

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION of  
PASTORAL MUSICIANS

December-January 2006

# PASTORAL Music

NPM

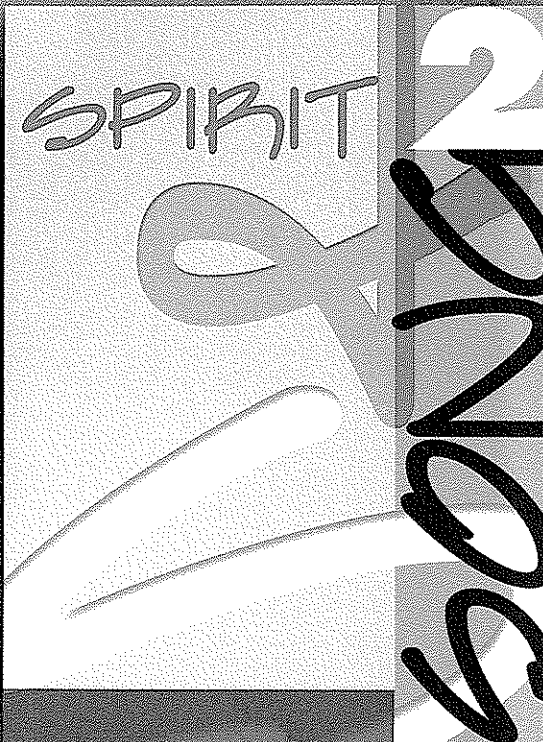


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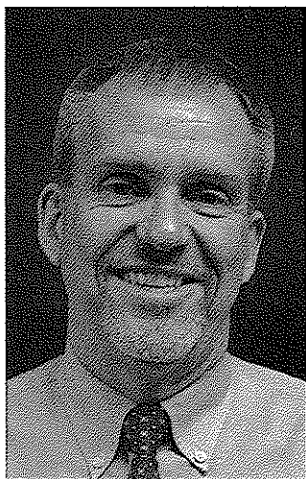
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## From the President

How well do U.S. Catholic teens compare with their peers from other religious traditions in their religious beliefs, experiences, and activities? Not so well, according to the recent National Study of Youth and Religion (NSYR). Researchers Christian Smith and Melinda Lundquist have prepared a full report of the study—*Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers* (Oxford University Press, 2005)—and a summary appears in the most recent issue *The CARA Report* (Fall 2005). The researchers interviewed teens in seven religious categories, including conservative Protestant, mainline Protestant, Black Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, Latter-Day Saints, and no religion.

One of the findings that particularly disturbed me was that just thirty-seven percent of Roman Catholic teens say that they have ever had an experience of spiritual worship that was very moving and powerful (compared with seventy percent of conservative Protestant and sixty-four percent of mainline Protestant youth). Even more troubling perhaps is the finding that only ten percent of Roman Catholic teens regard religious faith as extremely important in shaping daily life (compared with twenty-nine percent of conservative Protestant and twenty percent of mainline Protestant youth). I suppose that these numbers bother me so much because, like many adult Catholics, I can look back to participation in vibrant liturgical celebrations as one of the primary foundations of a maturing faith that in turn nourished and informed daily living.

Since Vatican II, liturgical leaders have devoted considerable effort to promoting the active participation of the assembly, but it is worth noting that the Council also called for *full* participation of the assembly—mind, body, and spirit. Have we served our communities well, especially our young people, if we have not helped

them to participate in liturgies that touch their hearts and draw them into full participation?

Our sisters and brothers in both evangelical and mainline Protestant churches are clearly doing a far better job of involving youth in worship that both engages them fully—including at the emotional level—and that has an impact on their daily living. While Catholic leaders have rightly been concerned to implement the Church's liturgical norms, have we devoted an equal share of attention and effort to celebrating the rites with joy and wonder, drawing participants into an experience of God's saving presence and action?

I'm hoping that musicians and other pastoral ministers will be as disturbed as I am that so few young people report that they have had powerful liturgical experiences or see the intimate connection between their faith and their daily lives. We need to devote considerable reflection to pastoral strategies that will address these problems. Yet we cannot afford to wait for plans and studies but need to take action now in our parish communities. Some of the ways that pastoral musicians and other worship leaders can make a difference right now include:

- helping children to build a strong liturgical foundation before they reach adolescence;
- remembering that our assemblies include people of all ages, especially when we prepare music and homilies;
- involving adolescents in ministries, including serving as cantor, singing in the choir, and playing instruments;
- going beyond our own territory to collaborate with other pastoral ministers, especially youth ministers.

The NPM Board of Directors is currently completing work on a four-year strategic plan entitled "Building Bridges." One of the bridges identified by the leaders of our association reaches toward young people, involving them more deeply and meaningfully in the life of the organization. Clearly there is much at stake here both for NPM and for the Church that we serve.

Pastoral musicians, clergy, and other leaders of prayer are called to foster the active participation of the assembly—including youth—in a corporate act of worship. That active engagement in the liturgy should open participants to God's transforming power and reshape their lives in the image of Christ. The task is clearly an urgent one.

*J. Michael McMahon*

J. Michael McMahon  
President



# PASTORAL Music

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## Contents

Association News

5

### Is Music Integral to Church Life and Mission?

11

BY LORRAINE S. BRUGH

### How They've Done It in Japan

13

BY ROB STRUSINSKI

## The Pastoral Choir

### It's All about Balance: The Role of the Choir Today

19

BY FRANK BROWNSTEAD

### Choral Repertoire: Good Choirs Sing Good Music

23

BY BENNETT JOHN PORCHIRAN

### A Place for the Choir: Values, Challenges, Solutions

27

BY WILLIAM BRISLIN

### From the Voices of Children, Lord

30

BY MICHAEL WUSTROW

### Mission Impossible, or How I Built a Youth Choir in One Year

32

BY HELEN NATHAN

### Mickey to Judy: "Let's Have a Choir Festival!"

35

BY JAMES CHEPPONIS

Professional Concerns

39 Music Education

43

Reviews

45 Hotline

54

Calendar

57 Bulletin Insert: The Choir

60

**Cover:** "Joanie." This photo, like many of the photos in this issue, was provided as part of our request for images that would display the ministries and singing congregations of parishes to be used at the 2005 NPM National Convention. We are grateful to the many communities that supplied these photos. Additional photos are courtesy of the Grand Rapids/Kent County Convention and Visitors Bureau; Diana Pearson and the Diocese of Fort Worth, Texas; Pat Hitt of You-Nique Photography, Mukwonga, Wisconsin; Metro Goldwyn Mayer Studios, Inc. (MGM); and the Catholic Schools Office of the Archdiocese of Cape Town, Republic of South Africa.



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The National Association of Pastoral Musicians fosters the art of musical liturgy. The members of NPM serve the Catholic Church in the United States as musicians, clergy, liturgists, and other leaders of prayer.

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# Association News

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## Conventions 2006

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### Gather in Stamford

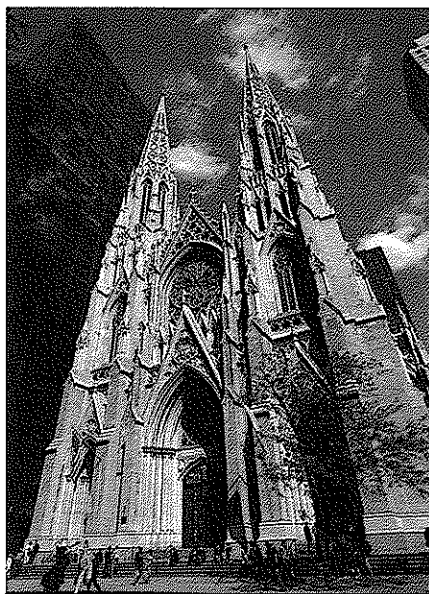
**JUNE 27-30**

**STAMFORD, CONNECTICUT  
BUILDING BRIDGES**

Particularly in the Colonial era, Catholicism survived in Connecticut in the shadow of New England Congregationalism. Though the area was under the care of the Diocese of Boston, it was not until 1834 that a Catholic church was built in Connecticut—Hartford's Church of the Holy Trinity. By the time that the Diocese of Hartford was established nine years later, however, there were about 10,000 Catholics in the Diocese of Hartford, most of them in and around Rhode Island. It was not until 1953 that the Diocese of Bridgeport was created to serve Catholics in Fairfield County, Connecticut. Currently there are more than 363,000 registered Catholics in the diocese—forty-three percent of the total population.

Twenty-nine families left Wethersfield, Connecticut, in 1641 to form the town of Stamford (originally named Rippowam) on land purchased from Chief Ponus and the local inhabitants for (purportedly) twelve coats, twelve hoes, twelve hatchets, twelve glasses, twelve knives, four kettles, and four fathoms (twenty-four feet) of white wampum beads made from polished shells. The settlers or their ancestors had come from Lincolnshire, England—an area that supplied more than eighty percent of the settlers in New England. The town remained strongly English in heritage and Congregational in religious practice until Irish Catholic settlers began arriving in the mid-nineteenth century with the opening of the railroad. Later arrivals included Germans in the 1880s. By the end of the nineteenth century, the town became known as "lock city," because the Yale and Towne Manufacturing Company was the largest single employer in town.

Curiously, until 1949, there were both a town and a city of Stamford, more or less in the same place. The two finally merged,



St. Patrick Cathedral, New York

and the city's population grew through the twentieth century, with a strong industrial base, though, as was the case in many places, that base declined after World War II, and Stamford became one of the bedroom communities for commuters working in the New York City area.

When NPM comes to Stamford for the 2006 Eastern Regional Convention, we will be using the Stamford Marriott Hotel and Spa as our headquarters hotel; we will also be using the Holiday Inn Select. The major presenters who will address our convention theme—"Building Bridges"—are Rev. Eugene F. Lauer, director of the National Pastoral Life Center; Paul Inwood, director of music and liturgy for the Diocese of Portsmouth, England; Richard P. Gibala, director of music ministries at the Cathedral of St. Thomas More, Arlington, Virginia; and members of the Taizé Community.

