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In a recent conversation with Rev. Eugene Walsh, he reminded me of the centrality of the assembly as it emerges as the focal point for all discussions of the contemporary church. And critical to the assembly are the actions of the assembly at worship, viz., gathering, listening, responding. He went on to stress, as he does in this issue, that these steps, or processes, or functions, or whatever you wish to call them, are the acts of the assembly and without them the assembly is nonexistent, because the community would be without functions. This issue of Pastoral Music, based on this conversation, explores these three aspects of the community in great detail.

What struck me in listening to Fr. Walsh’s explanations were the parallels of these three functions of community with other ideas that have been central in my own education. In the middle and late 50s, I was very interested in the YCS and YCW movements (the Young Christian Student/Worker movements). Central to their strategy for change were the threefold elements of “see, judge and act” — remarkably similar to gather, listen, respond. Further, my studies in social work centered on the dynamic that is central to the formation of community and small groups: inclusion, control, affection — again, remarkably paralleling the steps of gathering, listening, and responding. This raised, for me, the question: is there something innate or fundamental to the human experience that urges us to move through these three steps: a coming together, or an examination of a situation, then, a listening, a judging, or a discovery of where the power, control or security rests and its relationship to me; and finally, a response, an action, and a sharing or giving of affection?

The order of the major articles of this issue are clear. We asked three liturgists (Walsh, Duffy and Madden) to approach their topics from a theory point of view, and three musicians to approach the same topics from the practical point of view. Smits stresses what is central to the entire issue, that these processes are the actions of the assembly. And there are challenges here. McLarney challenges us to put this into our planning. Empereur raises the question (often controverted and more often misunderstood) of “How is liturgy functional?” This is the central and yet least understood aspect of the entire Vatican II liturgical renewal.

But perhaps the deepest and the most risky of all the articles is Conry’s. How do you measure the response of your congregations? By the intensity of their singing (as most of us do) or by the mood you set or feel during the song (as some of us do) or (as Conry suggests) by the way the assembly lends its day-to-day life? Conry’s challenge is a heavy responsibility for a musician to assume.

V.C.F.
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Cover: Betsy Beckman and the Greg Reynolds Dance Group.

Photography: Rev. Virgil C. Funk.
New Document on Music from BCL

December 4, 1983 marks the 20th anniversary of the Constitution on Sacred Liturgy, and to commemorate the event the Bishops’ Committee on the Liturgy has recommended issuing a Joint Statement of the NCCB on Prayer and Worship. If approved, the proposed statement would be issued by the general membership of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

1982 also marks an important anniversary for pastoral musicians. Ten years have passed since the publication of Music In Catholic Worship, and the BCL is now working on a tenth anniversary statement entitled Liturgical Music Today. The new statement will be a supplement to MCW, and among other areas, will expand what MCW had to say about music in sacramental rites. The draft of Liturgical Music Today is now undergoing revision before publication.

Conventions 1982

While all six regional conventions are complete, we are able at the time of this writing to report on the first three: Ft. Worth, Providence, and Orlando. All the conventions were outstanding successes, programatically, numerically, and for the future of the organization. All represent something quite different. Because local needs are able to be addressed in the regionals, it is the differences that make them so valuable to the work of the association. For example, the topic of clergy-musician relationships is an important topic, but it probably would never be addressed as a major theme of the National Convention. But in Orlando it is a topic which could and should be addressed.

Conventions, obviously, are multifaceted events, with much of the best learning taking place outside the formal program of convention speakers and workshops. What is presented here is a brief summary of those elements most useful for those who were not able to attend, and, for those who were able to attend, an even briefer reminder of some of the more enjoyable events.

Ft. Worth

You just knew you were in Texas. It’s bigger—and better. A surprise but remarkably successful pre-convention concert featuring David Haas set a quiet but highly participatory tone to the convention. The official opening featured a parish choir, with a beautiful and moving Fanfare for Festivals by Noel Goemanne. Patrick Regan, OSB (who incidentally, was elected abbot several days before the convention) gave an inspired presentation on the history of active participation, showing how the movement to reform the liturgy began with a desire to overcome nationalism, to involve the worker in the activity of the church, and to bring about equality. The first timid gestures of this movement were frequent communion and the revitalization of Gregorian Chant; and the movement is coming to fruition in our times with the bold affirmation of the priesthood of the laity.

In a quiet way, Joe Wise reminded us of three profound moments in our lives—our coming, our going, and what we leave behind—three moments that we as church celebrate as Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. The evening concluded with a wonderful musical trip
through the tradition of hymn singing with Don Sallers. Maureen Morgan challenged us with the decline in candidates to the priesthood and the consequences for the assembly. A special appearance by the choir of Vietnamese students, with explanations of their instruments, demonstrated that "old Notes" and "new Notes" (deviations of Western music pitches) were the perfect contrast to the open air, Texas bar-b-que, and concert by Jubilation featuring a wonderful combination of clergy making music, having fun, and leading a new type of prayerful experience. Rev. Jonathan Stallone, SJ ignited the convention with his closing presentation on how active participation has just begun, calling the assembly to Full Active Participation—we know it is more than singing.

Arlene DeLuca and her fancifully dressed core committee (in Christian Dior or T Shirts) provided Texas hospitality to over 680 Conventioneers. The wide variety of music, Anglo, Spanish, Black, Vietnamese, Filgrim, Cathedral, Children's Choir, Cantor, provides just a glimpse of how big the music of this Texas convention was.

Providence

The warm and friendly hospitality of Providence struck the moment that any one—and I mean anyone—came through the doors of the Marriott Hotel. Organs, guitars, flutes, violins, banjos, singers, and watchers in the lobby of the hotel let the Conventioneers know that they were in for a real treat. And there were no disappointments. Music, music and more music was heard and made by the 1061 registrants—a joyful and festive event.

The opening Eucharist was celebrated by the entire assembly—the presider was Dan Schutte; the music provided by Roc O'Connor, Tim Manion and Robert Dufford, all members of the St. Louis Jesuits; but the liturgy was celebrated by the assembly.

The inspiring and confronting presentation by Rev. Robert Hovda raised questions about just where are we going with the liturgical renewal, and brought the participants to their feet in a standing ovation. And there were special musical moments: the wonderful sound of the Boston Boy Choir under the direction of Theodore Marier; the singing of Lyric Liturgy under the direction of C. Alexander Pelouquin, and the closing liturgy with a mixed style of music. The closing liturgy was deeply enriched by the very moving homily of Rev. Thomas Shepard.

A unique program at the Providence Convention were the debates—an attempt to find a vehicle for presenting topics that musicians and liturgists have differing points of view on—to show that not everything about the liturgical renewal is cut and dried. And they worked, wonderfully. Dolly Sokol (who set a world record for the most number of words in the shortest time) debated her worthy opponent, Fr. Don Hansen, in a lively and fun evening, with cheers being raised for both sides. The wedding debate on the question of whether it is ever permissible to sing a popular song at a wedding, drew a large crowd and a marvelous presentation by Patricia Romeo, who besides being a pastoral musician and chairperson of the Boston Commission on Music, is also a cop, and her very formidable opponent Rev. Thomas Bannick, Vice-Rector of North American College in Rome. We won't tell you how we think it turned out, but the cassette tape is well worth purchasing.

Providence and Fr. Ronald Brassard were the hosts of a regional convention two years ago. Through the graciousness of Bishop Gelineau (whose roller-skate story we will never forget), NPM was not only invited back in 1982, for which we say thanks, but an offer for 1984 was even extended. To all of you who worked so hard on making a repeat convention such a wonderful success, we thank you.
Orlando

Rollins is a beautiful college located on a quiet Florida Lake, featuring picturesque Spanish architecture, lazy palm trees and dramatic nighttime lighting. It was the perfect location for the Orlando convention that attracted over 450 participants. The topic, the Clergy-Musician Dynamic, drew a large crowd of musicians, but unfortunately a disappointing number of clergy, under 20.

The exciting opening of the convention was a marvelous keynote by Fr. Thomas Caroluzza exploring the personality types attracted to music ministry and those attracted to the clerical ministry. His combination of pastoral experience and theoretical insight brought the convention to its feet...a real gift for a keynote speaker.

The two evening musical events were the highlight of the convention. The quiet, prayerful gathering and singing led by Rev. Robert Dufford, SJ and Rev. Dan Schutte, SJ, called the Assembly to set aside their attention to music and focus on prayer. So often at music conventions, we are distracted by the techniques, the chord progressions, the fingering, the mistakes, the timing or whatever, and never reach the level of prayer. This was a moment of prayer.

And Rev. David E. Fedor led his Festival Choir, composed of members of area Catholic Church choirs, instrumental ensemble, dancers, and organists, through a Festival of Pastoral Arts entitled “The Great Fifty Days.” Moving from Easter, Ascension, and Pentecost, to Commissioning, it provided a means for a repertoire familiar to Catholics to speak the song of praise: A Festival Flourish, by William Ferris; Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones; Christ the Lord is Risen Again, John Rutter; The Ascension suite, Olivier Messiaen performed with organ and dancers; Exultate Deo, Scarlatti; Hail the Day That Sees Him Rise; Veni Creator, Durufle; Veni Creator Spiritus, chant; Cantique de Jean Racine, Faure; Shout for Joy, Peloquin. It was a night to remember.

The closing liturgy was in marked contrast to most convention liturgies. It was done in a simple, parish style...with great dignity and beauty, reminding us of the truth of the saying “less is more.” As we left the chapel, our heartfelt thanks went out to Paul Skevington and members of the team that put on the convention, for the beauty of the college campus was matched by the speakers, musicians, the artists who celebrated so well their effort at “Getting It All Together.”

St. Pancras Choristers

The 75 member boys and men’s choir of St. Pancras, Glendale, New York, will join voices with the Sistine Choir in St. Peter’s Basilica at the October beatification ceremony for Jeanne Jugan, foundress of the Little Sisters of the Poor. The Choir is under the direction of Mr. Andrew McArdle, Chairperson of the Brooklyn diocesan Music Commission, and an NPM member. A hoped-for Papal Audience will include two pieces composed by Fr. Joseph Roff, based on poems written by the Holy Father, “Children” and “The Samaritan Woman.”

A Polish Hymnal

Traditional Polish songs, combined with both Polish texts and English translations make up the varied Polish-English Franciscan-Felician Hymnal. Edited and arranged by Sr. Mary Evelyn CSSF, the hymnal commemorates the 800th anniversary of the birth of St. Francis (1182–1226) and the 50th anniversary of the New England province of the Felician Sisters (1932–1982).

Sister indicates that the financial proceeds for the work provide support for Senior Sisters, the aged, the ill and the retired. $10 plus 10% postage and handling. Order Felician Sisters c/o Sister Mary Evelyn CSSF, 1315 Enfield Street, Enfield, Conn. 06082.
Recruiting New Members

As the yearly life cycle of church and school musicians completes its course and returns to September, thoughts turn to new beginnings and renewal of old habits. Six NPM chapters have made the transition to permanent status in the last two months, and an additional four chapters have begun their trial period. Members of new and established chapters alike are looking toward recruiting new members as fall begins.

The NPM Chapter Manual contains a major section on how to recruit chapter members. The key person in this effort is the Assistant Director for Recruiting. This officer is the person who could replace the Director if necessary; but more important, he or she must be a go-getter, willing to spend time making lists and talking on the phone.

The first step in recruiting is to make a list of potential chapter members. The best way to do this is to call each parish secretary and ask for the names, addresses and phone numbers of the parish musicians. Initially, the list should include at least the clergy and chief musicians (choir director, guitar group leader, organist, etc.) of the 25 closest or most active parishes.

Telephoning is the best method for contact. Call three weeks before the meeting in order to give people enough time to plan. Mention that “A” from “X” parish will be making a presentation on techniques for teaching new music to parish congregations. Give the date, time and place of the meeting. It also helps to mention the social part of the meeting (Koinonia) especially if it will include refreshments.

The initial success of the chapter will depend upon the enthusiasm brought to the task of recruiting. If there is insufficient recruiting, the chapter may die before it has a chance to get started. How people are invited and informed about the chapter is very important.

Permanent Chapters

Wheeling-Charleston, W. Va., Wilmington, Del., Indianapolis, Ind., Miami, Fla., Green Bay, Wisc., and Amarillo, Tex. have formed permanent diocesan chapters of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians.

Chapter Officers for Wheeling-Charleston include Sr. Carol Hannig, SSJ, Director; Donna Kinsey, Coordinator for Planning; Michael Kiebel, Assistant Director for Recruiting; Rev. Robert Perriello, Animator for Koinonia; and Ilga Grinvalds, Secretary-Treasurer.

The chapter has formed three branches in addition to the parent branch in Wheeling: Fairmont Branch - Robert Ellis, Director; Charleston Branch - Michael Kiebel, Director; Bluefield/Princeton Branch - Tim Waugh, Director.

The Wilmington Chapter officers are J. Michael McMahon, Director; Marion Pohl, Coordinator for Planning; James Kelly, Assistant Director for Recruiting; Linda Flummer, Animator for Koinonia; and Linus M. Ellis III, Secretary-Treasurer.

Indianapolis Chapter officers include Cecilia Shepley, Director; Charles Gardner, Coordinator for Planning; Karen Wilson, Assistant Director for Recruiting; Nick Georges, Animator for Koinonia; and Le Jean Buehler, Secretary-Treasurer.

The Miami Chapter officers are Robert Andrews, Director; Charles Brennan, Coordinator for Planning; Sr. Helene Kloss, Assistant Director for Recruiting; Rev. Robert Christman, Animator for Koinonia; and Carol Klock, Secretary-Treasurer.

Officers in Green Bay include Martha Burkard, Director; Leo Keegan, Coordinator for Planning; John Coppin, Jr. and Rodney Weed, Co-Assistant Directors for Recruiting; Barb Dix, Animator for Koinonia; Anita Kirschling, Secretary; and Debbie Strelka, Treasurer.

The Amarillo Chapter officers are Joyce Shank, Director; Betty Keller, Coordinator for Planning; Cristina Parra, Assistant Director for Recruiting; Cathy Steele, Animator for Koinonia; and Madita Bumau, Secretary-Treasurer.

New Chapters Forming

The dioceses listed below are the most recent recipients of the NPM Chapter Manual. Contact the Temporary Director if you live in any one of these dioceses.

Diocese of Erie, Pa. - Bill Herring, Office of Worship, 246 W. 10th St., Erie, PA 16501.

Diocese of Raleigh, N.C. - Rev. Mike Clay, Sacred Heart Cathedral, 15 N. McDowell St., Raleigh, NC 27603, (919) 832-6030.


Diocese of San Antonio, Tex. - Rev. James O'Connor, St. Anthony Church, P.O. Box 268, Kyle, TX 78640.

For More Information

The pamphlet entitled “How to Form an NPM Chapter” contains instruction for conducting an organizational meeting and an application form for a copy of the NPM Chapter Manual. If you are interested in forming a chapter in your diocese, send $1.00 (check or money order only) for this pamphlet to the NPM National Office, 225 Sheridan St. NW, Washington, DC 20011.
Evaluate, Brainstorm, and then Act

BY MARY McLARRY

Tuesday evening (or Monday or whenever) the parish liturgy committee holds its regular monthly planning meeting. All the members have done their homework—read the scriptures of the Sundays to be covered, pondered ways to “enflesh” the Word through their various ministries...environment, music, proclaiming. And so you settle down to share and shape your ideas in service of the community’s prayer.

