Now, more than ever, we face the need to minister to a worldwide Church, because the members of that Church are sitting (and standing and singing) in our parishes!

**Workshops for Clergy**

Workshops in each of the breakout sessions address practical clergy concerns. Pastor and musician teams look at issues of collaboration, evaluation, hiring (A 19), and planning together (D 04, E 04). Paul Turner continues his practical look at the Roman Missal by addressing its impact on those who preach and preside (B 19) and by looking at upcoming (and some current) changes to the celebration of the Paschal Triduum (C 19). Father Richard Fragomeni examines the musical needs of the “extraordinary form” of the Latin Rite Mass (D 24). Monsignor Anthony Sherman, from the Bishops’ Committee on Divine Worship, offers background and updates on the new translation of the Roman Missal (D 06). Steve Janco will look at the challenges and advice offered to clergy in Sing to the Lord (D 19). And Father James Marchionda, op, will look at preaching the liturgy in light of the concerns we face in our world today (E 19).

**Hovda Lectures**

Clergy participants in this year’s convention are particularly invited to attend the Hovda Lectures, which will look in depth at the document Sing to the Lord. This scholarly lecture series is named in honor of Father Robert W. Hovda (1920–1992), whose prophetic voice summoned Catholics and other Christians in the United States to recognize the transforming power of worship. Father Anthony Ruff, osb, will look at the contributions to our understanding of music’s role as well as the challenges to ritual understanding and practice posed by Sing to the Lord (A 03). Dr. Kathleen Harmon, SND de N, will look at what the document has to say about ministry in general and liturgical ministries in particular (B 03). Dr. Kevin Vogt will examine how Sing to the Lord harmonizes the inherited treasury of sacred music with the ritual demands and readiness of the “receptive culture” (C 03). Father Ricky Manalo, csp, will look at the new paradigms that Sing to the Lord offers for understanding the relationship between worship and culture (D 03). And Rev. Dr. Jan Michael Joncas will look at the theology, ecclesiology, and liturgical theology expressed in (or presupposed by) the document and their implications for pastoral practice (E 03).

**Other Highlights**

Clergy participants, of course, aren’t just presiders, preachers, deacons, and pastors. Many are also musicians, catechists, liturgists, and diocesan directors of those ministries. So they will be interested in many of the 120 workshops that focus on those interests and ministries. Diocesan directors of music are especially encouraged to participate in the institute with Bishop Ronald Herzog (Tuesday, 10:30 AM–12:00 NOON), which will examine the implications of Sing to the Lord for diocesan music ministry and the possible development of a directory of music for the United States.

Priests and deacons working in African American communities will want to take a look at the Father Clarence Jos. Rivers Lectures. Father Rivers (1931–2004), the first African American priest ordained for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, was a key figure in the fusion of African American cultures and sensibilities with Roman Catholic liturgy and theology. This year’s set of four lectures will address diversity in American Catholicism. Mr. Meyer Chambers will look at the tough question of whether the Church’s embrace of diversity has been a model to be emulated or a failed experiment (A 08). Father J-Glenn Murray, st, will see what the sung prayer of African American communities can teach us all (B 08). And, in a two-part reflection (C 08, D 07), Msgr. Ray East and Ms. ValLimar Jansen will explore the diversity of sounds in African American worship
Gregorian Chant

There is a quiet chant revival going on, spurred by interest in ways of integrating this ancient song into vernacular liturgy as well as by a need to become re-acquainted with this repertoire in order to celebrate properly the “extraordinary form” of the Roman Rite.

In Chicago, there will be a pre-convention Gregorian Chant Intensive on Monday morning (9:00 AM–12:00 noon) led by Fathers Anthony Ruff, OSB, and Peter Funk, OSB. This introduction to and overview of the resources will also provide practical ways of introducing chant to your choir and congregation.

Other chant-related events include the Monday afternoon meeting of the NPM Section for Chant; workshops on conducting chant (A 27) and using chant with choirs (B 20); sessions on making chant work in parish communities (B 27 and C 27); and music and celebrations of the “extraordinary form” using the 1962 Missale Romanum (D 24).

Clergy Section

Clergy members of NPM are asked to attend the Section for Clergy meeting on Monday afternoon (4:00–5:00 pm), to find out what their section is doing and to offer input for future programs. The section is chaired by Rev. Robert Webster, director of liturgy for the Diocese of Orlando, Florida.

Concelebration

Participating Roman Catholic clergy are invited to vest for the Wednesday evening Convention Eucharist, for which Cardinal Daniel DiNardo is the ordained celebrant and homilist. Priests and deacons will gather according to their order, and some will be asked to assist with the distribution of Communion. Further details will be available onsite at the convention.

Clergy-Musician Duo Discount

Clergy members and musicians who register for the convention together and in advance receive a deeply discounted rate. This discount applies to one clergy member and one musician from the same parish; NPM parish membership must be current. Registration and payment for both the clergy member and the musician must be included together in the same envelope and postmarked on or before the Early Bird (new this year) or Advance registration deadline. The duo discount saves an additional $25 each off the Early Bird rate (through March 2)—itself a savings of $80 per person off the regular rate—or an additional $25 per person off the Advance rate (between March 3 and June 5)—add- ed to the $60 per person discount that the Advance rate offers off the regular rate. Sorry, this discount is not available online.

Come Early, Stay Late

Come to Chicago in time for the Independence Day fireworks at Navy Pier. Chicago celebrates Independence Day with fireworks over Lake Michigan, the symphony outside, great food at the Taste of Chicago, and kids lighting firecrackers in just...
about every neighborhood.

Chicago’s Country Music Festival will take place Saturday, July 4, and Sunday, July 5, at Grant Park. Some of the biggest country music stars including Jo Dee Messina, SheDaisy, Phil Vassar, and Glen Campbell will be on hand to bring country music to Chicago.

NPM’s liturgical space tour takes place on Monday, July 6, from 8:00 AM to 1:00 PM (lunch is included in the fee). Visit a contemporary structure designed for a large community but with attention to human-scale intimacy, a seminary chapel built in the classic Federal/Georgian style, and a contemporary church built to fit into a rural setting.

Stay late to visit Navy Pier and Millennium Park, enjoy the spectacular view from the Sears Tower Skydeck, and visit Chicago’s world-class museums. Take in a Cubs game (against the Milwaukee Brewers on July 2, 3, 4, or 5 or against the Atlanta Braves on July 6, 7, or 8) or a White Sox game (against the Cleveland Indians on July 7, 8, or 9). Go to a performance of Wicked or Jersey Boys.

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