Musical performances will feature noontime concerts, including a carillon concert at First Presbyterian Church and an organ concert at St. John Episcopal Church, and there will be an evening performance on Tuesday by the Stamford Mendelssohn Choir. The major performance day, however, will not be in Stamford but in New York City. On Wednesday

afternoon, the whole convention will be bused to New York for a performance of "Sing a Song This Night—Lessons and Carols for Music Ministry," produced by Alan Hommerding and presented at St. Paul the Apostle Church, completed in 1885 and the mother church of the Paulist Fathers. After dinner on our own, we will gather for sung evening prayer, coordinated by Dr. Jennifer Pascual, at St. Patrick Cathedral, the largest gothic-style Catholic cathedral in the United States, which opened its doors in 1879.

In addition to daily prayer, Tuesday night Taizé Prayer, and Wednesday evening prayer, we will celebrate the Eucharist on Thursday evening with Bishop William E. Lori of the Diocese of Bridgeport, who will preside and preach.

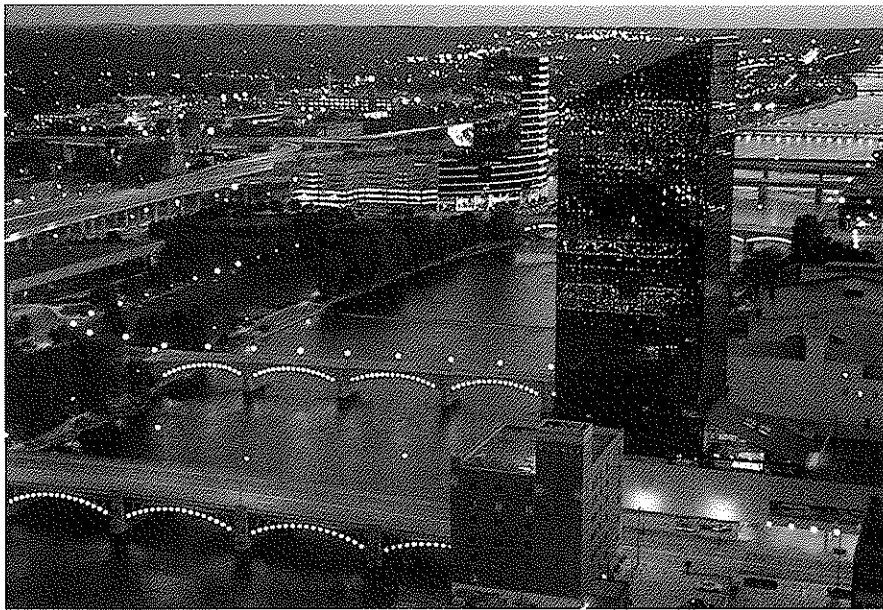
Other great opportunities in Stamford will include a Hispanic Ministry Day on Sunday, June 25, a Musicians' Retreat on Tuesday, June 27, and special pre-convention Music Educator Workshops on Monday evening and Tuesday morning with Donna Kinsey, Paul Tate, and Deanne Light.

### Gather in Grand Rapids

**JULY 18-21**

**GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN  
SING A NEW WORLD**

The area later known as the Grand River Valley has been inhabited for more than 2,000 years. Some of the first Europeans to travel through the area that would become Michigan were the Jesuits Isaac Jogues and Charles Ramoaut, who preached to the Chippewas in 1641, and fur traders. The fledgling United States surveyed the area as part of the Northwest Territory, but European immigrants did not begin to settle in the Grand Rapids region until the 1820s (when the rapids were much "grander"—higher—than they are today). Expanding around an original fur-trading center, Grand Rapids became a village in 1838. By the mid-nineteenth century, the town was a lumber and woodworking center, known as "America's furniture capital" in the 1880s. (At one point, Grand



Grand Rapids skyline. Photo by Brian Kelly courtesy of the Grand Rapids/Kent County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

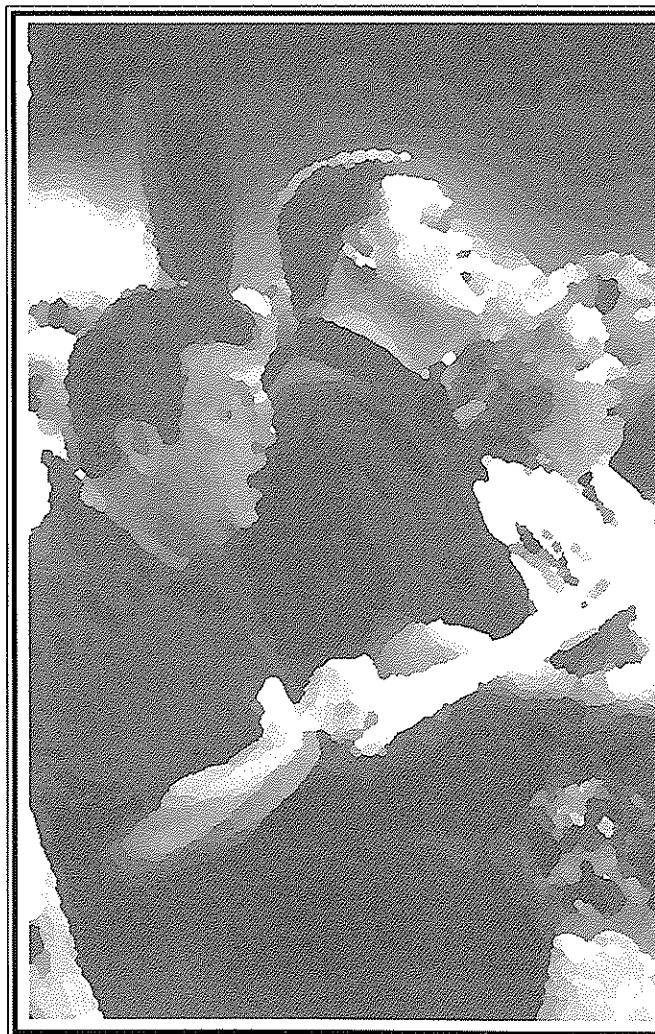
Rapids was home to forty-four furniture companies.)

While the Catholic presence in Michi-

gan centered on Detroit, occasional services were provided to Catholics throughout the state. In 1833, for example, the year that

the Diocese of Detroit was established, Father Frederic Baraga celebrated the first Mass for Catholics in what would soon become Grand Rapids, and the first parish in the area—St. Mary Mission, which would soon become St. Andrew Parish—was formed. The Diocese of Sault Sainte Marie (later Marquette) was created in 1857, and the Diocese of Grand Rapids followed in 1882.

Grand Rapids is now the second-largest city in Michigan. For the NPM Central Regional Convention, our headquarters hotel will be the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, which incorporates the historic Pantlind Hotel, built in 1913. Our keynote speaker, introducing the convention theme "Sing a New World," will be Bishop Ricardo Ramirez, csm, of the Diocese of Las Cruces, New Mexico. Other plenum speakers include Dr. John Witvliet, director of the Calvin Institute for Christian Worship and associate professor of music and worship at Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids; Dr. Elaine Rendler-McQueeney, assistant professor of music theory at George Mason Univer-



"Ours is a singing faith  
All thanks to God be sung  
By people here both far and near  
In every land and tongue"

Jane Parker Huber

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sity, Fairfax, Virginia; and Rev. J.-Glenn Murray, SJ, presbyter of the Diocese of Cleveland and director of the diocesan Office for Pastoral Liturgy.

Some of the performances at this convention will take place at two historic churches: the Catholic Cathedral of St. Andrew, a continuation of Father Baraga's first mission—the current building was opened in 1875—and LaGrave Avenue Christian Reformed Church, formed by Dutch immigrants as the Fourth Holland Christian Reformed Church in 1887, with a sanctuary built in the 1950s, when the community made a commitment to remain in downtown Grand Rapids when other churches were relocating to the suburbs.

Performances include "Sing a Song This Night: Lessons and Carols for Music Ministry," produced by Alan Hommerding; the medieval chant trio Vox Angelica, who specialize in the music of Hildegard of Bingen; the fourteen-member handbell ensemble Embellish; Chicago's Harmony, Hope, and Healing Choir, directed by Marge Nykaza—a creative music program which strives to provide meaningful enrichment opportunities to clients from various shelters and community outreach programs in Chicago; the Holy Cross/IHM Marimba Ensemble (which was such a big hit at the 2005 National Convention in Milwaukee); an organ concert by Jennifer Pascual and Lynn Trapp, members of the Liturgical Organists' Consortium; a performance by the Grand Rapids Catholic Central High School Choir, directed by Dennis Rybicki; and an African American Festival directed by James Abbingdon.

There will also be a theatre organ recital at the Van Andel Museum Center at noon on Thursday.

Opportunities for prayer include Taizé Prayer on Tuesday night, daily morning prayer, ecumenical evening prayer on Thursday, and the convention Eucharist on Wednesday at the Cathedral of St. Andrew.

Pre-convention events include a Hispanic Ministry Day on Saturday, July 15; a Musicians' Retreat with Rev. James Marchionda, OP, and Sister Ann Willits, OP, on Tuesday morning; and Music Education Workshops with Michael and Jill Gallina and Sister Patricia Giljum, CSJ.

## Gather in Sacramento

**AUGUST 1-4**

**SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA**

**"WHAT YOU HAVE RECEIVED,  
GIVE AS A GIFT" (MATTHEW 10:8)**

Although Father Junipero Serra started the first Franciscan mission in California in 1769 (following some earlier work by Jesuit missionaries), Spanish explorers did not reach this area of Northern California until the early nineteenth century, when Gabriel Moraga named the area and the river for the Blessed Sacrament. And it was not until 1850 that the first Mass was celebrated in Northern California: On August 10 of that year, Father Peter Augustine, OP, gathered a group of Catholics at a private home in Sacramento. Until 1860, when the vicariate of Marysville was created to

serve Catholics in Northern California and most of Nevada, Sacramento remained a mission of the Church of St. Francis in San Francisco. Marysville was replaced by the Diocese of Grass Valley in 1868, and the new Diocese of Sacramento was created in 1886. Patrick Manogue, who had served as the second bishop of Grass Valley, became the founding bishop of Sacramento. (He had earlier been a gold miner—trying to earn money to study for the priesthood in Paris—and a priest caring for miners working the Comstock Lode in Nevada.)