But what if a meeting or part of several meetings were spent squinting your collective eye to go beyond details to the broad outline of what the community is about when it comes to Sunday worship? Specifically, what if, before going into the planning of the 17th Sunday of Ordinary Time or the feast of the Assumption, for example, you examined the fundamental movements of communal worship—gathering, listening, responding—as experienced by your community last Sunday?

For the process to be fruitful, it will help to set some ground rules:

1. Stay within one topic: gathering or listening or responding; do not start on one and then spill over into another.
2. Begin with simple questions—where? who? what? or those that can be answered “yes” or no.”
3. Then ask of the above answers “why?” or “why not?”
(Note: In this section (1-3) no solutions are allowed. It is better to get as complete a picture as possible of the reality the community experienced before attempting answers. Otherwise, you may end up with band-aids instead of cures.)

Here are some starters for this technique:

GATHERING:
Where did it begin? (Parking lot, sidewalk, steps of church, vestibule, pews?)
What were the signs that gathering was happening?
What were the signs that gathering was not happening?
How did the song leader, music minister add to the process of gathering—or did s/he?
Did the opening hymn assist gathering—musically, textually?
What effect did the priest-celebrant’s opening greeting and remarks have on the sense of gathering?
By the time the opening prayer was begun, did your people have a sense of being a community called and gathered as one? Should they have?

And briefly, a few starters on Listening and Responding:

LISTENING:
What indicated the community was listening?
What were the distracting elements in and around the community?

RESPONDING:
Where were the people responding?
What were the different modes of response?
Which modes were the most successful, the most obvious, the poorest?

Now comes the crunch. All you have at this point are answers to questions, not solutions to problems; your task is just beginning. To give some focus, perhaps the group can modify the basic trio of words, e.g., “effective” gathering, “absorbed” listening, “authentic” responding. Again limiting the focus to one topic at a time, let the group brainstorm solutions to the problems they found. Bring out the newsprint and felt markers and capture everything suggested. You may need two recorders during this time to keep up with ideas without losing part of a thought in the rush. As is true in any brainstorming, anything is acceptable, no judgments are made.

When ideas on the first topic slow down, move to the second. When all three topics have been covered, and you find yourselves surrounded by fields of newsprint, start the culling process. Depending on the size or preference of the group, you may work as a committee of the whole here, or divide into groups, or work in any way that is comfortable for the group. But each list now must be refined. It’s a good idea to have someone check that any “solution” on the final list has its concomitant “problem” from the first part.

Begin with simple questions: where? who? what?

The results may indicate actions beyond the purview of the worship committee, e.g., into areas of responsibility belonging to the parish’s service committee or finance-administration committee. In that case, take your ideas to those groups. For actions that fall into your area, set up a list of priorities, considering first the choice of something that can yield visible results in fairly short order (for the psychological lift of success), followed by something more demanding that will show results more slowly.

Given the amount of time most committees have over against the amount of work they must accomplish, it may be practical during the year to take only one topic at a time, possibly one topic over several meetings. On the other hand, if your committee has a chance to spend a day together, or better yet, a weekend together at the beginning of the year, the three topics could be covered in close succession.
Another approach to building the role of the community into the work of the planners is to ask, "Who is responsible for creating the atmosphere that calls and allows a community to recollect itself, to remember and to respond?" A quick glance at that question by the seasoned liturgy committee member will guarantee the answer: "everyone, of course." This is essentially correct, but a little too facile. It is true that everyone is responsible, but not equally, not at all times, and not with the same tools.

Ministers of environment can consider the basic structure of the worship space—how it assists or hinders gathering, listening, responding—before a single banner or tapestry is hung or plant or flower arranged. Hospitality ministers may question how effectively they awaken and/or encourage the gathering tendencies of the people as they enter the church area, outside or inside. Any minister moving through the church building before worship begins might ask her/himself how s/he contributes to that sense of gathering.

All "visible" ministers may question how they themselves listen when the appointed minister proclaims the Lord's Word, how they respond in gesture, song, and speech under the leadership of other ministers. The spotlight of critical attention so frequently focused on ministers of hospitality (read "ushers") must just as carefully be directed at each minister from priest to acolyte to the individual in the choir or instrumental group. After this self-analysis they may share their perceptions of other ministers' attitudes, since what our faces and postures express to others is not always what we intend. A non-threatening observation can open one's eyes to an unrecognized problem one may be unwittingly creating for others. For example, the forehead furrowed in attention and/or concern may present a fierce look quite unintended. Boredom or distraction may be hidden, one thinks, but a finger tracing designs or a foot tapping shouts the opposite to an observer. The "tools" of ministry—vestments, ciborium, cup, music, instrument—add to or detract from the community's efforts to gather, listen, respond; and so they, too, should be scrutinized.

Finally, someone is certain to wonder "when (or how) do we start telling the people all this about gathering, listening, responding?" The old adage about values "better caught than taught" is appropriate here, along with the opportunity to share impressions of the warmth experienced in a hospitable greeting given in an unknown church, the prayer one has been drawn into when seeing others truly praying, the joy shared and passed on because of a freely given smile.

Go beyond details and look at the fundamental movements of worship.

This is not to say that we should never tell the congregation anything. It is a plea to seek first every possible avenue of non-verbal communication on the premise that this is a more powerful teaching tool than the spoken word. You may need to use many words in planning and sharing the principles of gathering, listening, responding with various ministers or ministering groups; the result should be to limit the amount of words needed to communicate to the community. A further benefit of well-indoctrinated ministers is the increased number of grassroots opportunities to offer explanations when real interest arises. People, who may be bored or even hostile toward explanations given to a large group with uneven levels of interest in the topic, may be very open to a one-on-one sharing, even a lengthy one, if it is an answer to their particular question.

Finally, a community whose ministers are genuinely caught up in gathering, listening, and responding will gradually develop these modes of worship, which are, in the deepest sense, the tradition of the Christian assembly: a community that knows itself called and loved, drawn to listen to the ever-new Good News, moved to respond in thanksgiving, in joy, and in sharing, beyond its own members, the gift it has received.
For Musicians & Clergy: Liturgy

It is the Assembly that Acts

BY KENNETH SMITS

In an age dominated by media, people often experience life as a spectator sport, participating indirectly through their favorite soap operas, sports programs, DJ's, and media events. People can even tune in to the "electronic church" to satisfy their religious needs. These cultural tendencies carry over implicitly into the worship of the Sunday assembly, making it something to be attended, watched, entertained by, or bored by. There is a natural cultural tendency for congregations to settle into a relatively passive role in worship. This happens in varying degrees, perhaps related to the extent to which religion or the parish operates as a significant focal point in people's lives. It is no accident when people who are experiencing religious renewal in their lives move up to the front pews for Sunday worship. Nor is it an accident when latecomers or occasional churchgoers slip into the last pews. People have an intuitive sense of the right distance in their participation in religious activity.

But we are faced with a liturgical reform in the Roman Catholic tradition that has, in most respects, attempted to restore the primacy of the action of the whole assembly—what everyone does together—as the core of worship. This involves a whole relearning of the act of worship, which is still far from being adequately implemented as a major reform, and which will endure indefinitely as the perennial work of promotion of the liturgy.

The main lines of this reform are now clear. The primacy of the act of the assembly means that the effectiveness of worship is gauged above all by the quality of activities like gathering, listening, and responding. In the celebration of eucharist, the liturgy of the Word is organized as a tightly knit pattern of call and response, requiring not only effective proclamation but also engagement in communal liturgical response by the assembly. In the liturgy of the Eucharist, the assembly is called to engage in activities of preparing and presenting gifts, praying over them in praise of God, and sharing these gifts in communion. While we need continued effort to promote good prayer leadership and assistance in all the special roles in worship, such as presider or liturgical musician, we must remember that these roles do not exist solely for themselves but to serve the act of the assembly.

A way of viewing the liturgical reform is to see it as an attempt to restore direct access to the mysteries of faith celebrated in eucharist, the other sacraments, the liturgical year, and the tradition of common prayer. The goal is to make the experience of God available at the heart of religious ritual rather than in more peripheral activities. For instance, if the eucharistic prayer is experienced as being frustrated. Again, if the laying on of hands at an ordination is experienced as a long and tedious clerical interlude, the business of bishop and priests only, then something is not working right.

Yes, the challenge of restoring direct access to the heart of the mysteries celebrated is awesome, for we are speaking of a whole assembly in all its diversity. And our efforts need to encompass the whole gamut of possibilities: action, gesture, movement, posture, speech, word, response, and silence. But there is a special and privileged place for song—suitably joined to other available avenues—in getting the assembly into the heart of the ritual action. Accordingly, if musical liturgy is normative liturgy, then all engaged in worship have a vested interest in seeing that song enters into the heart of the liturgical action, suitably providing direct access to the mystery being celebrated.

A look at our recent past helps to illustrate this point. The old Latin High Mass, for all its objective beauty and splendor, was still an overlay on the private Mass of the priest, as indicated by the requirement that he say all the texts, whether said or sung by other ministers. And while there was some provision for participation of the assembly in the ordinary parts of the Mass (Kyrie, etc.), such important parts as the response to the reading (Gradual, etc.) and the communion song (Communion antiphon) were normally reserved to a choir or schola. Even the Sanctus and Benedictus were overlays on the
recitation of the eucharistic prayer. This was not direct access, but music as an artistic embellishment accompanying a mystery performed by a single person.

Some of the same weaknesses passed over to interim solutions like the four-hymn syndrome, as first attempts at the participation of the assembly in the vernacular were made. Here the Low Mass was taken as the standard pattern, and vernacular hymns were inserted at available times that did not interfere with the proper functioning of the priest’s role. A notable advance was made in the restoration of the communion song, and there is obvious merit to having song at the opening and closing of rites, but the net effect is still one of occasional participation of the assembly in what remains, in essence, the Mass of the priest.

The reform of the Order of Mass, introduced in 1970, had something else in mind. In its provisions for the responsorial psalm and alleluia, for acclamations during the eucharistic prayer, and for a litany during the breaking of bread, it sought to point the way toward fuller participation of the assembly in the high points of ritual activity. While such first official attempts at reform are necessarily limited in scope, the general aim is truly revolutionary in what it seeks to bring about: the changed perspective and experience of the assembly. Of course, this new development has proven particularly demanding for the liturgical musician, since the new texts mean not only new music, but the development of new forms and styles of music suitable for response and acclamation. But the challenge at its best is for musical creativity and leadership to move the assembly into the core of ritual activity. Let us illustrate this point, both in terms of the present normative pattern of eucharist and of possible future development.

Song must enter into the heart of the liturgical action.

As mentioned before, the liturgy of the Word is a highly structured pattern of call and response. The call comes normatively in proclamation and preaching, and the preaching already begins to articulate possible response. But the question is: how can the response of the assembly be supported, sustained, and carried through in song? The responsorial psalm already begins to articulate this responsiveness, and the alleluia builds on it by way of anticipating (and sometimes concluding) the gospel. But there are frontiers that need to be explored. As long as the overly doctrinal (and therefore unpastoral) Nicene Creed is normative, then the response of faith will normally be done in spoken form. But the acclamatory form of the Easter renewal of vows, plus its possible adaptation to more developed creeds, indicates that there are untested possibilities for developing a fuller congregational response of faith in song. And who is to say whether a metrical text, suitable for a hymn, could not be a fuller faith response, once we have moved away from identifying faith response too closely with a fixed set of words? Finally, the general intercessions are slowly gaining recognition as a form of litany appropriate for sung response, whether the intentions are spoken or sung. When people get more deeply into the mood and stance of intercessory prayer through a sung refrain, then music becomes the vehicle for deeper entry into ritual action.

There are challenges, of course. To what extent can there be musical unity in the liturgy of the Word, yet respect for the unique contribution of the various elements of response? And it seems particularly unrealistic to deal with a psalm response that changes every Sunday. In this case, the seasonal responses are only the top of the iceberg, indicating the need for the development of favorite psalms and responses that become the privileged expression of the responsiveness of the congregation. The liturgy of the Word is an unending stream of mostly one-way communication without the artistry of song. And music can be the main carrier of congregational response, without which the liturgy of the Word is incomplete and inadequate.

A similar vista opens in the participation of the assembly in the eucharistic prayer. A normative beginning has been made in developing musical unity in the presently available acclamations. But there are ritual questions. Of what value is musical unity when the congregation stands for the “Holy,” then kneels for the central affirmation of the paschal mystery and, most incomprehensibly, for the great amen? There are different understandings of the eucharistic prayer at work. “O come let us adore him” is not a suitable acclamation of the paschal mystery, but this nicety of liturgical form may well escape the devoutly kneeling parishioner who has experienced the miracle of transubstantiation accomplished a moment ago by the priest alone. But this contradicts the nature of the prayer as a “we” prayer, developed in grand themes of praise, thanks, proclamation of saving events, and intercession. Whatever is done (and certainly distinct roles are appropriate) is done in the name of all, on behalf of all, as embodying the activity of all. Thus the very nature of the prayer calls for the assembly to make this prayer their own experience in as full a way as possible.

Whatever is done is done in the name of all.

Here again music can serve as the normative embodiment of the assembly experiencing itself at the heart of the mystery. And the frontiers of textual and musical development are only beginning to be explored. It is in the best interest of the liturgical musician to study closely the normative pattern of eucharistic prayers, to reflect upon the changes in mood and stance, and to bring these to acclamation form in text and song. The present normative acclamations are only a beginning; the eucharistic prayers for children already point the way to fuller embodiment of the assembly’s participation. Already efforts are being made to test out instrumental underscoring for a more effective proclamation of the works of God in prayer.

Similar exploration and development of sung participation of the assembly in central ritual actions needs to take place throughout the eucharist and other major forms of liturgy, starting from normative possibilities already provided and expanding from there. It is always true that liturgical music must serve the purpose and function of liturgy. But this need not and should not be a merely ancillary role, serving as decoration and embellishment at the edges of ritual action, or simply to fill in empty spaces or transitions. It has served these roles in the past. Now it is in the best interests of the assembly, and the liturgical musician, to get where the action is, and to stay there as normative liturgical experience in song.
First, the Assembly Gathers

BY EUGENE WALSH

The most important thing that people can do at a parish Sunday Mass is to take the trouble to gather with each other. The reason is deceptively simple. If there is no real gathering, there is no real assembly, just so many individuals in the same room. If there is no real assembly, there is no real church.

"The church makes the eucharist; the eucharist makes the church," says Yves Congar, one of the truly great theologians of this century. What he is saying is that the assembly makes the parish Sunday Mass and the parish Sunday Mass makes the assembly. He is saying also that the parish assembly is the first and primary minister of the parish Sunday Mass.

The full, life-giving sacramental sign of the eucharist is the life-giving assembly gathered, listening, responding. Bread and wine are only a partial sign of the sacrament. People eating bread and drinking wine are only a partial sign of the sacrament. The full, life-giving sacramental sign of eucharist is the parish assembly, the body of Christ, fully aware of itself as God's people, deliberately and consciously sharing themselves through the sacramental actions of gathering, hearing God's word, and responding through eucharist and mission.