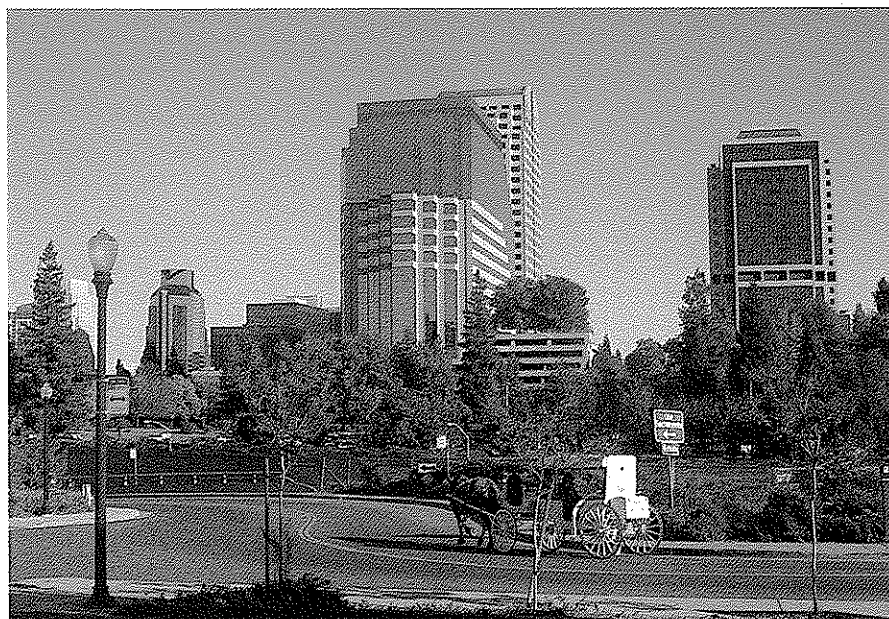
Blessed Sacrament Cathedral, built by Bishop Manogue one block from the state capitol, is in the historic center of the city which grew from a fort built by Johann Augustus Sutter in 1840 (the same Sutter whose mill, fifty miles from the fort, became the heart of the California Gold Rush in 1848). After a recent renovation to restore its beauty, the Cathedral was just re-opened to the public on November 20.

Our headquarters in Sacramento will be the Radisson Hotel Sacramento, a special site with its own lagoon, about four miles from Old Sacramento. One of the highlights of the convention will be an evening at Blessed Sacrament Cathedral that will include evening prayer, the NPM Awards Dinner in Cathedral Hall, and "Jazz at the Cathedral," a performance that celebrates the tradition of using jazz and Gospel-style music in Cathedral liturgies during Sacramento's annual jazz festival. The event features the Jazz Jubilee Festival Choir and some of the finest professional musicians in the area.

David Haas will be our keynote speaker, introducing our convention theme on Tuesday, August 1. Other plenum speakers include Bishop Jaime Soto of the Diocese of Orange, California; Sister Suzanne Toolan, RSM, composer and staff member at the Mercy Center in Burlingame, California; and Monsignor Ray East, presbyter of the Archdiocese of Washington, DC, where he serves as director of the Office of Black Catholics, vicar for evangelization, and pastor of St. Teresa of Avila Parish.

In addition to the special Tuesday evening at Blessed Sacrament Cathedral, performances during the Western Regional Convention will include "Sung Rosary" by Bob Hurd; "The Biblical Way of the Cross" by David Haas; "Panapalayang Handog," an exploration of Filipino popular devotions; and a Hispanic Festival of Music.

Our prayer together is centered on the Convention Eucharist on Wednesday



Sacramento from the Riverwalk

evening, with Bishop William K. Weigand of Sacramento as the ordained presider and Msgr. Ray East as homilist. Other prayer times include evening prayer at the Cathedral, morning prayer, and Taizé Prayer on Thursday night.

We will be offering a special Hispanic Ministry Day on Sunday, July 30, and pre-convention Music Educators' Workshops with Sister Teresita Espinosa, csj, Mark Friedman, and Janet Vogt are scheduled for Monday and Tuesday, July 31 and August 1. There will also be a Musicians' Retreat with Jeanne Cotter on Tuesday morning.

## Late-Night Expo

Yep, it's back! The very popular late-night expo is part of all three convention schedules for 2006. In addition to regular exhibit hours, the convention exhibits will be open from 10:00 PM to midnight on June 29 in Stamford, on July 18 in Grand Rapids, and on August 1 in Sacramento.

## Brochures and Online Registration

Full brochures for the 2006 NPM Regional Conventions will be mailed to all members in January, and details will be posted on the NPM website: [www.npm.org](http://www.npm.org). You may also register easily online; we have a secure site.

## 2006 Institutes

### Old and New Friends

Our most popular summer institutes will be returning in 2006—those for cantors, choir directors, guitarists and ensemble directors, music with children, and pastoral liturgy. There will also be a new institute that weaves together resources for organists and vocal directors. Watch for more details in the February-March issue of *Pastoral Music* and on the website: [www.npm.org](http://www.npm.org). Detailed brochures will be available early in 2006.

## Members Update

### Church-Related Music Ministry Associations Meet

Representatives of music ministry associations from seven denominations met at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan, October 17–19, 2005. The thirty-five participants represented American Bap-



St. Mary, Gdansk. Photo by Lisette Christensen.

tists, Episcopalians, Lutherans (ELCA), United Methodists, Presbyterians, Roman Catholics, and the United Church of Christ as well as the American Guild of Organists. The purpose of the conference was to explore issues that are common among all the denominations: church life and mission, the role of musicians, the impact of cultural shifts, the formation of church musicians, and repertoire. Short presentations on those topics were followed by lively discussion in small groups. (Read one of those presentations on page eleven of this issue.) Prayer at the conference was led by the various denominational groups, each highlighting its own worship practices.

At the end of the meeting the delegates decided to form a network of the organizations that will continue the dialogue and consider the possibilities for joint activities. The executive directors and elected leaders of the groups will consider and plan for the next steps.

NPM was represented by seven members: Jean McLaughlin, James Savage, Charles Gardner, and Michael Connolly of the NPM Board of Directors; Joanne Werner, DMMD President; Paul Colloton, NPM Director of Continuing Education; and J. Michael McMahon, NPM President.

The conference was supported by a grant from the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, based at Calvin College. The institute promotes scholarly study of the theology, history, and practice of Christian Worship.

*This report was prepared by Dr. Michael Connolly.*

## Photo Apology

We extend a belated apology to Li-

sette Christensen for the way her photo appeared on the cover of the August-September issue of *Pastoral Music*. The background of the photo was washed out because of problems with new software used to prepare that issue. Here's a smaller version of her beautiful picture.

## Première

On Sunday, October 16, at New York's St. Patrick Cathedral, Lynn Trapp performed the première of a work that he had been commissioned to compose for a new recording to be made at the cathedral. Cardinal Egan and the music ministry of St. Patrick had commissioned Dr. Trapp to compose the piece for a new chant and organ CD. The Cardinal was given several chants from which to choose the basis of the organ work, and he selected the *Exsultet* chant. *Images of the Exsultet Chant of the Great Paschal Vigil* is a seven-minute work which depicts the ritual, environment, and chant experienced during the opening service of light in the Easter Vigil of the Roman Rite. The work is published by World Library Publications.

## Meetings & Reports

### National Meeting of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions

The annual National Meeting of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions gathered 147 delegates from 91 dioceses in Buffalo, New York, October 11–15. The meeting, jointly sponsored by the Federation of Liturgical Commissions (FDLC) and the U.S. Catholic Conference's Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy (BCL), focused on "sacred time" with the theme "All Time and Seasons Belong to Christ."

The major speakers offered insights into aspects of sacred time and its relationship to liturgy. Liturgical language expert Gail Ramshaw explored how the Sunday gathering is transformed through Christ's presence in Scripture and the language of liturgy. Gary Eberle took an anthropological look at sacred time through the structure of the Roman Catholic celebration of Eucharist. The seasons of the liturgical calendar were examined by David Philippart in light of appropriate environment and art. The final presentation by Dom John Eudes Bamberger looked at the work of liturgy as it entails a discovery of the transcendent realities conveyed in words and images. Excerpts of the addresses will be posted on the FDLC web site ([www.fdlc.org](http://www.fdlc.org)).



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In the course of the meeting the Federation presented its annual Frederick R. McManus Award for pastoral liturgy to liturgical designer and consultant Robert Rambusch. Mr. Rambusch's work in the liturgical renewal spans more than sixty years. In accepting the award, Mr. Rambusch paid tribute to the numerous persons and organizations involved in the reform of the liturgy in the United States. The complete text of Mr. Rambusch's remarks is available on the FDLC web site ([www.fdlc.org](http://www.fdlc.org)).

During the meeting the diocesan delegates adopted four position statements. Three were formulated during FDLC regional meetings earlier this year; the fourth was formed during the meeting and presented by the FDLC Executive Committee.

In light of the frequent clustering or closing of parishes, delegates asked the BCL and the FDLC Eucharist and Liturgical Year Committee to identify and develop "pastoral tools, strategies, and resources . . . to assist bishops, diocesan offices of worship, priests, parish staffs, and parish worship commissions in dealing with ministerial and liturgical issues that result from clusterings, mergings, and closures of parishes or even loss through natural disasters in order to provide a pastoral response to the needs of our assemblies and an authentic respect for the Church's liturgical traditions."

They also asked for more support from the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy for Communion under both kinds, particularly to "invite and actively promote the full implementation of the lay faithful sharing in the fullness of Communion through the reception of the Precious Blood." One way to do this, described in another position statement, is by providing a "question/answer tool to assist bishops, priests, deacons, seminarians, and liturgists in educating the laity, pastors, and pastoral leaders on the importance and practice of Communion from the Cup in order that Holy Communion from the Cup be offered to the assembly at all regularly scheduled Masses."

Finally, the voting participants approved a statement drafted by the FDLC Executive Committee which strongly urged the BCL "to continue to explore with the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments and the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith alternate pastoral approaches regarding reception of Holy Communion for those people suffering from Celiac Sprue disease who are totally gluten intolerant."

## National Association of Pastoral Musicians Director of Music Ministries Division

The National Association of Pastoral Musicians (NPM) fosters the art of musical liturgy. Its Director of Music Ministries Division (DMMD) reaches out to all those who work as music directors, music and liturgy directors, and those with similar titles and duties to meet their needs in a specialized way. We do this through our work in the areas of professional concerns, certification, ongoing education, and communications.