To the degree that the sacramental sign is life-giving, the Sunday Mass is life-giving. To the degree the sacramental sign fails, so, to that degree, does Sunday Mass fail to be life-giving. Dull, feeble, half-hearted signs make dull and feeble and half-hearted sacraments. Dull and feeble and half-hearted sacraments are not life-giving. In fact there comes a point where they begin to be death-dealing. It is only a fully life-giving assembly that makes a fully life-giving sacrament of eucharist. No matter how hard they try, all the other ministers cannot make it happen.

The developed theology of Vatican II about church and sacraments demands that we speak in the terms I have used in the opening paragraphs of this article. The reform and renewal called for by Vatican II is not superficial, a matter of rearranging furniture. It calls for radical changes in our way of thinking and doing. We are just beginning to realize how radical these changes are.

I believe future historians will hail as the most radical of all the changes called for by Vatican II, the demand that we understand the church again, before all else, as the people of God.

By designating the church as people of God, The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church rescues from near oblivion and restores to life a long neglected dimension of the church, an essential dimension of the church.

Before it is anything else the church is a people called by God to be specifically a priestly people and to exercise all rights and privileges of a priestly people. All God's people are called back from an exile of more than a thousand years. All God's people are aliens and strangers no more, second class citizens no longer. All God's people are called back to their rightful inheritance in the church: first-class citizenship.

If this is true, then the first task of all specially designated ministers is to serve the assembly. Their conscious and deliberate target is to help the assembly bring itself to life, to help it understand and claim its primary ministry for making Sunday Mass a life-giving celebration. When ministers of Sunday Mass lose sight of this target they fail in their ministry.

If ministers are to do the task of serving the assembly effectively, they have got to understand precisely what the task is, to understand its implications for worship (and for all other areas of church life as well), to take it seriously and to make it happen.

It is precisely through the "experience" of making Sunday eucharist that the people of a given parish get to know themselves for what they really are: God's priestly people. There is no other way. You can talk about it forever, but people will never really get to realize what it means until they experience it.

They must get to feel what it means to gather by actually gathering, to listen by actually going through the experience of listening, to respond by actually sharing the eucharistic action and the mission that flows from it.

In this article I want to focus on the energy of gathering, because gathering is the first action of the parish assembly. Gathering is not only first in order of time, gathering is the most important action by which a roomful of individuals get transformed into an assembly.

Gathering is something that people do. Gathering does not happen. Gathering takes place only to the
degree that the members of the assembly “go out of their way” to pay attention to each other. People really gather only when they “take the trouble” to gather. True gathering demands that all members of the assembly “give of themselves” to each other. Gathering is the beginning of the sacrificial action of loving one another. Gathering is the first and indispensable step of Christian love, the first movement in fulfilling God’s commandment to love one another.

Those who take the trouble to gather are the ones who are most ready to listen with greater care and intensity to God’s word proclaimed in the midst of the assembly. They begin to share the word, realizing that God’s word is proclaimed primarily to the assembly, not to individuals in the assembly. Those who take the trouble to gather are ready to enter more deeply into the energy of responding to God’s love through the eucharistic action and, afterwards, in the way they try to live.

Gathering is the energy that has the power to transform a passive people into a consciously active people. It is precisely by means of gathering that members of the assembly begin transforming themselves from passive receivers to active doers.

It is precisely by means of gathering that members of the assembly begin transforming themselves from passive receivers to active doers.

Full, active, consciously deliberate participation of the entire assembly has been the constant, stated goal of all the reform and renewal of worship called for by the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy of Vatican II. So far we have not succeeded very well in the task of bringing the people to genuine, active participation. By everyone’s admission it is the least successful of all renewal efforts. There are a number of reasons for this.

One of the reasons is that we have not really grasped the genuine meaning of truly active participation. Genuine, active participation can mean one thing and one thing only. It can mean nothing less than having an active part in “making the eucharist.”

The longtime and still prevailing notion of active participation is very much like our understanding of what it means to eat a meal that someone else has prepared. When we eat, we do participate actively but only as part of a larger process. Our active eating of the meal has nothing to do with making the meal. Such participation is active only to a degree. It is really more passive than active. People at Mass on Sunday are asked for the most part to “have some” of what others are preparing for them. That is not good enough. Full, active, conscious, deliberate participation means nothing less than having a genuinely active part in all of the eucharist, in making it happen.

Members of most assemblies are unaware that they have an important and essential part in the making of a life-giving celebration of the eucharist. Very few Mass-going people have a sense that the life-giving quality of Sunday Mass depends very much on what they do and how actively they engage themselves in doing it.

Only in the last couple of years do we see emerging a growing consciousness. In all the flurry of developing the “new” ministries for worship during the past fifteen years or so, the assembly never got so much as a mention. We never even used the word, let alone designated the assembly as having any kind of specific and unique ministry. Now we are speaking boldly of the primary ministry of the assembly. Now we are speaking of the responsibility of the assembly for life-giving worship for which there is absolutely no substitute.

Now we know. Only when the assembly and all the especially designated ministers of Sunday Mass consciously work together as a team under the leadership of the priest-celebrant do we get a truly life-giving celebration of Sunday Mass. Only then do we bring to full life-giving splendor the sacramental sign of the eucharist.

When members of the assembly put out the energy of gathering they release the powerful, transforming energy of hospitality. When people take the trouble to make room in their lives for each other, they begin to make strangers feel welcome. They begin to make lonely people feel needed and wanted. We will never know how much healing of hurt and pain takes place in the lives of people as more and more members of the assembly reach out to one another in the embrace of hospitality.

Gathering also releases the main energy of the faith experience, the faith experience by which God touches us and we touch God. Faith is ignited from flesh to flesh, from person to person. God comes to us through us. Jesus comes to us through us. When people open themselves to each other through the hospitable action of gathering, they release in that moment the life-giving real presence of the risen Lord into their midst. If people do not open themselves to each other, Jesus remains captive and imprisoned by the alienation and isolation of an ungathered and inhospitable people.

There is much more to say, but we must stop here. In this article I am making one single point: gathering is the absolutely indispensable energy by which and through which a parish Sunday assembly brings itself alive, understands itself as assembly, and claims itself as the first and primary minister of Sunday eucharist.

I am making the additional point that the main task of all other ministers of the eucharistic action is to help the assembly achieve its full potential as the greatest living sign and symbol of a life-giving eucharist. All ministries are in service to help the assembly bring itself to full, conscious, deliberate, intelligent, active participation.

Now we can get on to discovering how to make it happen.
First, the Assembly Gathers

BY ELAINE RENDLER

For many years, one of the most difficult times in my ministry of music was the time before Mass when I had to address the congregation and teach them the music for the celebration about to begin. Facing that sea of staring eyeballs and glazed faces was the dreaded moment of my week. I, of course, had arrived early and was excited over what was about to happen, and I couldn’t understand why they didn’t share my enthusiasm. What I didn’t realize was that they had just come from dressing and re-dressing their children, anxiously herding the family into the car on time, and fighting the parking lot crowds. They had finally plopped into their pews seeking a moment of peace—when out I came to disturb their well-earned repose by conducting a musical rehearsal. No wonder our attitudes were so different!

What finally opened my eyes was a comment from Joe Wise. He remarked, “Can you imagine going to our father’s house without acknowledging our brothers and sisters?” That image got me thinking about music. If we are at a family celebration at our parents’ house, when do we sing? When we first arrive? No. We sing much later—after we have been welcomed, after we have spoken with the other guests, after we are relaxed.

The Mass is a celebration, too. I realize now that the assembly needs a rehearsal, but a preparation for celebration: a gathering rite. They need to be collected—to be greeted, to be welcomed, to be made to feel at home—before they are comfortable enough to sing. The musical preparation for the Mass, and indeed the entire gathering rite, is effective only if it is not only a beginning, but a conclusion—the conclusion of the long, informal, and sometimes hectic process of gathering people in one place, and the beginning of formal celebration. The gathering rite is the procedure that makes a group of individuals into an assembly.

It is not my intent here to examine all the elements that make the gathering rite work in this way. The writings of the holy fathers elsewhere in this issue do that more effectively than I could. Rather, I intend to share with you how I see the role of the pastoral musician within the gathering rite. That rite has many advantages for musicians: It adds creative options for shaping the liturgy, it recognizes hymn singing as actual prayer rather than “traveling music,” and it fosters congregational singing. I will explore the choices available to the musician, and explain how these choices affect and shape the gathering that occurs.

The ministerial function of the opening music is to assemble the congregation as a people of God. As Lucien Deiss puts it:

The people coming to Church are a crowd. . . . Entering the church, they are still separate individuals, but when they sing together, they express their unity for the first time. [The entrance music] should be as long as it takes for the community to assemble itself and spiritually acclaim Christ (Deiss, Spirit and Song of the New Liturgy, p. 121).

The music for the gathering rite should be chosen with these principles in mind, applying them to your particular congregation.

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I have found that, for most congregations, a good “foursquare” hymn best serves the functions of the opening rite. The melodies and rhythms are usually strong and simple, encouraging people to sing. Furthermore, a wide variety of texts are available in this style, making it easier to find music that precisely suits the theme of the day’s liturgy.

Other kinds of unison gathering songs may also work well, depending on the makeup of your particular congregation. Music in some of the more modern styles, as long as it is written to be sung by all, can be effective with communities who are comfortable praying in this way. Even if your liturgy makes extensive use of this kind of music, though, you may want to consider using a hymn as a way of diversifying your musical experience and appealing to a broader range of interests and tastes.

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Read a hymn instead of watching the bride?
Are you kidding?

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A psalm, on the other hand, is less suited to the opening function. If the congregation is given only an antiphon, it is usually too short a melody to get them singing with any energy. An additional drawback is that a psalm usually focuses attention on a soloist or choir rather than on the people themselves. To fulfill its proper function of gathering the people, however, the opening music must put the emphasis on the people, not on a presider (whether musical or spiritual). If the assembly is to participate actively in the entire liturgy, giving them a purely reactive role in the opening rite is a poor start.

Whatever sort of music is chosen for the opening rite, the piece must be presented either in its entirety or in a thoughtfully shortened version. The length of the piece must be determined by the music and text, not by extraneous considerations like how long it takes the priest-celebrant to get into place. I have seen the wonderful three-verse trinitarian hymn “God Father, Praise and Glory” stop after two verses because the priest was in position and it was time to stop the “traveling music.” So much for the Holy Spirit! The message is clear: if the hymn or song you have chosen is too long for the gathering process, either shorten it in a way that makes sense or find another piece of music.

Every assembly needs a musical preparation. If the people already know every note of every song, they may not need a rehearsal, but they still need preparation. The violinist must tune the strings before playing; the runner must exercise before running; and the worshipper must likewise “tune up” before beginning the formal celebration.

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The mood and style of the preparation must be suited to its function as a conclusion—the last step of the informal preparation before celebration. The congregation does not need an introduction to the priest in the style of Ed McMahon introducing Johnny Carson. They do not need an elaborate verbal description of the music before hearing how it goes. Nor do they need a sermonette or an outline of the themes of the day’s liturgy. In many cases, people deliberately come late to Mass to avoid these experiences. A musician who prepares a congregation in any of these ways misconceives his or her role.

The preparation should be simple, short, and friendly. The musician should greet the people informally and informatively, go over any music that needs to be taught or reviewed, and sympathetically encourage the people to sing. I also feel strongly that at the conclusion of the musical preparation the musician should ask each person to greet those around him or her. It is difficult, if not impossible, to celebrate among strangers. Even if the people in the congregation know each other well, the greeting serves to reestablish bonds between people who have been through another week of different experiences.

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After the musical preparation and the greeting, the prelude begins. The prelude serves as a natural break between the preparation and the celebration, and signals the congregation to end the greeting period and get ready to begin. It can be a short organ piece or improvisation, a choir anthem, or an instrumental solo. In choosing the prelude, remember that it will set the theme, tone, and tempo of what is to come; in any event, it should not be longer than a minute or so.

The musical preparation must be fitted into the broader framework of the opening rite. I have found that there are two different basic frameworks for the
rite—the processional and the gathering song—and that each works well for certain kinds of occasions. The processional is a formal rite best suited to festival days and special occasions like weddings and First Communions; in this rite, the preparation precedes the procession. The gathering song is a simple, less formal procedure than the processional, and works best on ordinary Sundays; in this rite, the preparation is part of the sequence of events within the rite itself.

Make the preparation simple, short, friendly.

The processional is the most familiar form of opening rite. After the prelude, everyone rises and sings while a procession marches down the aisle. The main advantage to a processional is the sense of solemnity or festivity it can impart to a celebration. Although the opening processional is almost a way of life with many parishes, I believe that its use should be limited to exceptionally solemn or festive occasions.

The main problem with using a processional routinely as an opening rite is that when there’s a parade everyone loves to watch. No matter how exciting the hymn or song may seem, people will still want to look up and see who is marching down the aisle. It is unfair to deprive people of an exciting visual experience by trying to force them to pay attention to words in a book, and unrealistic to expect to be successful in the attempt.

In fact, the too frequent use of the processional probably accounts for much of the lack of enthusiasm often heard during the opening song. It amazes me that musicians blame themselves for not choosing a good opening hymn when the real reason people aren’t singing is that they’re too busy watching. This effect is particularly severe at weddings, First Communions, confirmations, graduations, and similar occasions. Read a hymn instead of watching the bride? Instead of watching a line of angelically-dressed seven-year-olds? Are you kidding? No contest! And there goes the opening song.

Another reason for limiting the use of the processional is that overuse numbs people to its effect. If we eat turkey every Thursday, there’s nothing very special about turkey at Thanksgiving. If we look back to our post-Vatican II past, we will remember that we used entrance processions of acolytes, choir boys, and priests for only the most serious celebrations: Palm Sunday, Christmas, Holy Thursday, and Good Friday. A return to this more limited practice would heighten the effect of the processional and give these occasions deeper meaning.

For those occasions when a processional is appropriate, plan the music with the practical problems discussed above in mind. At a wedding or First Communion, for example, you might accompany the procession with an organ march, choir anthem, or festival fanfare, and follow immediately with a gathering song after the show is over. Watching and listening, after all, can inspire a congregation as much as their own singing; just be sure to turn that inspiration into assembled song as soon as possible.

The gathering song is a different form of conducting the opening rite that, I have found, works well on most ordinary Sundays. With the gathering song, there is no procession at all. The priest, readers, and eucharistic ministers stand near the entrance to the church greeting the people until about five minutes before the Mass is to begin, then simply take their places before the assembly. The musical preparation follows immediately, and the priest-celebrant and other ministers participate actively in it. The priest’s participation is especially important because when people see the leader of the assembly learning and singing the music they will be encouraged to do so too. You will find that people will plan to arrive at church in time for the preparation because they feel that things have started if the priest-celebrant is in place.

During the prelude, the acolytes process down the aisle to the sanctuary, light the candles on the altar, and disappear into the sacristy. When the prelude ends, the priest-celebrant rises, greets the assembly, and asks them to join in the opening hymn or song. By focusing attention on the song as a separate activity in itself, rather than as an accompaniment to other activity, the text becomes a prayer prayed by the assembly. You will be surprised at how the people don’t mind singing several verses of a song in order to complete the prayer—even, on occasion, all the verses!