The DMMD has created a network of support, education, and attention to professional concerns for all who are directors of music ministry in the church. Members meet during educational opportunities at NPM conventions and colloquia and at special member meetings at national and regional conventions.

The Director of Music Ministries Division of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians addresses the unique needs of current NPM members (see below); employed in a position from which one derives primary income from church music employment, or in a pastoral music and liturgy position, or in a combination of positions (i.e., parish, diocesan, seminary, or religious community music/liturgy staff; parish music teacher; or some combination of these positions). Membership is also open to all ordained clergy. To apply for membership, please read the membership description and download the application form at the NPM website: <http://www.npm.org/Sections/DMMD/membership.htm>. Or phone the National Office: (240) 247-3000.

### Benefits of Membership

- ❖ Participation in the DMMD certification program, leading to the designation *Certified Director of Music Ministries*. The USCCB-approved DMMD certification program is open to all members of DMMD and focuses on the musical, liturgical, pastoral, and organizational aspects of the work of a director of music ministries. Members are encouraged to explore this program further by requesting an application packet from the NPM National Office.
- ❖ Direct election of the DMMD Board of Directors.
- ❖ Participation as members on DMMD Board Committees.
- ❖ Participation in the development of position statements and publications pertinent to the DMMD membership. Publications developed or approved by the Professional Concerns and Education committees include: *An NPM Workbook: Job Descriptions, Contracts, Salary; Hiring a Director of Music: A Handbook and Guide; Qualifications for a Director of Music Ministries*; and *The Director of Music Ministries in the Parish: Work and Remuneration*.
- ❖ Express registration and DMMD badge at all NPM national conventions.
- ❖ Participation in advanced-level professional programs at NPM national and regional conventions.
- ❖ Listing in the DMMD Membership Directory published on the DMMD password-protected site on the NPM web page ([www.npm.org](http://www.npm.org)).
- ❖ The DMMD quarterly newsletter *Praxis*.
- ❖ Participation in a united voice for advocacy through networking and liaison with AGO, CRCCM, ADDM, FDLC, BCL, CG, NACPA, and others.

DMMD membership dues are \$20.00 per year in addition to annual membership in NPM (membership fees are explained on the application form).

All DMMD members must agree to uphold the NPM/DMMD Code of Ethics. The articles of the Code are found on the NPM website; the complete text is also available from the NPM National Office.

More information at <http://www.npm.org/Sections/DMMD/index.htm>.  
Or phone (240) 247-3000.



# Is Music Integral to Church Life and Mission?

BY LORRAINE S. BRUGH

It may be easier to address this question by imagining its antithesis: a church's life and mission without music. Consider for a moment a gathering for worship, the entrance of the ministers, and the reverence of the moment without music. Consider gathering around the table to receive the gifts of Christ's Body and Blood without music. Consider the blessing and sending back into our daily life at the end of worship without music. It would be easy just to answer the question by affirming that certainly music is integral to church life and mission and sit down. Perhaps I should. However, since I have the time, I'll share with you some reflections I've made over the past week.

I believe that we can't imagine any of these things I have described. We can't imagine them because they simply couldn't be. Music connects us in community, binds us as the Christian family, connects worship with the rest of life. "Glue" is a word that comes to mind when I try to imagine the role of music in a church's life. We would become literally unglued without it, because we would no longer have our bindings. Music connects us to each other, places us in relation to our Creator, accompanies our actions in worship, proclaims the Gospel among us. It does all of these things while carrying the words of God into our assembly, literally putting those words in our mouths.

Music is so like proclamation of the Word because both exist through time and presume a community to speak or



NPM participants in the Church-Related Music Ministries Association Conference included (seated) Ms. Jean McLaughlin and Ms. Joanne Werner; (standing) Dr. Michael Connolly, Rev. Dr. Paul Colloton, or, Mr. Charlie Gardner, Dr. James Savage, and Dr. J. Michael McMahon.

sing and listen. Word and music are a pair that co-exists in the Christian assembly, creating dialogues between leader and congregation, cantor and congregation, choir and congregation. No other art form does this like music. Visual art enhances a space and can also proclaim the Word, but it does not engage a community's participation like music. Drama and dance, too, can enrich and diversify our worship experience, giving it fresh meaning and a new presentation. But these arts seldom engage us as participants as fully as the music of a congregational hymn or sung response. Music is integral because it builds up what the community does; singing together makes the community into the community. It is integral because it forms the community through its common work: the church's liturgy.

If music were not integral to the church's life and mission, would there not also be other musical voids outside of worship itself? What would we do on that night we wake full of fear and can't return to sleep? What would we draw on for comfort during that visit to our dying

friend, when there are no words left to say? What about that moment of joy we want to share with that young child who has been baptized? These moments, too, are filled from the church's music. Without it, these would be empty spaces in our lives.

## Integral Means Primary

Integral means primary, not secondary. Something that is integral is not a warm-up for the main event; it is the main event. It is not a way to cover an uncomfortable silence; it is its own communication. It is not entertaining; it is engaging. Music engages us at multiple levels—at the level of our senses, for sure, but also at the level of our spirit, our emotions, and our psyche. Music reaches our hard hearts, our tired minds, our weak spirits, and our wounded psyches. If the church were a self-help organization, we could claim music's purpose to improve all of these things in us. The better news is that these benefits are still by-products of music's function in the Christian assembly. Music draws us into the church's life and mission by engaging us in proclaiming and receiving God's Word for us. As we sing together, we embody God's Word to us in this place at this time.

Last Saturday evening I sat in the Chapel of the Resurrection at Valparaiso University to listen to an orchestra concert. Since the university lacks a concert hall, the chapel serves as the worship space for our nine services a week and also doubles as our auditorium for Music Department concerts. As I listened to the orchestral works of Schubert, Mozart, and Bernstein in the space where I worship daily, I tried to imagine this room without music. I couldn't do it; in fact, as the evening progressed, the music almost took on its own sense of worship. The backdrop for the orchestra was the large image of the victorious Christ, lit at night, observable from every seat. Music gave the room meaning, even though we weren't engaged

*Dr. Lorraine S. Brugh is the Frederick J. Kruse Organ Fellow, an associate professor of music, university organist, director of chapel music, and director of the Institute of Liturgical Studies Center for the Arts at Valparaiso University in Valparaiso, Indiana. This article is based on her presentation at the Church-Related Music Ministry Associations Conference at Calvin College for Christian Worship in Grand Rapids, October 17–19, 2005 (see the report on page eight). Used with permission.*

in worship. How much more so does music infuse the worship gathering with its life mission and meaning?

Is music integral to your life and mission? Integral to your own deepest sense of who you are and who God called you to be in baptism? By your presence at this conference, I think I am safe in assuming that you are answering with a yes. Remember, then, these words of Paul from 1 Corinthians: "Do you not know that you are the body of Christ, and individually members of it?" Our call as the church's musicians is to expose our baptismal identity within the body of Christ. As we assent to that call, we are also witnessing to God's work among us as the body of Christ. We are witnessing to our own place in the church's mission as leaders for others into these great gifts of God. We are staking our claim on the belief that there is something so important going on in the church's music that we will develop and hone our own gifts for that service leadership.

My guess is that we are here because we believe that but are often too timid or lacking in courage to admit it. Maybe we've

been beaten down by others' criticism of our work or our own self-doubt. Maybe we've let our own gifts wither because there seems to be so much urgency around us. Deep within us, though, we have been motivated to come this far today. Let's take it as a sign of encouragement to one another that we are all here. Through our times of discouragement we have not yet given up. We are still taking time away from our busy lives to consider these important questions of our church's life and mission.

### Integral to My Life

As we prepare to move into our discussions on this question, I'll share with you a personal, embarrassing example of music's integral nature to my own life and mission. One beautiful summer morning this past July, I was praying on the deck of a cottage my brother owns in northern Wisconsin. I had been struggling with my selfish desires and was feeling depressed that I was so far from desiring God. As I prayed, a song just came wandering through my head, as often happens. It

was actually just the line: "You alone are my heart's desire, and I long to worship you." I couldn't even recall initially what the hymn was or how I knew it. About the same time I remembered what the hymn was, though, I remembered I didn't even like it! The reason I knew this hymn was that I attend our weekly Praise Band service in the chapel. It is not my favorite service, but it is a part of the community with whom I worship, and I attend regularly. Sure enough, we had sung that hymn there quite a bit last year, and now here it had popped up in the middle on the wilderness of the Northwoods at the moment I needed it. I didn't need to remember it consciously or even like it. Music had worked in me to bring God's word of healing for my life and mission, allowing me to return again to my work in the church. That's how integral it is.

Paul, in his letter to the Philippians, reminds us how important it is to keep focused on the central and important nature of worship: "If there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any excellence, and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things." Let's do that.

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# How They've Done It in Japan

BY ROB STRUSINSKI

I remember pulling to the side of the road years ago to record Paul Simon's precise words describing *Graceland*, his landmark album fusing African music with his inimitable pop/rock genius. "When we sing in someone else's language," he said, "our experience of God becomes bigger. Our mother-tongue God is too small." I've never forgotten that wisdom, and now after living for two years in Japan and growing in a voice very foreign from my dotted, previous multi-cultural attempts, my experience of God—and Church—has indeed become bigger.

The postconciliar liturgical life in Japan is a microcosm (or better yet a blip) of the global Church, offering a unique perspective on how one culture, far removed from the Euro-centered Church in the Americas, has approached acculturation and the challenges of the vernacular. The year 2005 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the implementation of Japan's national hymnal, *Tenreiseika*. In the 1970s, the Japanese bishops named Saburo Takata (1913–2000), an established, highly respected composer and teacher, to lead in shaping the voice of the Church, and his work has endured for at least a quarter of a century. Takata-sensei's hymnal grew from a psalter project begun in the early '70s under the direction of the Trappists in Hokkaido. What came out of this monastic community in Japan's far north was a seedbed of sounds which would singularly become the voice of a new generation. To this day, *Tenreiseika* continues to be the principal repertoire of parishes from the tip of Japan's North Sea to the end of the Okinawa Islands—roughly the span of California with ten times its population.