In the past, people attending Mass tended to do exactly what they were told to do, whether or not they understood why. If they had been told to stand on their heads during the Gospel, I’m sure they would have tried. Educating the assembly was less important than making sure they “did things right.”

The people may know every note of a song, but they still need preparation.

Those days, thank God, are over (I hope). If you institute a new procedure for the gathering rite (or, for that matter, any new procedure), explain to the congregation what you’re doing and why you’re doing it. I have found that congregations are more than willing to cooperate if they understand what it is you are asking them to do. When our ministers know what they are doing, do it well, and are able to explain to the people the reasons behind their actions, the assembly is much more willing to risk participating in the liturgy as actors rather than reactors, and the celebration becomes truly a celebration of the people.
Listening
Then, the Assembly Listens

BY REGIS A. DUFFY

Listening is an endangered art. Several large corporations, for example, have begun training programs to help their management acquire better listening skills. Without managers who know how to listen well, unnecessary business and personnel problems inevitably arise. In such a perspective, good listening means efficiency and profits.

Listening is an endangered art even in the concert hall. For a population accustomed to wall-to-wall Musak and other forms of background music, indiscriminate and inattentive listening can become a disability that prevents us from knowing how to enter fully into listening to a rendition of a Haydn symphony or an Irish folk song. On the other hand, good listening assures greater participation in and joy from music.

Good listening can also seem to be a rare ability even among our family and friends. We sometimes do not bother to share our thoughts and feelings because we feel that they will not be listened to with respect and understanding. Casual listening does not make for deeper relationships.

We must listen out of our own experience.

It is easy to lay the blame for such a situation on the post-industrial society we live in. Our short attention spans are fostered by the media format of brief presentations interspersed with commercials. We are bombarded by noise and yet afraid of the sounds of silence.

In this article, I should like to present the importance of listening in a liturgical context. Our aptitude for and willingness to listen, after all, does not radically change because we enter a liturgical space and perform liturgical rituals. The psychological background of listening will be outlined. Then, some theological dimensions of listening will be developed. Finally, I will suggest some practical liturgical corollaries from this discussion.

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When we discuss listening in worship, we are not concerned with the casual and selective listening that may be appropriate to a cocktail conversation or television entertainment. Liturgy deals with God's Word, which both challenges and heals, confronts and informs us. For our part, we can only listen and respond from our lived experience. An important part of that experience is the way significant people in our lives have listened to us.

Scripture readings will remain only words unless we listen with the ears of our experience.

The offices of therapists and priests are filled with people who do not seem to be able to find effective and healing listeners among their family or friends. These troubled people seek a type of listening that will sufficiently liberate them to see what was initially missed in their experience and, from their retrieved stories, respond to others in their lives. But why have others sometimes been poor listeners as far as these people are concerned?

Carl Rogers, a great American therapist, points out one important reason for such situations: evaluation listening. As our family and friends listen to us, they tend to make judgments on what we are saying. As we come out of a movie, for example, and express our opinion about it, our companions' first reaction may be to evaluate us and our opinion from their own viewpoint. In other words, instead of fully listening, they are already absorbed in framing their response.

Rogers pinpoints a second component connected with much evaluative listening: the emotional or feeling dimension of what is being heard. Any family or circle of friends knows the list of topics that are so emotionally charged that any rational conversation about or sensitive listening to these topics is immediately precluded. Whether the subject is a drinking or sexual problem, an overweight condition, or how to raise children, a "listener" may stop listening and start reacting.

The therapeutic listening that Rogers suggests consists in trying to put ourselves "in the shoes of the other per-
son.” The counselor, as a healing listener, must put aside judgments and reactions that prevent a complete and empathetic listening to the other person. This type of listening permits the speaker to perceive and to admit previously unacknowledged areas of the story. Rogers sums up this point of view by saying that if we were to show to another what was most personal about ourselves, it is that which would speak most loudly to the other.

Preaching that merely informs can deform liturgical listening.

In brief, just as we speak from our experience, so we must listen out of our experience. In being an empathetic listener, we do not deny our own story but rather we come with new respect for that of others. This means that any effective listening must always be an embodied listening, that is, one in which we bring as much of our body-person selves as possible when we attend to others. To paraphrase Rogers’ insight, cited above, if we were to listen to another with more empathy, we would hear what we had never heard before.

When we hear God’s words, he enables us to listen and respond. This unearned and continuing gift of listening and responding to God’s offer of redemption is called justification. But this gift does not excuse us from the effort required to listen and from the commitment necessary to “do” the Word. How does God’s Word change our listening and response?

Simply put, God’s Word teaches us our deep need of his unearned love. God’s Word permits us to see this need in each chapter of our lives and challenges us to deeper commitments of service for the sake of others. God’s Word is, therefore, reforming and strengthening. It effects what it promises.

It is not by accident that God’s Word introduces each sacramental celebration. God’s Word is there so that our celebration may be honest. The liturgy is not static praise or polite acknowledgment but rather the Spirit groaning in intercession out of our weakness (Rom. 8:26). Thus, liturgy both celebrates what God has done and is still doing among us and enables us, in turn, to announce this Good News to others. Effective sacrament, then, is a word-action that invites and enables belief in and commitment to God’s work. St. Augustine says it beautifully: “From whence does the water which touches the body and purifies the heart have such power except from the act of the word, not because it is said but because it is believed” (Commentary on John, 80, 3).

Vatican II, in trying to explain how we should participate in Word and sacrament, employed three adverbs: knowingly, actively, fruitfully (Const. on the Sacred Liturgy, I, 11). Three better qualifiers could not have been chosen to describe what liturgical listening entails. In fact, it might well capture the essence of the healing listening discussed earlier.

To concretize this kind of participation, imagine yourself listening to the liturgy of the Word on the Wednesday of the second week after Easter. The first reading from Acts (5:17–26) recounts the Apostles boldly preaching God’s Word after having been imprisoned. The responsorial psalm (34) begins: “The Lord hears the cry of the poor” and gives us reasons to pray this refrain with conviction. The gospel reading from John (3:16–21) takes up the image of Abraham—willing to sacrifice his own son Isaac—to remind us of what God has done for us and how we must decide to believe or refuse this great love.

These beautiful readings will remain words if we do not listen with the ears of our experience. A knowing, active, and fruitful listening will begin with a more sensitive awareness of our own situation. The apostles’ commitment to the Word challenges ours. The responsorial psalm remains pious nonsense until our autobiographical experience suggests compelling reasons to attest in word or song, “The Lord loves the cry of the poor.” The gospel images of unearned love, light, and darkness and the question of our responding belief becomes less familiar and more searching when heard against the background of our current experience.

All of us have been fortunate enough to have people in our story who taught us to listen by the healing way in which they listened. We can extend that same help in ministering the Word of God to each other. In the liturgical ministries of celebrating, lecturing, singing, and playing, we help others to listen, not because of a facile technique, but because of our own willingness to listen to the very Word we proclaim to others. There is an obvious difference between the lector, singer or celebrant who is merely “professional” in what he/she is doing, and the one who brings an embodied awareness to their ministry of the Word.

We need to listen and hear what we have never heard before.

Poor preaching and teaching also encourage poor listening. I would characterize as “poor” any preaching that does not invite listeners to find God’s footprints in their own experience. Preaching that simply informs can deform liturgical listening because it can make us forget the difference between theological information and redemptive participation.

The liturgy continues to give sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf in our liturgical assemblies. As a result, the liturgical assembly is able to witness, in effect, to its world: “If you could only see what we hear.”
Then, the Assembly Listens

(by Anthony Krisak)

To a perceptibly thick-skinned friend, the blind person roared, "If you could only see what I hear!" Indeed listening engages far more than the ears—we may listen with eyes, nose, heart, hands, the whole body; and we can encourage this embodied listening. Ministers of the liturgy are people who have already heard the Word of God for a particular celebration; in their prior preparation they have already begun to perceive the relationship between their experience and the experience of Scripture. The listening they have done enhances their shared ministry: skilled dramatic reading is transformed into genuinely heartfelt proclamation; a technically correct musical piece becomes a prayerful remembrance of God's action in our lives; a logically developed homily gathers power as the generous sharing of concrete faith. This article notes some of the practices that are helpful for liturgical ministers in encouraging embodied listening.

Vital for a worship of Word that stimulates listening (as well as gathering and responding) is a team of ministers whose prior work with each other is obvious in the experience of worship. They understand the dominant focus or mood lest, for example, a lamenting musical composition follow a first reading in which imagery of thankfulness has been emphasized. They have "walked through" transitions from one part to another in order to avoid the little distractions that easily become significant points of memory and attention, however humorous they may be. They pay attention to each other by their respect and their physical posturing, for they recognize each as an integral moment of God's presence.

As listeners, the people of the assembly are ministers of the Word for they allow the Word to touch them and they commit themselves to share that Word more deeply in their lives. They do not normally gather for worship to participate in a classroom experience unless they have been given indications that this is the purpose of their listening. Such unfortunate indications include commentary before the readings that supposedly explains what the reading is all about, homilies that are didactic in nature and hardly relate to their personal experience, or music that challenges their skillfulness but ignores their feelings and frustrates their openness.

Listening goes far beyond intellectual understanding and it is pointless to imagine that people must understand everything in the proclaimed Scripture. While no one can absorb all of it, all of the people have the capacity to relate to some of the Word. The people of the assembly carry their own intentions and experiences that shape what they hear. As proclaiming and hearing the Word entail a relationship among people, so leaders of worship engage in a human communication that displays their openness and ability to listen also to the assembly. A congregation that gets the impression that their leaders do not listen to them will question why they must listen to the leaders.

As the opening prayer comes to a close, people prepare to shift their attention to the proclamation of the
Word. They need a moment for this. Consequently, readers may engage the attention of the assembly by remaining standing in their place until the congregation is seated and silent. The very presence of this standing figure draws people into the ministry of the Word, especially if the other ministers of worship are clearly focused on the reader.

Understanding that there is no compelling reason to rush into the reading, the readers at this point of silence approach the table of the Word and gracefully pick up the lectionary. If it is handsomely bound yet not so large and heavy that it demands clumsy handling, its appearance will speak to the significance of the moment. Establishing eye contact with the people in the assembly, the reader may introduce the reading without having to look down at the book; this initial eye contact serves to engage people in the very human communication of God’s presence. When the book is held at a level to reduce head-bobbing, this important eye contact can be maintained without distraction.

Readers do well when they recall that their proclamation of Scripture is quite distinguishable from the solitary reading of a novel in the confinement of their homes. This is proclamation in every sense of the word, and the power of the Word is in the speaking of it, in the delivery. Attention to pace, pitch and volume, along with variations of these, draws interest to particular points of emphasis in the reading. And when the assembly sees that readers are sincere in their ministry and believe what they are reading, those in the assembly can also listen in a way that allows them to enter into the Scripture. Good proclamation encourages people to listen actively and to put down the missalettes which make them only passive readers.

Meanwhile, the music ministers are in a position of attentiveness to the proclamation of the Word; they’ve already organized their music and, if they are holding instruments, they are in place. The leadership of the reader does not quite end with the concluding acclamation, “This is the Word of the Lord.” Giving people time to reflect and absorb what they have heard, readers remain before the lectionary in a reflective stance, and those who are leading the responsorial psalm respect their silence.

Just as embodied listening involves more than ears and audible sounds, so is silence crucial to genuine listening. Such silence following the reading provides a ground where the intentions and the experiences of those in the assembly can come in contact with the story related in the Scripture. In such silence, people’s awareness of the commonality between their stories and the salvation story deepens. In some places, however, such silence may produce fidgeting, coughing and back-scratching; should this be the case, some education about silence is helpful. But communities can begin with very short spans of silence which, over a period of time, are slowly lengthened in a manner that is comfortable for the congregation.

The music ministers have worked with the reader to agree on a suitable amount of time for this silence. They may signal its end with an instrumental introduction to the responsorial psalm, at which point the readers may move away from the table of the Word. Here the leadership shifts and a musical introduction provides a mellow transition for both the reader and the assembly. As the responsorial psalm is not merely another reading, it is always appropriate for this to be led by the music ministers. Its purpose is to set a tone of prayerful worship for the entire liturgy of the Word, and it is not simply a response to the first reading. Its name comes, rather, from the fact that it is conducted responsorially.

Listening goes far beyond intellectual understanding.

Here the music leadership picks up on the relationship they have established during the gathering rites. It is hoped that they are in a place where they are visible to the congregation; disembodied voices limit listening to an aural experience. From the standpoint of engaging participation, a recitative psalm offers the poorest opportunity for listening and is contradictory to the very nature of a psalm as a poem or song. A great variety of musical options can be employed to envelop a congregation in the religious sentiment that is very much a part of psalms; the text and music together enable people to experience the rejoicing or pleading or sorrow that is prevalent in the particular psalm. People’s listening is enhanced when this is understood as a musical event rather than another reading.

If a refrain lead by a cantor or choir is employed, singing it twice in the beginning offers people the opportunity to hear it once before they join in. This, together with a refrain that is not overly lengthy, minimizes the need for the assembly to run searching for a page in a book and thereby break the atmosphere with the cacaphony
of paper ruffling. Here again, as with silence, some communities may not be accustomed to joining in vocal prayer without an aid in front of them, but it is a practice that people can develop over a period of time, and encouragement of this gives evidence of regard for people’s competence. In some places, a seasonal refrain may be used over a period of weeks so that people do have the chance to involve themselves in a progressive way that reflects their growing commitment.

An interesting but not frustrating (for the assembly) musical piece also encourages deepened commitment as it offers new insight into people’s self-awareness as participants in the Christian story; hence, care is given to the style of music and its ability to disclose the text in a fresh and meaningful way. The choir/congregational motif need not always be employed; sometimes an inviting poem with musical background or a reflective piece done by musicians alone can stimulate the embodied response of the congregation and give meaningful shape to the entire liturgy of the Word.

The minister of the gospel needs to arrive at the table of the Word by the time the acclamation comes to an end. If there is a long break between the acclamation and the reading of the gospel itself (to get to the place, to find the page), the unity of the event is also disrupted. All the other ministers focus their attention on this event; being visible to the congregation, they exemplify the stance of listening. And in maintaining the human relationship through which God’s presence is experienced, the minister of the gospel proclaims the Word with the enthusiasm and competence that has been expected of the first readings. When there are other ministers to the side or back of the one proclaiming the gospel, it is helpful to acknowledge their presence and attention in some way, perhaps by including them in the range of eye contact or by slight (but not disruptive) body movement.

Though normally delivered by one person, the homily can serve as the response of the assembly to the proclaimed Word. Their response, of course, is an active, embodied listening encouraged by the insight offered by the homilist. But if people are to enter into the spirit of the homily, the insight cannot belong to the homilist alone. Through personal faith, presence, the disclosure of genuinely human experience, and more, the homilist enables people’s participation in this activity.

Only a few brief notes are here given to serve as an aid for engendering embodied listening on the part of the assembly gathered for worship. Many more creative ways exist. And sometimes these seem like picayune details representing liturgists’ supposed arrogance. But they have worked; and they are practices into which people can grow naturally without feeling that they have to become someone else when they enter into a worship space. Then they can actively listen to the Word of God with the whole of their experience. Although called a “word,” this Word, as the First Letter of John reminds us, can be heard, seen, looked upon and touched. All this is embodied listening.
Christian life is basically a life of response. This statement may paint a dull picture of life for Americans who prize initiative so much, who love and admire “get-up-and-go-ness,” and “take charge” attitudes. Nevertheless, response is what Christian life, Christian prayer and Christian celebration are all about. “We are to love, then, because he loved us first” (1 John 4:19). Response, not initiative, is our first action in relationship to God. “The better we learn to pray,” writes Hans Urs von Balthasar, “the more we are convinced that our halting utterance to God is but an answer to God’s speech to us” [Prayer (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1961) p. 12]. At some point in our life most of us have growled, “God doesn’t seem to answer my prayers!” Maybe we should first listen, then ask. We might find the better thing to ask for.

We should confess straightaway that it is sometimes very difficult for us to perceive the speech of God. But it isn’t God’s fault; the problem is ours. God has spoken and continues to speak. There is a story about Saint Francis of Assisi who woke up the whole town one night by incessantly ringing the church bell. When the folk gathered, sleepy-eyed and disgruntled, Francis simply exclaimed to them, “Look at the moon!” He was overcome by the graciousness of God who created such a beautiful night for his children. The universe spoke to Francis.

“God spoke at various times and in various ways to our ancestors,” says the Letter to the Hebrews, “but in our own time, the last days, he has spoken to us through his Son” (Hebrews 1:2). Jesus is the Word of God, and the Word through whom you made the universe,” as Eucharistic Prayer II confesses. After the death of Jesus one aspect of the overwhelming experience of his resurrection for the first generation of Christians was that Jesus was still present to them, that he lived, that he “spoke” to them in their community, the church, by his Spirit who would teach them all things. They also realized, amazing as it seemed, that they were temples of this Holy Spirit, members of his body, the visible expression of his presence in the world. They, the assembled Christians, though sinful, were nevertheless also the herald to the world announcing the Kingdom. They were aware, too, that in a special way they “knew him” in the breaking of the bread.

To hear God speak we first have to attend, to contemplate. We have to take time to look, without and within. If we make this a regular part of our life we will begin to perceive the Mystery who has spoken and still speaks in the universe which is pure gift. Yes, contemplation is necessary; contemplation of the ordinary, of the extraordinarily beautiful, and of the painful. When this is done in a sustained way, a response will build in the depths of us and it will move us to decisions, to change, to a more Christ-like lifestyle. The above thoughts are the burden of Matthew Fox’s book on prayer in which he defines prayer as “a radical response to the mysteries of life” [On Becoming a Musical Mystical Bear (Paulist Press, 1976)].

Response becomes our life. It will sometimes be a response to a perception of the Lord’s immense love for us and will issue in praise or thanks or stunned silence. It will sometimes be a response to the mysterious suffering of Christ in his members as we read the bad news in the newspaper and it will issue in compassion and commitment. We cannot expect to attend and respond well at liturgy if our life is not one of attention and response.

We will not respond well at liturgy if our life is not one of attention and response.

The Christian community believes that there are special, privileged moments when the Lord is present to us, his church. These are the liturgical moments that sum up our life, tell us who we are, guide us in our corporate response, intensify our communion in Christ and send us to be his presence in the world, a signpost of the coming Kingdom. These are the moments when we assemble together as his people, believing that when we gather, two or three, he is in our midst. Consequently this is when we should attend in a special way to one another and allow our corporate presence, action and
silence to invade us. This is when we listen to the Scriptures; they remind us of the great love the Father has shown us. God is present in his Word. Then there are words, actions and time that allow us to express our response: awe, praise, thanksgiving, petition. This is when we break bread and trust that we will “know him” in the breaking and communing. These special liturgical responses sum up, enflesh and fill out our life of response; they validate it and, most important, they unite our responding life to the response of Jesus to his Father.

The musician is called to be a contemplative person.

The responding life is one lived in love of God and love of neighbor. This life is what we join to the sacrifice of Jesus; this is our “spiritual sacrifice” (1 Peter 2:5). The liturgical events are the cultic expressions of our secular lives; just as the Last Supper was the cultic expression of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

Keep doing good works and sharing your resources, for these are sacrifices that please God (Hebrews 13:16). Think of God's mercy, my brothers, and worship him, I beg you, in a way that is worthy of thinking beings, by offering your living bodies as a holy sacrifice, truly pleasing to God (Romans 12:1).

We respond to God in two ways: in our life and in liturgy, which is a part of life. We respond in our life by loving him and our neighbor in return for his immense love for us. We respond in liturgy by gathering, by praising, by acknowledging and by thanking him, that is, by making eucharist. Life and liturgy are simply two different moments of faithful response. Liturgy presumes a life of contemplation and response that leads us back to liturgy where that contemplation and response is summed up, intensified, deepened and joined explicitly to Jesus in his church.

Response that comes from Christian contemplation will often demand more than an expression in words alone. Sometimes we will feel the need to do thanks, to do it with our bodies; our whole self will want to render praise, express our joy. And sometimes, when we have perceived the presence of the Lord in his world, in ourselves, in our relationships, we will feel the need to do this with others. A solitary act will not simply be enough. I would hope we would have this kind of experience occasionally: an experience that would almost drive us into the Christian assembly to give praise and thanks with our bodies, together.

What is the responsibility of the pastoral musician whose special ministry is to help express, foster and deepen the assembly’s response? The fundamental responsibility of all liturgical ministers is to lead a life of attention (contemplation) and response. If this is not the case they will understand neither the assembly’s life nor its needs and will be unable to serve them. All other talents, craftsmanship and artistry must build on this foundation.

With this foundation pastoral musicians will have an instinctive feel for what is appropriate. They will develop a nose, for example, for music and text that fit the character, the depth, the complexity of the experience of the Word spoken. They will feel at home in the given texts of the liturgy itself because their religious experience will be akin to the experience expressed in the liturgy. They will instinctively emphasize the right parts of the liturgy and will not put all their efforts into liturgical moments of secondary importance. The contemplative musician will understand the need for silence in the liturgy, too, for sometimes contemplation and response need silence. They will also notice that if they are trying to live a committed Christian life their music will have the realism and sobriety that characterize an awareness that they are graced sinners but clearly sinners as well as clearly graced; a sobriety and humility in the face of a world that does not yield easily to the justice of the Kingdom. By being contemplative persons, occasionally on a Sunday morning as the assembly gathers, the musicians themselves will wonder at the work of the Spirit; they will feel a strengthening of their own good decisions, confirmation of their faith and hope, a challenge to their selfishness, and gratitude that occasionally the assembly will “carry” them when they have not the inner strength to make eucharist themselves. They will be able to lead response very well.
And Then, the Assembly Responds (the practice)

BY TOM CONRY

I.
The other articles in this issue
Have raised serious questions
About gathering, listening, and responding.
There is a subsequent practical matter, however
Which remains. That is:
How can we know we are responding authentically
To that shattering story?
After all, some two thousand-odd years after
The execution and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth,
It must be admitted even by believers
That iron and money still run this world;
The victor's smiling face adorns the cover
Of Time and Wall Street Journal.
Meanwhile, the vanquished (if they are fortunate)
Eat cheese.
For us, a few of us victors, more of us vanquished,
These facts must be disheartening, to say the least.

Still, there are other possibilities for us.
We could become that people,
The light of the world, the salt of the earth:
It is not beyond our imagining to have a change of
heart,
To go on Exodus.
To place our fate in the hands of he who is and who
will be
More than armies and Pharoah's honeyed promises.
It is a course not without risk
(The sea may part, the sea may not)
And we are a long way from home.
Better a hovel with God, though,
Than to sit in the palace of presidents.

In the same way, and in a very practical fashion,
It is better to sing the truth boldly
Than to create a glorious sound signifying nothing.
Indeed, it is part of our peculiar disease
That we prefer well-mannered noise to the unvarnished truth.

"What did you come out to see?" Jesus thundered,
"A man clothed in fine garments?"
And just so, our gatherings are often structured and
played out
As if that is exactly what we came out to see:
Someone pleasant, easy on the eyes and ears,
Someone who won't put off the clientele.
In the great majority of our gatherings,
Only the comforting words of Jesus are included,
With predictable results:
Even we don't believe our own story anymore!
The incidents that once provoked a crucifixion—
The blasphemy, the baiting questions, the bitter
retorts—
Are nervously tucked away.
Why would anyone wish ill of that harmless man?
Even the parables, those marvels of irony and insubordination
Are reduced to occasions for cheap sentiment.
The entire account is robbed of motivation
And rendered trivial and petty.
An accident of history. These things happen.

We musicians are among the chief offenders, I am
afraid.

Mr. Tom Conry, composer and author, is liturgy
coordinator for St. John Vianney Parish in Seattle,
Wash.
We strive to provoke an effect.
To tug at the heartstrings—
“Annie” with a halo!
Much of our craft is given over to a quest for the
merest sensation.
A slow song at communion to make them feel pious—
A quick number at the beginning to make them feel
energetic.
A pretty melody here, a fanfare there,
We daren’t draw out the closing hymn
Lest they embarrass us by leaving early.

If this is our ministry and these are our songs,
Then we cannot claim our art—
We cannot even claim to be artists.
We are pushers
Cynically addicting the assembly
To the tawdry and safe.

What does that mean?
The liturgy ought to be consciously and explicitly
cconcerned with the immediate problems and questions
of the particular community which is gathered
together.

Which problems and questions?
Problems and questions of human relations, of
human behavior, of human capacities.

And most liturgical ministers are not now trying to
address those subjects?
No.

They would claim that they are.
But they are not.

Then what is in reality the object of liturgical ministry
in modern practice?

What do you mean by that?
Consciously or unconsciously, we usually evaluate
the goodness or badness of the liturgy by the feelings
we have conjured up, whether of reverence, commu-
nity, solidarity, or whatever. We measure our suc-
cess or failure by the extent that we have manufac-
tured in the assembly certain predetermined emotions.

How should our liturgies be evaluated?
Not by our feelings, but by our actions.

How is that practically possible?
I would look at the experience of our community
over time, in and out of the liturgy. To what degree
has our community attempted, in a practical fashion,
to bring about the kingdom of God? What risks have
we taken? With whom have we aligned ourselves?
The answers to these questions will measure what and
how we are celebrating.

So you reject technique as a measure?
Technique alone, yes. Technique is valuable to the
exact extent that it accomplishes what it sets out to
. . . that it provokes an action or decision.

Can that kind of action or decision be engendered
without emotion?
No; without passion, reason is impotent. But what I
am referring to here is that pandemic feigned intensi-
ty, that ritualized, highly stylized emotionalism which
is so in vogue these days—an appeal to emotion that
has no concrete object in action, but at most a rather
generalized appeal to future conduct.

Can you give some examples?
The presider whose chief virtue is that he (it’s still
always he, unfortunately) usually makes the com-
community feel secure, or that he does not bore the com-
munity perhaps so much as some others.
The homilist whose modus operandi is to extract
from the scripture some homely, sociologically ac-
ceptable message which “the people can take home with
them”—as if this time, this moment, this place were
somehow less real than all others.
The musician who ignorantly or knowingly habituates her (or his!) community to music that provokes only passivity and vague good feelings.

What in particular is the problem with these ministers?

At the end of that kind of ritual, everything is as it was. There is an implicit contract in our willing suspension of disbelief that happens when the congregation is first seated to the effect that nothing outside of those walls and sixty minutes will be threatened or altered. Nothing changes. That is the problem, precisely.

In which liturgical roles is the problem rooted?

The problem is in the interactions of presider and assembly, homilist and assembly, and musician and assembly.

What do you mean by that?

For the presider, the problem is to preside: to allow the assembly's own real concerns to come to the surface in the midst of a tradition and architecture and ritual environment that has been more or less thrown together over two millennia to prevent that from happening.

For the homilist, the problem is to exegize and realize the connection between a variety of ancient songs, poems, polemics, stories, incantations, etc., collected by and for a people with whom we have virtually no anthropological or cultural relationship, and the authentic heartfelt immediate concerns of a people on the brink of history.

For the musician, the problem is to provoke an honest response with a repertoire and tools that are as far removed from honesty (generally speaking) as the stars are from the earth.

You keep insisting on human concerns, human focus, human responses. What becomes of the transcendent in this environment?

The transcendent can only be expressed, conceived of, dealt with and argued about in human terms. Even that impure, artificially-collected and officially-approved hodgepodge we venerate as revelation is clearly filtered through history. Any effort not to recognize this as fact is a simple attempt to dodge reality.

It sounds as though you are denigrating scripture.

By no means. On the contrary, I advocate taking it seriously.

How?

By recognizing it for what it is in the context of our own lives. It is that thin, obscure, but absolutely necessary lifeline that we cling to lest we be cut away from that which imparts meaning to our existence. It is an old, inconvenient set of literature that is nevertheless our clearest connection to the one who creates us, and thus, to our own story, our own mystery.

But practically, what does that imply?

It means that we should not read the scripture at our services unless we are prepared to deal with it exegetically, historically, and realistically.

It means we must find the courage to say clearly what these stories mean for us personally and politically, and then attempt to live out the consequences in a communal fashion.

It also means an end to services (often instituted by the local bishop or pastor on behalf of a pet project, interestingly enough) in which the scripture is read but thereafter simply not referred to.

What about the rite itself?

The rite itself is entirely a different matter from the scripture, and as such ought to be conspicuously open to local pastoral adaptation.

How should it be open?

Let me answer with more questions. Why should the eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time necessarily be structured the same as the first Sunday of Advent? Why should the prayers read at a parish in the Bronx remain identical to those of a mission in Texas? What historic or traditional justification can there be for official approval from Rome of eucharistic prayers—prayers which, well into the second century (and in many areas, for a long time even after that!) were composed for the occasion?

What if the people aren't ready for all this?

The greatest myth of all is that the liturgical professionals are pushing change and the 'man/woman in
the pew' (another myth—no such archetype exists) is resisting. In fact, as in all organizations it is the people, the "clientele," those who perceive themselves to be on the receiving end who are most anxious for change. It is we professionals who have status, who are custodians of the mystery, who have the most to lose. We are the ones who resist. By maintaining this facade of our willingness to hand over part of our authority, to democratize, we also maintain the status quo, in which we are perceived to be important. Even Vatican II, after all, was not change initiated from above but rather a direction ratified by the episcopacy after years of (illicit) pastoral experimentation.

The best thing we can do for our own people is to respect their intelligence, their intentions, and their own experience. We professionals are not leading. We are being led.

**So what is it exactly then that you are advocating?**

First, experimentation—communities ought to adapt music, public prayers, architecture, ministry—all that comprises their own gathering—to their own situation in light of their own experience and the authentic tradition. They ought to be able to pursue this without threats from Rome or the local ordinary. (Incidentally, the fact that this freedom from ecclesial interference will be good for the entire church is beside the point; the kind of episcopal blackmail that hangs over those few parishes who have been willing to try something new is simply morally unjustifiable.)