Since Japan is a country whose demographic is less than one percent

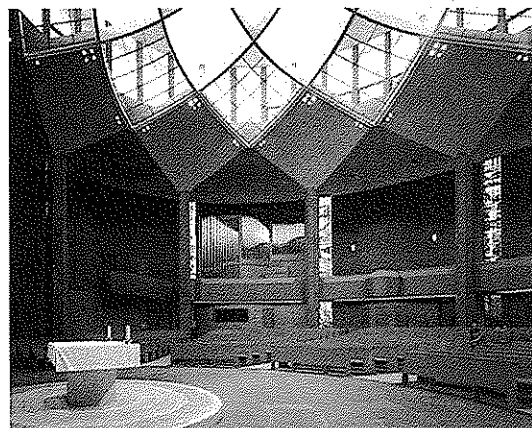
Christian, in which Catholics account for only a fraction of that demographic (450,000 people), the opportunity exists for a homogeneity unthinkable in the United States. Whereas Sundays in the Los Angeles Archdiocese finds Mass celebrated in forty languages, the Catholic community in Japan primarily represents five or six languages: a smattering of English, Tagalog, Portuguese, Korean, and Spanish in addition to the Japanese vernacular.

## A Changing, International Church

It is worth noting, however, that the face of the Church in Japan is changing radically due to the influx of immigrants to offset Japan's aging workforce and declining birthrate. For the first time in Catholicism's 450-year history in Japan (St. Francis Xavier received permission to preach Christianity in Japan in 1549), there are more immigrant Catholics in Japan's sixteen dioceses and 800 mostly very small parishes than there are native Catholics.

And a majority of the native Catholics are converts. In my parish (Ibaraki Catholic Church between Osaka and Kyoto), I would estimate that less than one-third were baptized into the Catholic Church as infants. Passionist Father Augustine Kunii, a liturgical scholar from Tokyo, explains that in many places foreign Catholics are the "life and joy" of the Church in Japan, especially in the countryside where many large factories exist such as Toyota. He feels the vibrancy of music and style they bring to liturgy is a positive, magnetic energy not only to parish worship but also to the very fabric of parish community life. (I can attest to the sumptuous Filipino potlucks after the English Masses and at Christmas and Easter—a feast to satisfy any sushi-laden diet to be sure!)

Our spirited bimonthly English



St. Ignatius Church, Tokyo

Masses, led by Filipino musicians, use words-only sheets with the acclamations and Lord's Prayer sung in Tagalog, various Filipino songs, and examples of English-language music that range from Joe Wise's "Take Our Bread" and Carey Landry's "Hail Mary" to titles that are somewhat more recent. In fact, at an international Mass on Pentecost Sunday in Tokyo, the music included compositions by Haas, Haugen, and Joncas—all sung beautifully. (After that Mass, I went to the choir loft to express my appreciation, since I had noticed that the music director was non-Japanese. When I introduced myself, he responded: "Rob Strusinski, I know who you are!" Excitedly he introduced me to some of the singers, explaining: "This is Rob Strusinski, whose name is on the music. David Haas dedicated the piece ['Send Us Your Spirit'] to him!" It turns out that this director's older sister was a student in my Liturgical Choir in Minnesota.)

## Influence of *Tenreiseika*

But in spite of the gradual immigrant influence (and exceptions such as the Jesuit St. Ignatius Church of Sophia University, which uses the hardbound third volume of *Glory and Praise* plus their own compiled hymnal), Japan's parish repertoire is *Tenreiseika*. Parishes also use a weekly published leaflet with readings plus music for the psalm, Gospel acclamation (usually sung by all), and intercessions. Only recently my parish instituted the ministry of cantor; previously, the entire psalm was sung enthusiastically by everyone.

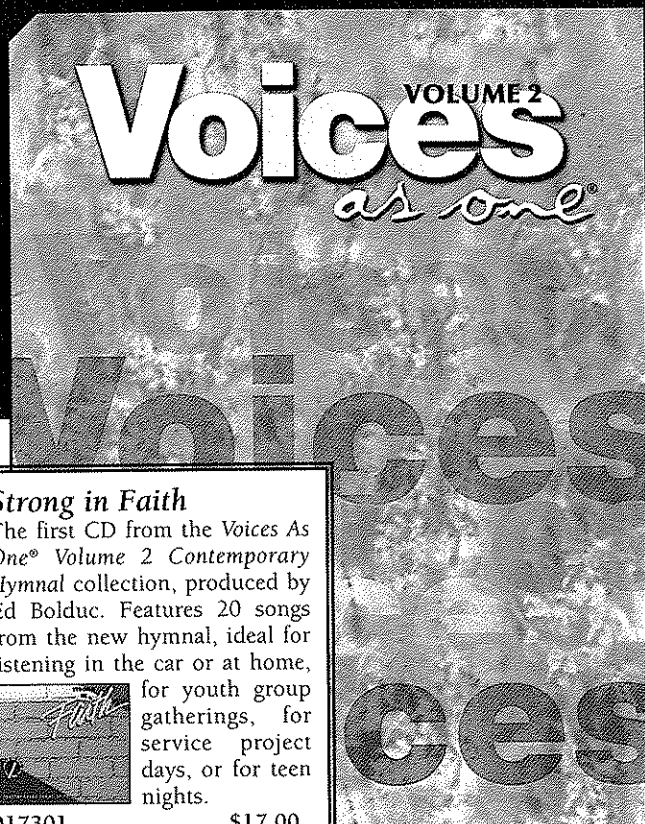
*Mr. Rob Strusinski is the director of chapel music and the Liturgical Choir at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota. From 2003 to 2005 he was visiting associate professor at Osaka Gakuin University in Osaka, Japan.*



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(The widespread practice of following the readings in this leaflet while they were proclaimed by the lector initially offended my learned liturgical sensibility, until I realized that I too was dutifully reading along—in translation!)

Setting aside the fact of the small national Catholic identity, which could contribute to the adoption of a single or primary source for liturgical music, it is worth examining other reasons why so much of *Tenreiseika* has taken root. I suggest the following factors contribute to Japan's vigorous, heart-strong singing of Takata's music:

- 1) It is uniquely suited to the character of the Japanese language.
- 2) The spirit of Gregorian chant is the basis for psalmody and acclamations.
- 3) The music has a masterful, artistic quality and simple, quality construction.
- 4) It uses indigenous cultural sonorities.
- 5) The texts have an exclusively scriptural basis.

Takata's music is not tune centered but text centered. The seeds of his psalm tones and antiphons have also informed the shape of his more developed service music and hymnody. There are some notable exceptions of beautiful, melodic writing, but in general his music is fundamentally simple and pure, structurally sound if not somewhat sober.

The earliest music sung in the vernacular after Vatican II consisted largely of European hymn tunes, Caecilian melodies, and Gregorian chants and psalms tones in translation. The result was a body of music unsuited to the nature of the Japanese language. Takata-sensei's point of departure, in contrast to these other compositions, considered placement of important Japanese words, phrasing, and natural word accent ("Ka-mi" vs. "Do-mi-num", e. g., the Japanese and Latin words for "Lord") as both fundamental and functional.

Thirty years ago, the Catholic Church in the United States enjoyed the gifts of composers like Omer Westendorf and Alexander Peloquin plus the imported and translated works of giants like Lucien Deiss and Jan Vermulst, but in its own way Takata's creative genius is far more pervasive and enduring in Japan than the works of any composers used in the United States. (Of course, a nod must also go to the sparks set off by America's Dameans, St. Louis Jesuits, and a very early Michael

Joncas composition or two, which ignited a new generation and still find their ways into many hearts, voices, and even some interdenominational hymnals!)

For a deeper understanding of Takata's congregational music and its lasting value, it is worthwhile taking a look at his modal motets and choral works, which continue to find their way onto the

*mp*

1. Sál - ve dó - cus hu - má - ni gó - ne - ris.  
2. Sál - ve té - lix vir - go pu - ér - pe - ra.

*mp*

1. Sál - ve dó - cus hu - má - ni gó - ne - ris.  
2. Sál - ve té - lix vir - go pu - ér - pe - ra.

*mp*

1. Sál - ve dó - cus hu - má - ni gó - ne - ris.  
2. Sál - ve té - lix vir - go pu - ér - pe - ra.

*p* *poco rit.*

Sál - ve vir - go dí - gni - or coe - te - ris. Quo vir - gi - nes óm - nes trans - gré - de - ris.  
Nam qui sé - det in Pá - tris dóx - te - ra. Coe - lum ré - gen - sár - ram et só - the - ra.

*p*

Sál - ve vir - go dí - gni - or coe - te - ris. Quo vir - gi - nes óm - nes trans - gré - de - ris.  
Nam qui sé - det in Pá - tris dóx - te - ra. Coe - lum ré - gen - sár - ram et só - the - ra.

*p*

Sál - ve vir - go dí - gni - or coe - te - ris. Quo vir - gi - nes óm - nes trans - gré - de - ris.  
Nam qui sé - det in Pá - tris dóx - te - ra. Coe - lum ré - gen - sár - ram et só - the - ra.

*a tempo* *mp*

*f* *rit.* *D.C.*

Et ál - ti - us sé - des in sú - pe - ris.  
In - tra tú - a se cláu - sit vis - co - ra. } O Ma - ri - a

*mp*

Et ál - ti - us sé - des in sú - pe - ris.  
In - tra tú - a se cláu - sit vis - co - ra. } O Ma - ri - a *D.C.*

*mp*

Et ál - ti - us sé - des in sú - pe - ris.  
In - tra tú - a se cláu - sit vis - co - ra. } O Ma - ri - a *D.C.*

Example one: "Salve Mater Misericordia"

*p*

ele - mén - ti - so, Tu nos ab hó - ste  
de vir - gi - ne, Cum pá - tre et ál - mo

*p*

mén - ti - so, Tu nos ab hó - ste  
vir - gi - ne, Cum pá - tre et ál - mo

*p*

ele mén - ti - so, Tu nos ab hó - ste  
de vir - gi - ne, Cum pá - tre et ál - mo

*mp* *rit.*

pró - te - go, et mór - tis hó - ra  
spí - ri - tu, in sem - pi - té - r - na

*mp*

gó - tu, et mór - tis hó - ra  
in sem - pi - té - r - na

*mp*

ste pró - te - go, et mór - tis hó -  
mo spí - ri - tu, in sem - pi - té - r - na

*p* *pp*

sú - sci - pe, A - men.  
só - cu - la.

*p* *div.* *pp* *div.*

sú - sci - pe, A - men.  
só - cu - la.

*p* *pp*

ra sú - sci - pe, A - men.  
na só - cu - la.