Second, honesty—a frank admission of who we are and what we are doing in this place together, in lieu of magical incantations and maudlin appeals to the general sentiment or artificial (that is, created for the occasion) emotions. Music that does not pretend to know the unknowable, that does not attempt to reduce the transcendent to the level of popular self-help books. Music that does not seek to carry us away, but which places us more firmly and fiercely here and now.

Third, democracy—a legitimate, practical opportunity for the entire community to be involved in decisions regarding their gathering. An end to our privileged mandarin status. Planning teams that do more than choose a few tunes from a severely limited repertoire: planning that begins by asking "what can this community do to proclaim the kingdom? how can we express our solidarity with the oppressed in a way
that makes a difference? how can we change our lives to be more in character with the radical demands of the gospel? planning, in other words, not to achieve an emotional effect — planning by the few for the many — but rather to create a different world for us all.

III.

The object of the liturgy is change.

Not 'praising Jesus' —
Not filling the collecting baskets —
Not communicating values to our children —
Not a respite from boredom or panic —
Not the creation of 'good feelings' for an individual or a community —
Not the manufacturing of beautiful sounds —
Not the preservation of a specific musical or architec-
tural heritage.

The object of the liturgy
Is the engendering of that change of heart
Which so obsessed Mark:
A decision about the meaning of Jesus' life, and thus
About our own.

Amid the risk of those decisions . . .
life and death —
courage or cowardice —
spirit or law —
future or past —
We discover, in a very practical fashion
Ourselves . . . our own true name . . .
And more —
The "kingdom of God."

That kingdom is not yet,
But we have proclaimed it as our certain future
For quite a long time.
That vision has expressed all our hopes and dreams
About tomorrow
For generations beyond counting.

Against that tomorrow is arrayed
The world of the gods:
  naked ambition
  a slavish adherence to the letter of the law
  well-intentioned ignorance
  dispassionate hardheartedness
  the status quo
  political power, in and out of the churches
  dishonesty in our music, in our words, in our lives.

So: choosing that tomorrow marked by hope
Is appropriately difficult.
("A blessing and a curse" said Moses
Who should know about hard choices.)
And so we devise ways to escape it
In much the same fashion as we commonly aban-
don what is inconvenient in our lives.
And, in much the same way as the rich young man
Of Mark's telling,
We are convinced we are not so bad off —
Everyone tells us so!

It is our endearing good fortune
That the invitation to the kingdom
Is at least as persistent
As our attempts to desert it.

All of this may seem unnecessarily harsh.
I do not mean to minimize or denigrate
Our efforts.
I too, see some promise ahead
But only to the extent that our Sunday gatherings
Are authentic and faithful.
Then only can we gather in peace, listen in wonder,
And respond in truth.
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P-140
Munching on a few leaves in a smoky cave at Delphi, the oracle leaned forward and growled some imperceptible advice to the daily round of truth seekers. Because they could barely understand the language, because of the smoke and strange light slithering from the cave, because she was the oracle, they were convinced that the words they received had to be good ones and they were to live accordingly—not too much different from a modern day visit to a government agency or to a medical specialist. Atmosphere and language convince us that we have encountered the immutable; we stand in the presence of truth, grateful, if not assured.

Jumping ahead a few thousand years, the atmosphere we encounter this time is also dimly lit and there is smoke, and you really have to listen carefully to get the words. This light is the pitiful candle on the table. The smoke is the cigarette smoke of the people around you and the deafness is caused by the sound shrapnel being hurled from the band near the bar. This cave is a cocktail lounge in a metropolitan hotel that is the scene of a national conference on liturgy, the new pilgrimage spot for the daily truth seeker. The twentieth-century oracle who is advising at this place does not utter half sentences, but speaks full, coherent, clear directions with a certainty that comes from vast experience and extensive travels. The truth seekers are the students, former students and friends of the American oracle, the Sulpician priest, Father Eugene Walsh. Also absent from this scene are the magic leaves. They have been replaced by glasses of Scotch, chablis and a diet soda or two.

His disciples affectionately call him, “Gino,” and he returns the compliment with their first names. Those disciples - who have had personal contact with him number in the hundreds and those who know him through his public appearances number in the thousands. If any one teacher and leader has bridged the gap between the pre and the post conciliar churches with sanity and orthodoxy, Father Walsh is that one person. His activity at the Liturgical Conference, his appearances at the NPM conventions and his endless circuit of workshops attest to this currency and impact. His career spans teaching at St. Mary’s Seminary in Baltimore to his present position as one of the major spokesmen of the liturgical movement in this country. It is a career exerting profound influence on the entire worshiping church. It is a career whose principles are articulated with rare clarity and unabashed joy.

Running through the many phases of Father Walsh’s work is an intuitive sense of the right musical choice, style and person for a given task. When he directed the music at St. Mary’s, he surfaced new talent among the seminarians. In the 1960’s through his encouragement, the music making at the seminary evolved a folk style whose leaders were Tom Parker, C.P. Mudd, Jack Miffleton and Neil Blunt to name a few, all familiar names to the folk musician. Their experimental folk style helped shape the style of music used today in celebrations of a less formal style. Father Walsh sensed their talent and capitalized on it by having them write and perform music for the seminary celebrations.

... an intuitive sense of the right musical choice, style and person...

The seminary classroom and chapel were extended to a national forum when Father Walsh began his involvement with the National Liturgical Conference. He was a familiar face at the national meetings as he led the singing and conducted workshops. These efforts placed him into a milieu which eventually generated the document on music in liturgy, Music in Catholic Worship. This document survives today as the most influential document on music since the Motu Proprio of Pius X, promulgated at the beginning of the century. Music in Catholic Worship would not be as effective as it is had it not been for Father Walsh’s contribution to it.

He has exerted a profound influence on the entire worshiping church

With such expertise and experience in the field it is no surprise that his personal teaching and writing style is lean and direct. One needs only to read one or two of his publications to see that. Such clarity can be seen as a little suspicious among the oracles of the world. But among the truth seekers, it is a welcome and inspiring commodity. It is that commodity that becomes most desirable as musicians seek truth, seek inspiration and seek the confirmation of their endeavors as valid and good.

Musicians are no different from any other truth seekers in the sense that they are never quite satisfied. Workshops or pilgrimages, they are one and the same, they act as sources for information and direction. When the direction is clear and the information turns out to be correct, that source is trusted. When the source is a teacher of impeccable character and is likeable, then the source is more than just desirable, that source has truth. Father Walsh has provided all of those qualities with neither magic leaves nor smoke—just the human magic of care, trust and honesty.
Hot Line

Hot Line continues for members on Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at (202) 722-5800. Copy must be submitted in writing on or before the 1st of the month preceding publication of Notebook, and the 15th of the second month preceding publication of Pastoral Music magazine.

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Parish Music Coordinator (with working knowledge of liturgy); average of 30 hours per week. Purpose is to enhance the parish liturgical celebrations. Knowledge of guitar and organ required as well as working knowledge of liturgy. Job description on request. Please send inquiries to: Rev. Richard O’Leary, OSA, St. Augustine Parish, 43 Essex Street, Andover, MA 01810. (617) 475-0050. (HLP-2809)

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Full-time Pastoral Musician, Organist/Choir Director. Contact: Rev. Michael Guarino, St. Joseph’s Parish, 790 Salem Street, Malden, MA 02148. HLP-2814

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Introducing a Person of Note

Sometimes in these pages we feature well-known musicians whose compositions are atested part of your repertoire. At other times, however, we hope to bring to your attention rising talents on the pastoral horizon whom we think it beneficial for you to know. One such talent is Marty Haugen.

Heralding from the bustling metropolis of Wannango, Minnesota—population 500—Marty enjoyed the benefits of a rural, Lutheran upbringing. Chief among these is his belief in the importance of the assembly’s role in worship, a reform legacy which well impressed him as a youth. Furthermore, Marty admits musical advantages from small town living, since limited resources forced him to take musical matters into his own hand, and thus he began writing arrangements for his eight-piece band when barely a teenager.

Continuing musical involvements through high school prepared the way for more concentrated studies at Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. This fledgling piano major, however, decided that the career options of teaching keyboard or full-time parochial ministry were unacceptable, and though continuing with musical studies, changed his major to psychology...useful training for any pastoral musician, to be sure. Following graduation, Marty moved to England where he staffed a Lutheran retreat center, where his duties included directing a small international group of musicians. Upon his return to this country, having apparently resolved his career qualms about parochial ministry, Marty became Director of Music at St. Bonaventure’s Parish in Bloomington, Minnesota—a position he has held for the past seven years.

As a full-time pastoral musician, Marty never envisioned a career of publishing or recording, and never sought an audience for his work beyond the parish. Rather, his eminently practical writing always responded to specific parochial needs and talents at St. Bonaventure’s. This practicality, however, is informed by classical studies and tempered with a concern to stretch the tastes and talents of his parishioners. We are pleased that the work of Marty Haugen, in service of his parish, now serves the rest of us as well, and we recommend his newest release for your consideration.

Edward Foley, Capuchin

Congregational

With Open Hands

Marty Haugen. PAA, 1981. AA 30.

Marty Haugen’s album and songbook, With Open Hands, are products of quality and consistency and are recommended to those looking for fresh material. Scored for choir and keyboard with guitar chords, the music is geared to the “folk group,” sounding best with guitar chords and perhaps supporting piano. Even so, this is not a collection that is locked into one style. Haugen has composed obligato parts for winds (primarily recorder and flute) and strings with many of the pieces, most of which appear at the end of the songbook.

Not all the pieces in this collection will work well with congregations. Some melodies seem beyond most assemblies, given normal rehearsal times. Happily, most of the best works presume congregational participation on the antiphons, while cantor or choir sing the verses. “This is the Day,” an up-tempo number with obligato recorder, and “Taste and See” are two pieces which should engage a congregation immediately. “Canticle of the Sun” is an enjoyable rendition of Francis of Assisi’s text and should work well for children. A rhythm band similar to the one on the recording could involve the children in this music and enhance the song. “We remember,” a fine congregational work, does double duty as memorial acclamation or hymn, and “Burn Bright” is a lovely song with haunting melody and engaging rhythm.

A piece not in the songbook, but on the album is the introduction to Haugen’s Christmas cantata, “All lands in Darkness.” This dramatic setting of the opening of John’s Gospel for soloist and sparsely accompanied chorus could be an excellent beginning for any Christmas celebration. I would hope that its omission from the songbook indicates PAA’s plan to later publish the entire cantata.

The production of With Open Hands is top quality. The recorded performances are quite good, making it enjoyable listening. The songbook includes Haugen’s comments on the works and recommendations for their liturgical use, as well as scriptural references where necessary. Special note must be made of the album slipcover. The cover artwork, a beautiful batik by Katrina Kobel, and the simple layout are some of the best I have ever seen on a liturgical album. Haugen, his musicians and production crew are to be commended for a fine effort.

Forever Will I Sing


Donald Reagan’s collection, Forever Will I Sing, appears to be a hodgepodge
of his compositions drawn together for publication. Some are related — there are three sets of acclamations — but most are not. All pieces are present in vocal score with keyboard accompaniments and guitar chords, and some have obligato parts for flute and/or oboe and percussion.

Of the major works here, Reagan's "Glory to God" is the best. It is written with a congregational refrain which alternates with the choir. Other compositions which are especially good are the "Penitential Rite C," the "Great Amen" following Reagan's setting of "Come Holy Spirit," and "General Intercessions," and the baptismal acclamation "You are Baptized in Christ." These are generally simple works with congregational parts that can be easily learned. "All you Peoples" is a good congregational piece as well, if performed at a brisk tempo without the silly percussion parts in the verses.

The other works in this collection strike me as quite stiff and dated. The "contemporary" acclamations would have been contemporary when Dave Brubeck recorded Blue Rondo ala Turk. The "folk" acclamations are throwbacks to Ray Repp's early work. The melodies are predictable and dull, the accompaniments and harmonizations uninspired.

Judgments about these compositions are partially influenced by their performance on this album. Unfortunately, these are some of the most consistently bad performances of recorded liturgical music I have heard. The one pleasant sound is the canting of Anthony Dicello: his singing is musical and in tune, and his words understandable. Aside from mediocre guitar playing on the "folk" acclamations, the instrumental performances are competent. The major problems are the other vocal performances and the stiff, deadly slow tempi of most works. Intonation and ensemble problems abound and are inexcusable. Uncontrolled vibrato, especially in the women's voices, renders the lyrics generally incomprehensible. Performances of this sort are heard in many parishes each Sunday and are certainly discouraging. Such performance on record, however, leads to despair.

The overall production of the songbook and album are adequate. The songbook has separate pages with congregational parts and rights to reproduce these (with the proper acknowledgments) are granted the purchaser. The album liner notes fail to list several selections which are on the recording. If one wishes to examine Reagan's compositions, avoid this recording, and go directly to the scores.

JEFREY NOONAN

Praises of God

**Robert Hutmacher. Congregation, soloists, SATB, instruments and organ. G.I.A., 1979, 1981. Recording MS-161, $8.00; vocal score G-2467, $1.50.**

The sons and daughters of St. Francis have a new voice in their midst in the person of Robert Hutmacher, a Franciscan priest of the Sacred Heart Province. His writing is strong in design and filled with fluid melodies that enrich their texts. Furthermore, a richness of organ and orchestral accompaniment renders Fr. Hutmacher's writings a church musician's dream. The music is effective, easily learned, idiomatically well into the 20th century and sparkling with dissonances that gently urge the singers on to well-crafted peaks and climaxes.

From the quasi-mantric "Litany of the Saints" to his Brittenesque "Alleluia/ Gospel Processional," he writes for pastoral effectiveness and liturgical fitness. Hutmacher's combinations of imitative structure with free-flowing accompaniments (as in "Make Music to My God" with organ and harp) create a real excitement for the singer. Congregations and choirs, who adopt this music will find themselves generously rewarded for their efforts.

Each composition shows a different facet of compositional technique, giving a "freshness" to this collection. The sense of musical integrity which permeates each work contributes a peculiar vitality to each chosen text. This alone should recommend his writing to many pastoral musicians who find themselves deadened with the sameness of styles.

Hutmacher's writing may not appeal to many who are used to immediately accessible music, or to those for whom serious writing is anathema. This writing demands work and understanding. While it can be done with a choir of moderate means, it requires competent soloists/cantors, organists, directors and instrumentalists. The transparency of the orchestrations leaves no room for error.

If you do not know these pieces, familiarize yourself with them. They are...
worth studying, rehearsing and performing. To many congregations, these
will be “new voices and new songs,” not easily forgotten and well worth repeating. Also the available recording is a model of what good choral singing is all about: smooth, refined, accurate, and purposeful. Denis Schafer, a fellow Franciscan, conducted the performances, and it is well worth owning.

Music from Taizé

Taizé-Cantate!
Record, MS-156; cassette MS-156CS; both $8.00.

Taizé in Rome
Jacques Berthier, G.I.A., 1981. Record, MS-157; cassette MS-157CS; both $8.00.

Taizé is an international ecumenical community, founded in the 1940’s in eastern France, composed of brothers from different Protestant denominations and today including many Roman Catholics as well. With the stated vocation of striving for communion among all, the Taizé community has worked from its inception for reconciliation among the Christian denominations. Reconciliation is not viewed as an end in itself; rather, “it concerns all of humanity, since it makes the Church a place of communion for all.”