Example two: "Maria Mater"



Examples three and four: Kyrie (top) and part of the Sanctus (bottom): "Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord."

repertoire list for Japan's amazingly high-level annual choral competitions. Some of these profound miniatures show distinct Buddhist/Shinto influences wedded to contemporary, Western classical styles. In "Salve Mater Misericordia" (example one), the pentatonic do-re-mi (flat)-sol-la (c-d-e flat-g-a) sonority can be found in ancient melodies associated with rice-planting ceremonies ("minnyou") or songs that Japanese merchants sang as they carried bamboo poles laden with their wares ("take ya saodake").

"Maria Mater" (example two), on the other hand, features ornaments on the words "Maria clementiae" and "mortis" which are characteristic of Buddhist cantilations but also recall Eastern Orthodox chants. It is difficult to notate the exact rhythmic values due to the vocal flexibility and color required to give this work stylistic accuracy with a somewhat pharyngeal, nasal color. In addition to ornaments, the unresolved cadences employ the added major second characteristic sound of the "shohichiriki," a double reed instrument used in traditional Shinto worship.

"Assumpta est Maria" is a stately motet ending with a wonderfully acclamatory Alleluia related to traditional "gagaku," Japanese imperial household music dating back a millennium. These influences, seemingly somber, very traditional, even

stuffy or "old fashioned," are perpetuated in the service music and acclamations still sung today (examples three and four).

## Congregational Singing and Musical Leadership

By Western standards that would judge this repertoire staid or unexciting, it is a marvel that Japanese parishes, by and large, would have such good assembly singing, but they do. Another striking contrast with typical parishes in the North American Catholic Church is the almost total lack of a professional music ministry. With the impressive quality of congregational participation, one would think that there would be a network of highly trained and paid musicians, but there are few if any paid and no formal, full-time career pastoral musicians. Nor is there a publishing effort which compensates liturgical composers. There is, however, a small nascent movement of compositional activity which could change the future climate, if leadership comes forth and if it becomes a priority of the hierarchy.

The successful transmission of Japanese liturgical music has depended on inspiring, amazingly talented, and dedicated faithful people committed to the cause of good music and quality worship. For

example, from the first publication of the national hymnal, a group of skilled singers were devoted to recording LPs so that small parishes could learn and teach the music. To this day, under the passionate leadership of Ueda-sensei, CDs continue to be recorded and disseminated throughout the country, exquisitely performed by a sensitive chamber choir of volunteers with a polished "professional" sound.

While on retreat last summer at the Trinity Benedictine Abbey in the mountains of Nagano, I had the fortune to meet a fellow retreatant, Hashimoto-san, a young man in his late twenties, whose path of conversion to Roman Catholicism was through music. He serves as a volunteer organist at Sendai Cathedral, north of Tokyo, and every day—after a long day as a high school teacher of "old" Japanese language—he stops at the cathedral to practice the organ. He seemed shocked when I asked him about his "professional conditions," since it would never occur to him to play for remuneration. One might think he was a dilettante, maybe even unqualified, but I can assure you that I've never met a more inspiring, knowledgeable, well-rounded musician who did what he did out of absolute love for the music. And, I feel assured, he is an extremely fine player.

## Incultrating

Besides the use of cultural sonorities in liturgical music, I was also struck with the incorporation of traditional Japanese customs into liturgical ritual, particularly the posture of bowing and the practice of incense. "We are not a European church," my pastor—Father Inoue—definitively stated. "Kneeling is not our culture." I must admit that all the theological reasoning and the stated official arguments for kneeling as a universal attitude of reverence, awe, prayerfulness, humility, and other attitudes—all produced from a European perspective—have gone out the window since I have lived with the tradition of bowing in Japan. By "bowing" I don't mean the abrupt head nod that seems to be the practice in the United States. There are many levels of bowing in Japan—and, thus, in Japanese liturgy—from a simple gesture in response to a greeting of the presider to a deeper bow at the greeting of peace (of course, there is no handshake), to a much deeper, slower gesture at the institution narrative. There is also a bow before receiving Communion and another after stepping aside to allow the next person to come forward—and



none of these is done on the run! After the 1940s war, many churches instituted kneeling, perhaps as part of the dramatic Westernization efforts, but it never took hold. Most churches do not have kneelers and have resorted to a posture in line with their authentic, indigenous custom of plentiful and reverential bowing as opposed to kneeling.

Visiting a traditional Buddhist temple, one cannot help notice a powerful presence of incense. The practice of temple visitors putting incense on a burner or wafting the smoke by hand from a huge cauldron finds its application in Japanese Catholic funeral and memorial rites. I had no idea, one Sunday, why people were lining up in procession before the closing rite until a photo of a parish member was prominently displayed in front of the altar. Through the communal ritual of taking a pinch of incense and dropping it on the coals, I sensed a unique connection to this man I never knew and to the community, when I too filed to the table (not unlike the home shrines found in most Japanese households) to "pay my respects."

Bogged down by the challenge of translation and implementation of the revised *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* and the new version of the *Missale Romanum* that it introduces, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan is biding its time in hopes of receiving special consideration for adapting certain aspects of the *General Instruction*—in addition to kneeling—which require an exemption from the universal implementation of the *Instruction* from Rome. Kissing the altar by the priest, for example, is another practice considered culturally incoherent by Japanese church leaders.

## A Fast Becomes a Feast

With few exceptions (like the time I was called impromptu from the pew to play for Mass and Benediction), my role at liturgy in Japan was as a member of the "choir" of the assembly. One Christmas Eve, I played a half-hour organ prelude of Bach and D'Aquin *Noels*, and on one of my final Sundays I was the cantor for the responsorial psalm—a surprise to many people, seeing their first "gaijin" (foreigner) as psalmist. In preparation for playing the parish's new little Allen organ on that Christmas Eve, I hadn't practiced so assiduously for decades, and in preparing to cantor, I've never painstakingly practiced a single psalm every day for weeks! I was a nervous wreck.

But rather than looking at this time

## The Task That Remains: Inculturation

The Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) marked the beginning of a thoroughgoing renewal in the Catholic Church. It effected dramatic changes in the counter-Reformation attitude that had characterized the Church ever since the Council of Trent. This renewal worked its way into almost every aspect of Catholic life from the inward, theological understanding of the Church—indeed of faith itself—to its outward expression in administrative restructuring, in liturgy, in legislation, as well as in general attitudes and behavior toward the present-day world and toward other religions.

The implementation of this renewal has been an urgent task of the Catholic Church in Japan, too, from the late 1960s to the present. Beginning with the translation and publication of conciliar and postconciliar documents, it went on to include reform of the liturgy; updating and realigning of administrative structures; re-education of laity, clergy, and religious; promotion of unity among Christians; cooperation with other religions; social involvement; and the

furthering of justice and peace. Today, too, the challenge continues to be how to incarnate the spirit of the Council in the life of contemporary Japan.

The first noticeable change brought about as a result of Vatican II was liturgical reform. To manifest its great esteem for the characteristic individuality of each region, culture, and language of the world, the Council opted for use of the vernacular in the liturgy to replace Latin, which had for centuries been the sole liturgical language of the Roman Rite. Accordingly, the Church in Japan, immediately after the Council, began to use Japanese in the liturgy and make liturgical accommodations to Japanese culture.

... Liturgical music was composed to fit the Japanese liturgical texts and replace Gregorian chant. The task that still remains, however, goes far beyond Japanese translations or cultural accommodations. It is the authentic inculturation of Christianity into Japan.

*Adapted from the website of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan, [www.cbjc.catholic.jp/eng/index.htm](http://www.cbjc.catholic.jp/eng/index.htm).*

as a sabbatical from music ministry, I view these two years as a "fast" which not only provided the time and space to be a member of the congregational part of the liturgical assembly but also as a "feast" that allowed me to grow in a new appreciation of what it means to make music with people of faith (and a chance to practice my newly adopted tongue). Singing from the pew (or, more accurately, from a bamboo-backed bench) allowed me to experience more deeply the role of the whole assembly as the principal choir, because the role of the choir in Japanese liturgy is exactly the same as the role of the congregation! There is no time out for anthems, motets, solo verses, or descants, but there is an appreciation for the meaning of "choir" in its deepest, original sense: The choir sings with and supports the voice of the people (albeit often in harmony).