As explained in the introduction to Music from Taizé, the musical style of Taizé has greatly evolved over the past four decades from the original 16th century chorales and psalms sung in French. Among other forms which were added were the psalmody of Joseph Gelineau and a number of liturgical pieces composed for Taizé by Jacques Berthier, composer and organist at St. Ignatius Church in Paris.

More recently, however, Taizé was faced with the pastoral problem of finding a form of song that could actively involve the assembly swayed by an increasing number of international visitors, where rehearsal time was limited. With the help of Berthier, a solution was found through the use of repetitive structures: short musical phrases that could easily be memorized by everybody. Parts were also included for cantors, choir, and instruments within an overall tonal or modal musical language expressly chosen to be within the reach of all.

The problem of language was solved by the adoption of Latin phrases—not because Latin was a universal language, but rather because it is foreign to everyone, and hence neutral. “Everyone is on an equal footing with a language that does not belong to a particular group.” Interspersed among or over these repeated Latin phrases are verses in a variety of living languages. The success of this solution is mirrored in the response of the assemblies recorded at Taizé and during the Roman pilgrimage.

This music draws from the ancient forms of worship—mantras, litanies, Byzantine and Gregorian modalities—so that the appeal is at once engaging yet mystifying, simple yet demanding hard work to appreciate, challenging to Westerners not conversant with historic musical forms but immersed in the R & B style of many contemporary liturgical composers. The arrangements vary from simple unison to full blown SATB, many of which are enhanced by canonical structures for both voices and instruments.

For those who are looking for musical and spiritual refreshment, and who believe in “contemplata alitis tradere,” then the strengths of these musical offerings can be incorporated into a parochial life with possibly spectacular results. Just listen to the rousing “Surrexit” on Taizé-Cantate! The spirited union of voices young and old speaks eloquently for the work of Taizé. The implementation remains for those parishes or communities who may choose to use what can only be described as “tradition come alive.”

James M. Burns

Children

We Walked Down the Road

A haunting melody supported by an interesting harmonic accompaniment, We Walked Down the Road will wear well through the years. The text is excellent and suitable as a communion hymn as well as for Sundays after Easter and the Ascension. One almost feels present with the group on the road to Emmaus as the hymn is sung. The steady flow of the melody and the few harmony lines can be easily rendered by youth choirs, ages 10 through the teens, and they will like it!

The Heavens Declare Thy Glory

An excellent number for a festive occasion, this simple anthem can be performed by the youngest of choirs. Little children would understand the word “your” better than “thy” but the archaic form can be explained. Any director who is searching for an easy, singable, joyful anthem should try this one. Add the trumpets and the sound is triumphal.

The Silly Skyscraper
Robert J. Powell; Virginia Mueller with additional text by Billie Echols. Musical drama for young voices (unison with keyboard accompaniment). Choristers Guild, 1981. CA-240; $2.95

“Babble with Babel” is the opening song of this delightful musical drama, followed by such titles as “King Nimrod’s Song,” “Build It,” “Confusion Song,” and “The People of Babel Begun to Divide.” People and oxen work together, building and babbling in song and action. The language is simple and the directions are clear and direct. Erecting the tower on stage requires only forty individual boxes exactly the same size. Children between the ages of four and eleven will have as much fun producing this drama as the audience who will enjoy every part of it. This is excellent musical experience for youth choirs.

Ants’ hill-in-iania

Ants’ hill-in-iania is an extremely clever presentation of the story of the Prodigal Son and the parable of the Sower and the Seed. The story unfolds as Antony wants to leave the happy village of Ants’ hill-in-iania and become an independant! The play on the word “ant” throughout the narration is striking and the children catch this immediately. The older students are able to recognize the puns and allusions to modern life better than the younger six and seven year olds. However, there is something for everyone to enjoy and learn in this fresh look at the parables. The music rhythms of the 1920’s bounce the ants along from
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one scene to the next as the characters sing their songs of wisdom. The use of alliteration in "The Riddle" is extraordinary, but is recognized as such mainly by the older students; yet the younger children do enjoy the repetitive "s" sounds. The art work appeals to all ages and catches the attention of the youngest listeners.

Ants/hill/lion/s is a "must" for those teachers who want to make learning fun and who like to correlate subject matter, e.g., a creative writing class, music appreciation, and religious instruction.

Sr. Anne Kathleen Duffy

Choral

Ubi Caritas et Amor

Peeters has taken a simple chant, Ubi Caritas, and dressed it in colorful quartal harmonies and seventh and ninth chords. However, the mood of the original chant remains surprisingly intact.

Although the rhythm in the tenor solo is basically halfe and quarter notes, the occasional syncopation keeps the line from becoming staid. Each time the refrain "Ubi Caritas" returns it begins a third higher, but uses essentially the same melodic and rhythmic contour.

This work might best work as a concert piece, though liturgically it might well function as a processional.

It seems that the same thing could have been said in half the length of this work. The "Amen" which concludes it is overtly in the style of blues, a style which is only hinted at earlier.

The piece looks moderately easy, but it would require maturity to handle it with finesse.

Mary Jane Wagner

Psalm 135


With drum beats marching throughout the King James version of verses 1-7, 13-14, and 19-21 of Psalm 135, Ives has set a challenging musical statement of praise in polymers and chromaticism. This is granitic writing: solid, sturdy and mighty in concept. Rhythmically undulating, harmonically dense, it speaks with a sense of forthrightness that is
both defiant and uneasy. For those choirs able to devote a large amount of time learning what is chorally a tour-de-force, this edition of Ps. 135 will speak with a voice of authority and great dramatic impact. A very difficult anthem!

Kergyma

Among the unexplainable musical items that are published, "Kergyma" by Malcolm Williamson will rank high—especially in light of its dedication to Dr. George Thalben Ball, marking the completion of his 60 years of service as organist and choirmaster of the Temple Church in London. Dramatically dissonant, structurally problematic, harmonically questionable and unnecessarily difficult (because of ungrateful voice leading), "Kergyma" shows what can happen when too much of everything in the composer’s arsenal is unleashed. The result is a work that has its own identity problems, with little or no apparent regard for the simplicity of the text.

JAMES M. BURNS

Huit Chorals

These eight chorals from Bach’s Orgelbüchlein have been skillfully arranged by Ralph Sauer to produce a full homogeneous sound, imitative of the original sound produced by the organ. The fine contrapuntal technique and style of J. S. Bach are eminent through the compositions, which are not technically difficult to perform. Included in the collection are:

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Christ lag in Todesbanden
(Christ lay in death’s Strong Bonds)
Jesus Christus, unser Heiland
(Jesus Christ, our Savior)
Liebeste Jesu, wir sind hier
(Blessed Jesus, we are here)
Jesu, meine Freude
(Jesus, my Joy)
In dir ist Freude
(In Thee is Joy)

Quintette

Even though the four movements of this composition (“Adagio,” “Allegro,” “Menuet amabile” and “Allegro”) are well constructed in regards to melody, rhythm, counterpoint and form, the reconstruction of the instrumentation for brass quintet leaves something to be desired. There is no doubt that virtuoso brass players could perform this composition, but even then it would take two Doc Severinsens to perform the exceedingly high range trumpet part (consistently high c, d, and e on B♭ trumpets).

The original composition was probably scored for strings or woodwinds and would present fewer problems for that medium. The trumpet parts could be transposed for a higher trumpet (in D) to facilitate the range. However, for the daring and bold, this composition would indeed be a challenge.

Petite Musique de Duivres

This collection of short compositions for brass quintet includes six pieces in the style of the ancient dance. The first dance, “Double,” uses a short melodic and rhythmic motive based on the modal rhythms, probably introduced by Leoninus shortly before 1200. Rhythmic modes establish the consistent repetition of simple patterns in ternary meter. This linguistic rhythmic mode used here is characterized by a short-long, short-long pattern. The second dance, “Canon II,” develops a short thematic subject canonically in all five instruments. “Ecossaise,” a style of country dance in duple time, describes the style of the third dance. The fourth composition, “Choral,” with its smooth flowing melodic phrases is followed by the “Chaconne,” a musical form almost indistinguishable from the passacaglia, which were original dances of a 3-in-a-measure rhythm, erected on a ground bass. The fifth composition, “Prelude,” is followed by the “Allegro,” a dance in duple time of moderate speed and in simple binary form.

These short, vibrant and well-composed works could certainly be the catalyst for a creative choreographer in developing short dance sequences for liturgical celebrations.

ROBERT E. ONOFREY, CPPS

Partita Teresiana. Portrait of a Saint

Partita Teresiana, a suite for solo guitar, is clearly a work of love by the composer/performer Patrick De Vietri. The suite is an eight movement programmatic composition, keyed to significant aspects of Teresa of Avila's life. De Vietri writes in a rather predictable, although entertaining, “Spanish” style replete with tremolo, rasgueado chords and flamenco-inspired scale passages. Portions of several movements reminded me of Spanish works in the standard repertoire. “Hija de su Divina Majestad,” for example, I initially mistook for a Milan pasione. The suite is long—taking two sides of a long-playing record—and this length is its most serious shortcoming. It is too easy to overload solo works, especially for guitar, with idiomatic technical tricks, and De Vietri has occasionally fallen prey to this temptation. At other times he has simply overstretched himself: where a musical idea would work well for two minutes, De Vietri often stretches it to four.

A final problem is common to most program music: the programmatic associations are usually clearer and of more importance to the composer than to the listener. The liner notes are a series of reflections on Teresa's life which explain the composer's programmatic intentions, but I found that neither the music nor the program shed any light on each other.

De Vietri plays competently, and draws some lovely sounds from his instrument. He has put his heart into this performance and the recording captures his intensity and feeling. I hope that De Vietri will continue to write for the guitar and to share his music with the liturgical music community.

JEFFREY NOONAN

Books/Journals/Media

Praise! Songs and Poems from the Bible Retold for Children

This splendid prayer book for children is an excellent resource for religion teachers, and for parents who want to do more than just kiss their children goodnight. It is a suitable gift for birthdays and festive occasions, especially First Reconciliation, when children are being directed toward a deepening of their interior converse with the Lord. The 60 prayers are not paraphrased, yet are true to the scriptural originals, and each is preceded by a few well chosen lines of introduction. This "setting" is important for children, who
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are usually quite literal about what they read. What give this collection power
and focus is that each selection is built
around a single strong image, modest
enough for a child to take possession of
it.

Scriptural references and other informa-
tion is put in the back for teachers and
parents. The “songs” of the title refers to
the fact that many of these are
psalm-based prayers—no music is pro-
vided. Some selections can be used with
pre-school children; all are suitable for
grades one through eight, although the
colorful illustrations and general
appearance of the book may limit its use to
fifth grade and younger.

This reviewer’s in-house critics (ages 8
and 10) gave Praise! a healthy 11½ on a
scale of 1 to 10.

ELIZABETH McMAHON JEEF

The Music of Christian Hymns
1981. 184 pp. (text): 605 musical ex-
amples (pages unnumbered); 13 pp.
bibliography, hymn tune and general
index. Library Binding, $29.95. Paper-
back $19.95.

Erik Routley’s contribution to church
music in general, and hymnology in par-
icular, is monumental. The Music of
Christian Hymns is his thirty-sixth book
and, according to him, his “third
word”—probably his last on the sub-
ject—the summation of all the others.
In the Preface, Routley notes that he brings
this text to a deeper knowledge and ap-
preciation of American hymnody than
his first (The Music of Christian Hym-
nody, 1957), having visited and sub-
sequently lived in the United States since
then.

In this work the author sets out “to tell
the story of the music of Christian
praise.” Hymn tunes are music, he con-
tends, and few musicians understand
that at least some of them are or can be
great music. In his view, there is “no
more illuminating commentary on the
church’s history than a study of its
peoples’ music—what they were offered
and what they accepted.” He admits that
the text has certain limitations and that,
coming from an English background, he
naturally approaches the subject from a
different perspective than, for example,
a German hymnologist.

The text is not light reading by any
means, and the intended audience is the
serious student of church music or hym-
nology. In order to fully appreciate
the material presented in the text, the author
suggests that the reader be equipped
with a copy of The English Hymnal
(1933 edition) of The Hymnal 1940, and
also that a copy of Hymns Ancient
and Modern and/or The Pilgrim Hymnal
be near at hand. This reviewer suggests that
a copy of Routley’s A Panorama of
Christian Hymnody also be close by,
since he refers to this many times, reit-
erating many of the points made in
that text. Editorialy, the text has many
problems, and this reviewer felt more
like a proofreader, circling mistakes and
making corrections.

In twenty-seven rather brief chapters
(184 pages of text) the author presents an
overview of the history of hymnody
from earliest times through contem-
porary forms. Six hundred and five
examples—more pages (unnumbered)
than the text itself—are included for further
clarification. The author is certainly en-
titled to his strong opinions in this
thirty-sixth opus, and these come
through quite clearly in many instances. The placement of the author’s relatively brief “Conclusion” at the end of the chapter entitled “Contemporary Hymnody in Non-English Speaking Regions,” is rather curious.

The text is primarily concerned with the music of the hymns. The reader, therefore, must be aware that any mention or discussion of the term “liturgy” or “liturgical” should be interpreted in light of the background of the author (English, Protestant) and his understanding of the terms, as well as the relationship between liturgy and music during each period under consideration.

A selective bibliography, an index of hymn tunes, and a general index are also included. The book is a worthwhile addition to any library, and an important resource for the serious student of church music.

Mary Alice O’Connor, CSJ

Liturgy Made Simple

Parish: A Place for Worship

Mark Searle, associate director of the Notre Dame Center for Pastoral Liturgy and assistant professor of theology at the University of Notre Dame, has written and edited two helpful books in the area of pastoral liturgy. The first of these, Liturgy Made Simple, contains four talks which Searle has given to assist people in the preparation and celebration of Sunday worship in the parish. The first talk deals with basic notions of church and liturgy, and is sensitive to pluralism in these areas and the need to provide a process for dealing with differences and tension. The second and third talks deal with the structure of eucharist in a simple yet well-informed way, with due regard for official norms, yet open to local adaptation and creativity. The fourth talk treats of the process of liturgical planning. While he presents a fine model for the planning of a single liturgy, this model is not so appropriate for the multiple liturgies of many large parishes. In large parishes it is better if a worship committee restricts its work to overall policy, procedures and objectives, seasonal planning and special feasts, and leaves the detailed planning of individual liturgies to one or two people. I commend this book as a helpful introduction and review for any groups engaged in preparing parish worship.

In Parish: A Place for Worship, Searle has gathered together and edited papers from the Ninth Annual Conference of the Notre Dame Center for Pastoral Liturgy, held in 1980. Richard McBrien provides a fine theological framework for assessing the parish. Jay Dolan and Jeffrey Burns sort out the history and stages of development of American parishes in an excellent manner. Nathan Mitchell explores the issue of the sacred in worship in a profound and disturbing way and Regis Duffy provides helpful insights into the complex question of ministry. Final essays speak from experience of the urban parish, the rural parish, and the alternative parish. While there are many implications that can be drawn for parish worship, the book is designed as broad background for any people engaged in the process of forming and developing parish community and ministry.