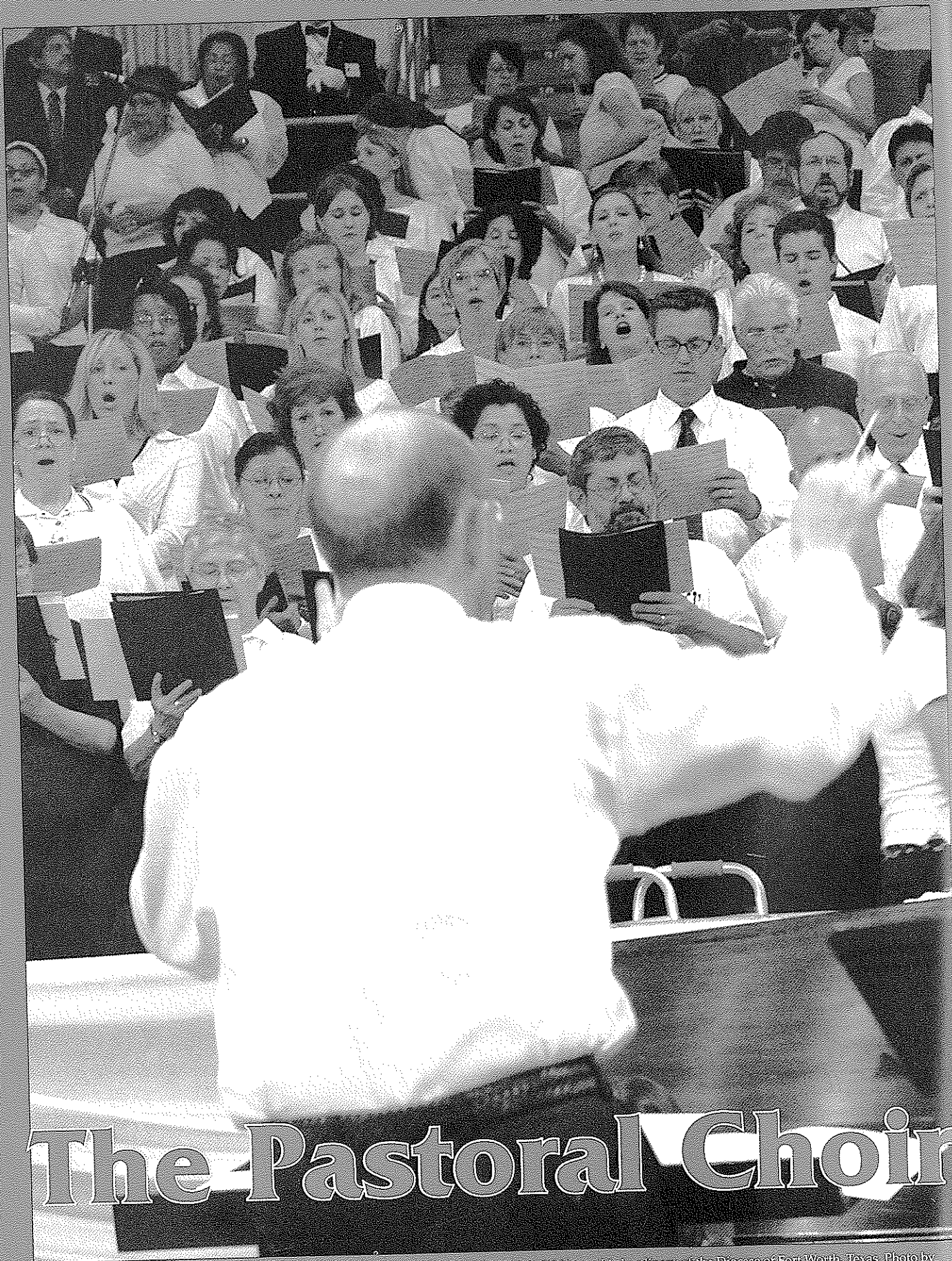
So if there are no *real* choirs in Japanese Catholic churches, what about music ministry as a formal, wage-earning endeavor? Music ministry, renaissance motets, and publishers' latest solo choral offerings are basically a Western phenomenon. Music ministry as a profession is unheard of; music ministry is rather a labor of love in the truest sense of the word: an "amateur" endeavor in service of community

worship.

My glimpse into the music makers in Japanese parish life—from the simple strum of a Filipino guitar to the fleet of volunteer pianists recruited as organists, who do their best with organ pedals, to the consummate musicianship and passion of people like the seasoned Ueda-sensei and the neophyte Hashimoto-san—was for me humbling and inspiring. And fumbling along in Japanese in the midst of the selfless, abandoned singing of voices young and wobbly and sometimes sour and creaky was for me a foretaste of the heavenly choir.

## Acknowledgements

Father Hirosugu Inoue, Pastor, Ibaraki City Catholic Church;  
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 Jeffrey D. Trambley, Meguro Church, Tokyo;  
 Edward Vebelun, *osb*, Holy Trinity Benedictine Monastery, Nagano.



# The Pastoral Choir

Kevin Keil directs a diocesan choir for the ordination and installation of Most Rev. Kevin W. Vann, third ordinary of the Diocese of Fort Worth, Texas. Photo by Diana Pearson. © 2005 Diocese of Fort Worth.

DECEMBER-JANUARY 2006 • PASTORAL MUSIC

# It's All about Balance: The Role of the Choir Today

BY FRANK BROWNSTEAD

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A good choir has two roles in the liturgy. First, the choir adds the element of *beauty* to the liturgy, and, second, the choir *encourages the singing of the whole assembly*. For a choir to be as effective as possible, it must fulfill both of these roles and maintain some kind of balance between the two. Whenever there is a significant focus on one role to the exclusion of the other, the choir is less effective. It's all about balance.

It is certain that the choir has the role of encouraging the singing of the whole assembly—the congregation and its ministers. Actually, the choir has the role of helping to make the singing of the assembly irresistible. “Irresistible” is a strong word, but it is the right word, and I think the choir that encourages the assembly is a choir that sees itself as a part of the assembly.

The same is true for all ministers and ministerial groups in the liturgical assembly: The presider who carries a hymnal and takes part in the singing is acting as part of the assembly. Assembly singing is something that we all do together. The sound of the assembly singing with vigor is a most thrilling and inspiring sound, and it celebrates our unity.

## Discouraging Assembly Song

Sometimes well-trained choirs, full of good musicians and good intentions, make such a fuss with those songs assigned to the whole assembly that the members of the congregation are actually discouraged from singing. When there are alternate harmonies at every turn, double descants verse after verse, and then both harmony and descant together, the congregation may tend to opt out of the assembly's song. The choir, in other words, may end up replacing the assembly.

Another practice that discourages full assembly participation is over-amplification of the choir and cantor(s). When one cantor, for instance, is louder than the entire assembly, people may wonder if it is worth the effort to join in. When the microphone is used as a weapon, it puts people in a terrible dilemma. In one parish I served, we decided that, for the Eucharistic acclamations, the cantor would step away from the microphone altogether. It was almost impossible for our cantors to do this in the

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beginning, because the drop in volume in the room was so drastic. There is an initial panic, in such a situation, that things are falling apart, and cantors feel an almost unbearable urge to step back to the microphone, which will only make things worse. This experience showed us that the singing of the acclamations had not been done by the whole assembly at all but primarily by those armed with microphones. After a few weeks with the new practice, the singing during the Eucharistic Prayer became stronger, and in a relatively short time people caught on that this was their role: the role of the singing assembly.

If we do not trust our assemblies to sing, they will be mute. Our Protestant friends serve as worthy models of full-assembly singing, since they have been singing beautifully without over-amplified leaders for more than four hundred years. Once the assembly is familiar with the music, they will sing if there is a reason to sing.

## Encouraging Assembly Song

The manner in which new music is taught to the congregation and its ministers is part of the process of assuring good strong singing. The role of the choir is crucial when the whole assembly is learning new music. This became evident when we began learning the *Missa Emmanuel* by Richard Proulx at the cathedral in Los Angeles. These Mass parts for Advent are based on the tune of “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” set skillfully with a unison part for the congregation and four-part harmony for the choir. The temptation was to introduce all of this at once, but we decided to save the choir parts for later. At this point we had a plan: Let the congregation's part gain strength then begin enhancing it.

On the first Sunday of Advent, after a short rehearsal, the choir was prominent when we sang this setting, and the rest of the assembly was a murmur. But by the last Sunday in Advent, this had changed, and the congregation was singing with strength. We decided to use this set of acclamations the next time Advent rolled around, and by the end of the second year the choir was no longer prominent but was a part of the overall fabric. By the third year, the setting had become part of the collective memory, and people took it up right away with gusto. It was now impossible to distinguish the choir from the rest of the assembly. Finally it was time to add the choir harmony parts, and in the beginning we chose a few



singers in each section for the harmony parts, while most of the choir was singing the assembly part. Then, as the congregation continued to strengthen, we added a few more choir members to the harmony part. Once the music is part of the collective memory, we learned, it is strong and vibrant, and then enhancements may be added.

Although this process may seem tedious, two things are evident. The choir is first a part of the assembly, and, in time, everyone finds that the new music has become a part of them, individually and collectively. We end up learning the acclamations by heart. Be patient with this, and do not hurry, but do have a plan.

Have you ever participated in a Mass without a choir present and heard some assembly member singing a choir part—even a descant—although everyone else is singing the assembly part? Perhaps that is the only part this person has ever sung, and he or she is unfamiliar with the congregation's part. We are not talking about a person's motive here, just a lack of understanding. It may be that this choir member may not know the assembly part. Whenever we are making decisions about the assembly song, we must allow the members of the choir to be part of the whole assembly.

This same process applies to learning new hymns. While the congregation is learning new material, allow the choir to be part of the assembly. It's a good idea to teach new materials before the liturgy begins. The assembly—including the choir—can learn new parts of the Mass in a short rehearsal.

What do we do about a hymn that the congregation seems unable or unwilling to sing? If the congregation is not picking up new music, even over time and with the help of the choir, it's better to let the hymn go rather than persist in trying to use it. This is not the time for perseverance; this is the time for acceptance. At an appropriate place in the liturgy, the choir may sing a hymn which the people are not ready to sing. A few years later, you may find that the whole assembly then picks it up eagerly.

The musician's job, in other words, is not to fuss with the assembly's song. Get out of the way so the people can sing their part.

### To Add Beauty

But the encouragement of singing by the whole assembly is not the only role of the choir. The choir is also called upon to add beauty to the liturgy. Here is a statement by Pope Benedict XVI, written when he was still Cardinal Ratzinger: "The Church is to transform, improve, humanize the world—but how can she do that if at the same time she turns her back on beauty, which is so closely allied to love? For together, beauty and love form the true consolation in this world, bringing it as near as possible to the world of the resurrection."

What is this beauty described here? Dictionaries list the components of beauty as a pleasing quality, excellence of craftsmanship, and truth. The pleasing quality of beauty can be difficult to describe, depending on the

background of the individual or the group of people, the cultural framing, or past experiences. And that's just the beginning.

We hear quite often that music is the international language. Nothing could be further from the truth. Ethnomusicologists tell us that when people who have been separated from the "civilized" world and are quite isolated hear the music of Mozart, for instance, one group sits and listens attentively while another runs away in horror! To say that music—especially music with text—has power is one thing. To say that music that is beautiful to one group is equally pleasing to the next is quite another. The best we can do is to discern this component of beauty based on the people attending our churches. Who are the people in your church? What is pleasing to them?