Kenneth Smits

Blessings: A Reappraisal of their Nature, Purpose and Celebration

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When we speak of blessings, many envision saying prayers over things, e.g.: Almighty everlasting God, whose very gaze causes the earth to tremble, pour out your blessing on this seismograph and grant that the signs of the earth's tremors may be precisely recorded by it... (from the ROMAN RITUAL of 1952).

It is Simons' purpose to change this view of blessings by returning to a more scriptural and early Christian understanding. Briefly, he points out that in the Jewish tradition (the tradition of Jesus and his disciples), blessing first means God's blessing of all living beings. Because of this, humans can entreat and mediate blessings: women and men are situated in "the stream of blessings" that flow from God (34). Moreover, they return God's blessing to God in praise and thanksgiving. This approach is articulated in prayers of praise and thanksgiving which first acknowledge God (ascending movement) and then ask for God's further benefits (descending movement). The eucharistic prayers are such models of liturgical blessing.

Since, for early Christians, all creation is a bit of God, the concept of blessing things meant "...to praise God for created things that have come from the creator's hand" (43). Thus, one does not so much bless things as acknowledge God as the giver of all good. To forget this— as the church has sometimes done—is to lapse into a pre-Christian "division of reality into 'profane' and 'sacred'" (89), and consequent attempts to "redeem" things from the powers of evil through blessing and consecration.

It is important, according to the author, to grasp again the biblical and early Christian meaning of blessing, which "...finds its fulfillment in the eucharist" (21). Our concept of blessing and the forms our blessings take affect the way we think about and do eucharist, the premier blessing rite of the Christian community.

This useful resource in six chapters—blessings in scripture, theology, history, liturgical practice, Vatican II and beyond, and contemporary pastoral practice—plus appendices, proves that blessings are an important subject matter that has had little impact on the modern Catholic, especially since the liturgical blessings have not yet appeared in revised form. Many will also discover here a richness of this area of theology and prayer. It is highly recommended.

FRANK C. QUINN, O.P.
Meeting House to Camp
Meeting: Toward a History
of American Free Church
Worship from 1620 to 1835
Doug Adams. Modern Liturgy-
Resource Publications and The Sharing
The lack of enlightenment which cast the
middle ages into darkness was that of
the historian, not of the epoch. Like the
surface of a deep pool, a mere glance at
that which we know but little, reveals
more about ourselves than the thing it-
self. So it has been with the history of
free church worship in New England, the
primary topic of this book. This story is
usually told as a tale of heroic manumis-
sion in which a long-suffering laity over-
comes liturgical enslavement by a long-
winded clergy—demanding in the early
nineteenth century the adaptation of
participatory worship forms found in
the revivals. To our gratitude, Doug
Adams has provided us with a welcome
revision of this story, refreshing our
understanding with a first plunge
beneath the surface of early American
free church worship.

The calling of the Puritans was indeed
to establish a new England, a new Jeru-
salem, the Kingdom of God on earth.
Far from encouraging passivity, this
conviction led the Puritans to create a
worship in which laypersons contrib-
tuted to prayers, questioned the minister,
exhorted the community, witnessed pri-
or to baptism, expelled fallen members,
and frequently gathered about the Lord's
Table. However, fervor lessens as time
passes. As the understanding of who
was sanctified moved from the whole
community to the church and finally—
with the revivalism of the early nine-
teenth century— to the individual, wor-
ship forms followed suit. Lay participa-
tion evolved from an active contribution
in dialogue with community to an emo-
tional piety induced by clergy. Here is
quite the reverse of the story usually
told!

Adams attempts to offer more than a
history here, for he sees "free church
worship" as a type of worship observ-
able in a variety of church settings—not
just in the free Church. Thus aspects of
Methodist and Quaker worship receive
attention along with those of Puritans
and Disciples. This mixing of the writing
of a history with the tracing of a type of
worship leads to some confusion. On the
other hand, throughout the book
Adams takes pains to distinguish the dif-

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different roles of men and women, a distinction painfully absent from much of the literature in the masculine world of liturgical history.

Frederick Sommers West

Family Festivals

For several years Sam Mackintosh has informally published a mimeographed newsletter on family celebrations and developed a small but loyal clientele in the process. The appearance of Family Festivals means that Mackintosh's newsletter has hit the bit time—20 pages, excellent graphics, guest writers and advertising. Resource Publications is betting that the interest in 'religion in the home' is not just a passing fad, and has worked hard with Mackintosh to produce an excellent guide and stimulus for Christian families.

The centerpiece of each issue is a calendar listing the special anniversaries and festivals of the season. In addition to Christian holidays there are always some interesting surprises drawn from history, other cultures and religions, current events and the movement of the heavens. Articles, notes, stories, songs, recipes, poems/prayers and suggestions for celebrating these seasons and days fill the rest of the magazine. There is something for everyone: from the most aggressively celebrative family to the parent who just want a simple way to bless the time that passes so quickly.

What makes this magazine unique is its fundamental orientation to the family matched with a consistently practical approach. There are columns and features in pastoral or religious education periodicals that have similar ambition, but they often treat family celebrations as mere extensions of parish events, or as overly "educational" endeavors. Sam Mackintosh has succeeded in wedding sound theology and liturgical practice so that celebration can be brought to life in any average, lighthearted Christian home.

Pockets

This small devotional magazine (9" x 7") for small Christians is intended as a supplement to Christian education classes or as a tool for family discussion. Like all children's magazines it uses a variety of features: stories, poems, prayers, recipes, cartoons, puzzles, games and projects. Pockets aims at deepening young readers' knowledge of the Bible, participation in the religious seasons, practice of prayer and thoughtfulness toward others. All evidence of denominational identity is avoided, although some parents may find this total lack of ecclesial orientation distressing. Many of the best items in the first issue are adapted from a variety of Christian education lessons.

The high reading and concept level requires adult help for children in the first three primary grades. Fourth and fifth graders could read it on their own, but may be put off by some of the activities, the "golly gee whiz" tone of the editorial characters, and the cuteness of the cartoons. Intermediate children are quick to reject anything seemingly designed for younger students.

The magazine does not duplicate anything now available, and is reasonably priced for highly motivated families who seek some help for religious activity in the home. Bulk prices are available to interested congregations.

Elizabeth M. Jeep

About Reviewers

Mr. Brown is music director and liturgical consultant for the Church of St. Ursula in Parkville, Md.

Sr. Duff is music director at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Daytona Beach, Fla.

Mr. Noonan is a graduate student in early music at Washington University in St. Louis.

Sr. O'Connor, csp, is director of the Liturgical Music Program in the School of Music of the Catholic University of America.

Fr. O'Shaughnessy, cme, is assistant professor of music at St. Joseph's College in Rensselaer, Ind.

Fr. Quinn, or, is associate professor of liturgy as Pastoral Theology at the Aquinas Institute in St. Louis, Mo.

Fr. Smyth, C.S.P., currently chairs the Liturgical Commission of the Midwest Capuchins.

Sr. Wagner is a United Church of Christ minister, is finishing his Ph.D. in liturgy at the University of Notre Dame.

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Music Industry News

New Catalogue from Oxford

Oxford University Press has announced the publication of a new Church Music Catalogue. The 36 page catalogue contains over six hundred entries, giving composer, title, text source (if available), series listing (if any), level of difficulty, seasonal reference, catalogue number, current price, voices needed, and accompaniment. Among the composers listed are Ralph Vaughan Williams, William Walton, David Willocks, and Benjamin Britten. For a free copy write to the Music Department, Oxford University Press, 200 Madison Avenue, NY, NY 10016.

ICEL Resource Collection

G.I.A. has published the ICEL Resource Collection, Hymns and Service Music for the Liturgy, containing 250 hymns in the public domain, as well as 106 musical settings for the various liturgical rites commissioned over the past five years by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy. The content of the book may be reproduced at no cost when the source is acknowledged and the reproduced material is not sold. The ICEL Resource Collection is available in a perfect bound edition or loose sheets in boxed edition for easy reproduction, each $6.50; or spiral edition for organist, $7.50. Write to G.I.A. Publications, 7404 South Mason Avenue, Chicago, IL 60638.

Gregorian Chant Symposium

An International Symposium on Gregorian Chant in Liturgy and Education will be hosted by the School of Music at the Catholic University of America. Scheduled for June 19-22, 1983, the event will demonstrate the roots of Gregorian Chant and show how present-day worship services and contemporary music education can be enhanced with the same melodies that have enriched the church's prayer life for centuries.

For further information, write to Dean Elaine Walter, the Center for Ward Method Studies, School of Music, The Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. 20064.

New Spanish Hymnal

Oregon Catholic Press has announced the publication of a Spanish hymnal, Canticos de Gracias y Alabanza. The hymnal contains 215 titles, 182 hymns and 33 acclamations, and is available in a people's edition ($1.50 plus shipping for single copy; $1.25 each plus shipping for orders of 100 copies or more) and a guitar accompaniment book for $18.95.

Oregon Catholic Press has also announced that it is now the sole U.S. agent for reprint permission for three major publishers of Spanish liturgical music: Ediciones Musical Pax, Madrid (publishers of "Resucitó," "Una Espiga," "Gracias, Señor," etc.); Ediciones Paulinas, Madrid (publishers of "Pescador De Hombres," "Viene Con Alegría," etc.); and Editorial Apostolado De La Prensa, Madrid (publishers of "El Señor Es Mi Fuerza," "Ave María," and "Caridad y Comprensión," etc.).

Requests for reprint permission for any of the songs published by the above companies, and requests for more information on the Spanish hymnal, can be sent to Oregon Catholic Press, P.O. Box 14809, Portland, OR 97214 or call (503) 234-5381.

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Your Liturgy Functions . . .

BY JAMES EMPEREUR

I would think that many worshipers as well as some liturgists/musicians would be profoundly unhappy with this issue of Pastoral Music. It is filled with questions. There are questions about why Christians gather, and about the techniques of gathering, how the community listens, the purpose of any specific kind of response, and the function of the eucharistic assembly. And even worse, there are writers who try to answer these unhappily pragmatic questions.

Whatever happened to the recently and so arduously won redefinition of liturgy as doxology? Are not all these questions about function a contemporary mask for the mechanical approach to spirituality so well articulated by a previous age with its concern with instrumental causality? Why must we insist on making the ritualization of the Paschal Mystery subject to what can only be verified according to the standards of American pragmatism? Is not the project of the study of the Order of the Mass, entitled ironically The Mystery of Faith, a heinous contradiction? Why should we presume that a systems analysis of the components of a rite will revitalize Christian living any more than did a previous attempt often characterized by magic and superstition? Does not this way to liturgical renewal effectively undercut efforts to have the liturgy celebrated in a wholistic manner? Will not such functional criteria only reinforce the rigid mentality promoting thematic liturgies that not only interrupt the internal cohesiveness of the liturgical year but also limit the possibilities of celebration to the cerebral dimension of the worshiper?

Although these reservations are being voiced today about the validity of the functional approach to the liturgy, I am convinced of its usefulness, methodologically speaking. Despite the limitation of The Mystery of Faith in not distinguishing the relative importance of the various components of the structure of the eucharistic liturgy, it is necessary to ask the kind of questions it does, such as: what is the purpose of the entrance rite? What is the dynamic of the eucharistic

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prayer? Where should silence be found in the liturgy? Such a procedure is not only helpful but significant because ritual is a human way of acting. The one who ritualizes does not leave behind those dimensions of human life that are the domain of the humanistic sciences such as psychology and anthropology. These fields are very concerned with functionality because they seek to understand the structure of human living. To ask the question of how any part of the liturgy functions is to ask the question: what humanly is going on here? Those liturgists who are incensed over the use of thematic liturgies rightly make the case that a theme is abstract and one does not celebrate concepts. We do not want to create a new era of votive masses. I hope no one is moving in the direction of that former time of “Sunday displacement.” But one can also challenge what appears to be the presupposition of many liturgists, presiders, and planners, that since every liturgy recalls the whole history of salvation, it is sufficient to depend on the specificity of the liturgical texts and scriptures to focus the prayer of the congregation. To operate from such a prior understanding is to mis-understand the way the human person worships, or functions, if you will. Worshipers need some focusing, whether verbal or not, to enter into a rite. The liturgical prayers and biblical readings do not do it automatically. One should be able, then, to ask the question: what is the call to worship in any given liturgical action? And this is taking a functional approach because it is far more phenomenological or psychological than theological. Theologically, it may be true that God’s presence is articulated in the act of assembling and that God first offers himself to the assembly in the word proclaimed. But to make such an assertion does not render it so in fact. Theology does not create truth. One must find ways for people in the assembly to hear the word by concretizing for them what it is they are to pray about. But that is a functional approach to worship.

Good worship stirs the creative powers in people.

What this issue of Pastoral Music so well highlights is the meaning of function itself. Each of the three liturgical acts of gathering, listening, and responding are treated both theoretically and practically. The question of why Christians gather is complemented with: what are the techniques for gathering? This avoids evaluating the functional path to liturgy in a pejorative fashion where function equals the one dimensional, the utilitarian, the dehumanizing, and the perfunctory. It is quite the opposite. To examine the function of any part of the liturgy is to ask how it is working imaginatively, or better, how it is engaging the human imagination. It is to understand the active imagination in Jungian terms as the “transcendent function.”

To ask how well any individual section of Christian liturgy is functioning is to ask how it is the source of power and energy for faith. Does this part of the liturgy have the importance or ability to trigger the experience of God by means of the sensual? Does the gathering, the listening, and the responding help the worshipers to link their own stories to the larger incorporating story of Jesus Christ? Do the worshipers establish an affective bond among themselves because of the energy generated from any particular segment of the rite? One could ask the functional question of any of the divisions of the ritual in terms of what kind of storytelling is going on here. Does any part of the liturgy manifest a gratuitous experience of goodness; does it leave resonances in the personalities of the worshipers long after the service; does it provoke Christians to share their own stories with others?

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Such questions indicate the meaning of the functional approach to liturgy as a criterion for evaluating its effectiveness. The validity of this approach is based on its ability to discover how the liturgy works humanly and how the ritual involves the imagination. In this sense, to ask the question of how the liturgy functions is to ask how it operates dramatically. There is an immediacy about the dramatic experience that stirs the imaginative and creative powers of people. The same should be true of good worship. In the dramatic experience the response of the audience is essential to the final definition of the event. Can any less be claimed for the church’s public worship? Drama is a call to faith because in it the audience is asked to believe. Good drama is not pedagogical and didactic but is an invitation to contemplation by means of images, events, actions, and characters. Surely, that is also the purpose of good liturgy. I am suggesting that the dramatic experience will help us to ask functional questions of the liturgy that will avoid reducing the liturgical experience to the merely pragmatic. Because the theater is the place where people are invited to enter and express themselves in depth by creating, by suspending disbelief, by participating, and by losing themselves in the experience of others, it can serve as a model of how to apply functional criteria when evaluating worship. Such an understanding will ensure that to speak of liturgy’s function is to claim it as that which enables one to embrace the contemplation of one’s humanity with new insights and to re dedicate one’s life to the growth process in a communal setting.
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