Making such discernment can be quite a task. The Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles is located in the most culturally diverse city in the history of humankind, and there are lots of responses to every kind of music that is chosen. Sometimes, however, instead of responses to the music, there are reactions, and some of these reactions are surprising. A popular and beautiful

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**There is nothing wrong with building a bridge, but if no one is willing to cross it, there is no purpose in all the effort.**

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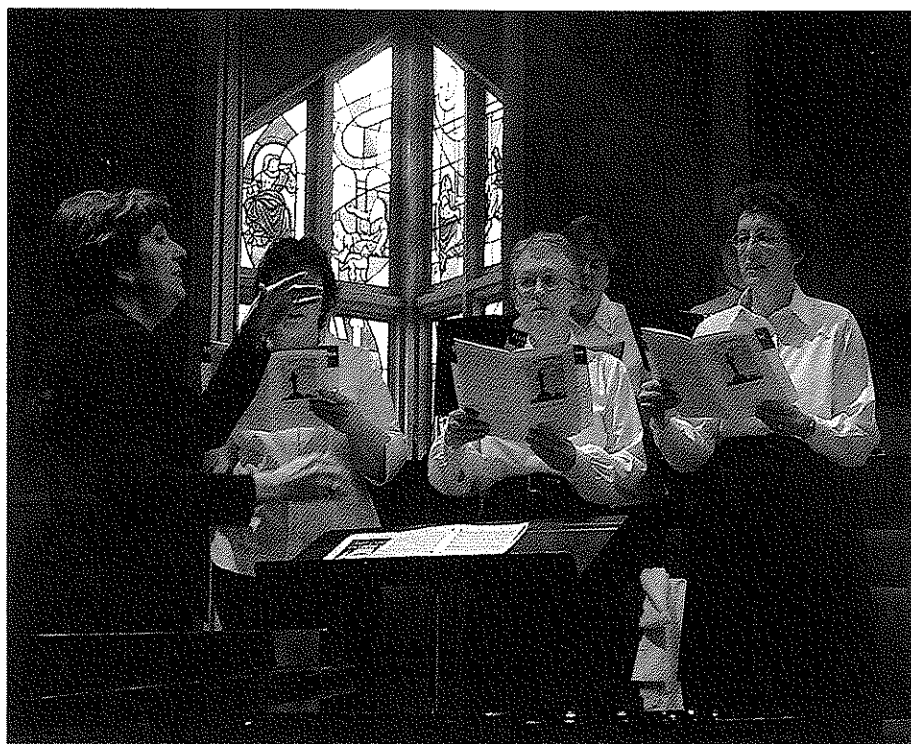
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bilingual setting (Spanish and English), which has been an astounding success at liturgy conventions, elicits absolute silence at a well-attended Mass celebrating the life and work of Cesar Chavez, but one of the hymns that is part of the collective memory of the culture brings a thunderous response. Does this mean that the bilingual selection is not worthy? Not necessarily. But it does mean that it was a poor choice for the group which had gathered. It may also mean that the world of liturgy and music conventions is a different world than most parishes and cathedrals. (Please note that I wrote "different" and not "better" or "worse.") It also means that the process of learning about a culture *begins* with the selection of music *of* that culture and not music that is created to be a bridge *between* two cultures. There is nothing wrong with building a bridge, but if no one is willing to cross it, there is no purpose in all the effort. Begin by sharing the gifts of the culture.

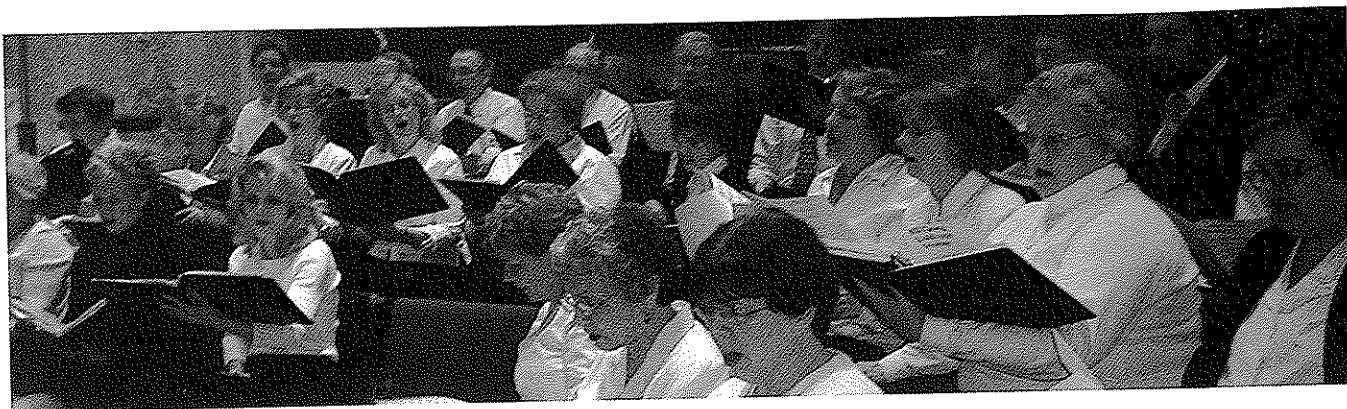
A worship leader ministering in a setting this diverse needs to make friends with and get to know the musicians who are immersed in the cultures of the peoples who participate in the liturgies. Making good friends outside of our own culture(s) is challenging, sometimes confusing, and very time consuming. It's a lot like learning a new language or mastering a difficult piece of music, but the payoff is more than worth the effort. It really is a gift to anyone who is willing to give it a try. When the cathedral was dedicated on September 2, 2002, the choir learned a lengthy antiphon in Vietnamese. We invited

I find that young people today are fascinated by choral



Liturgical context is the key to determining the balance we are talking about.

At our cathedral, the people involved in liturgy (including the ordained people) meet once a week to read, study, and pray about the readings. Over time, trust has developed in the group, and this trust is reflected in every aspect of the liturgy. Some of the results come from the simple and practical information that we have shared. Perhaps a homilist will choose to emphasize the middle reading. Fine, we all know that. But at a much deeper level,



we are all sharing our faith each week, describing things that the Creator has done for us that we could never have done for ourselves. We share the things that vex us and the things that give us inspiration. We are all on a journey of faith, and the sharing that takes place goes deep within us. The results at the liturgy on Sunday are not about us as individuals but about the journey of faith of our cathedral family and the larger Church. Many times one or another of us will make significant changes in plans as a result of these meetings. This process—or something akin to it—is the essential component in bringing the truth of love and beauty together.

If the goal of a good choir is to advance the Gospel truth through beauty, then that is different from the goal of a choir whose aim is to excite the people gathered. This is not to say that excitement cannot occur when the truth of the Gospel is given the cloak of beauty by the choir. It's a little like the difference between fun and joy: They are both good things in their way and time, but we do not have fun at a funeral, although we may be filled with joy. If the goal of the choir is to excite, then the choir will need to sing faster, louder, and higher each Sunday, but there will inevitably be a limit to such escalation. If the choir's contribution of beauty is based on the harmonizing of the Scripture with appealing and well-crafted choral music, on the other hand, then the joy is overwhelming. There are transcendent moments that are worth all the

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**The beauty that the choir provides is . . . especially important for the humiliated or the downtrodden.**

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time and effort it takes, but some of them are so quiet as to be almost inaudible (like the still small voice that Elijah heard).

### Encouragement and Beauty

If there is to be a good choir at liturgy, the group needs to offer both encouragement to the singing of the whole assembly and the choir's unique contribution to the liturgy, which links beauty and love.

Perhaps we are not as diligent as we should be in promoting choirs. Often we hear excuses for inaction based on lack of appreciation or lack of funding. The beauty that the choir provides is important for everyone, but it is especially important for the humiliated or the downtrodden. Others can drink in the beauty of music in any number of contexts, but the poor deserve beauty in worship, for it may be the only place where it is readily available to them. We must work hard to promote good choirs.

Music is so powerful that we must use it wisely. Where text may divide, music brings together. The German philosopher Arthur Schopenhauer (1788–1860) saw music as an expression of deep feeling and human will. In his principal work, *The World as Will and Representation* (first published in 1819, revised in 1844), he wrote that music is “of the essence” of human existence:

The invention of melody, the disclosure in it of all the deepest secrets of human willing and feeling, is the work of genius, whose effect is more apparent here than anywhere else, is far removed from all reflection and conscious intention, and might be called an inspiration. Here, as everywhere in art, the concept is unproductive. The composer reveals the innermost nature of the world and expresses the profoundest wisdom in a language that his reasoning faculty does not understand.

Therefore music is by no means like the other arts, namely a copy of the Ideas, but a copy of the will itself, the objectivity of which are the Ideas. For this reason, the effect of the music is so very much more powerful and penetrating than is that of the other arts, for these others speak only of the shadow, but music of the essence.

Through our music, both assembly song and the choral art, the liturgy is well served, and the essence of the Gospel message is able to shine through in a compelling way.

For the choir, it's all about balance. The balance to be achieved is between assembly song and the choral art; it is between the old and the new; and it is between cultural framings we are comfortable with and ones which make us uncomfortable. The balance is between loud and soft, between women and men, and between maintaining the differences and finding common ground.

When we all come to the one table as friends with differences, the balancing act occurs, and once again God has done for us what we could not do for ourselves.

DECEMBER-JANUARY 2006 • PASTORAL MUSIC



# Choral Repertoire: Good Choirs Sing Good Music

BY BENNETT JOHN PORCHIRAN

One of the most delightful activities in which a pastoral director of music ministries may engage is choral direction. Whether one directs a quartet, an octet, or a group of twenty or more; whether the groups are composed of children, youth, or adults, the sheer joy of plying our musical skills together and rendering a worthy performance of a piece of music is, I believe, one of the finest and most satisfying experiences that musicians can have. But there are several criteria that must be met and certain skills that must be developed to make good music together in a liturgical setting.

The first criterion is the proper function of the group that is singing. In the *Constitution on the Liturgy*, the bishops of the Second Vatican Council described that function in broad terms: "A well-trained choir adds beauty and solemnity to the liturgy and also assists and encourages the singing of the congregation" (112). Under this rubric, choirs may function in several ways in the liturgy: supporting and bolstering congregational song; embellishing the assembly's song with harmonies, descants, and perhaps a more florid version of the verses than a cantor might sing; and singing an anthem or motet on their own at appropriate times in the rite. This article is intended to give a closer look at the repertoire for a choir in this third function and to help answer this question: What principles govern the selection of choral repertoire? To answer that question, we need to take a look at some basic music skills and liturgical principles and how they apply to the use of choirs in the liturgy and to the selection of proper repertoire.

## Three Principles

Three principles govern the selection of choral repertoire to be used in Catholic liturgy. The first is identified by the bishops of the Council: "a well-trained choir." Producing good choral music will always be a challenging task in either the secular or sacred music arenas. Much time and attention must be spent in rehearsals on proper breathing, breath control, voice placement, tonal production, articulation, diction, and all of the other vocal skills that

singers must be conscious of and develop in order to sing well. Vocalises and exercises are necessary to help the singers attain and maintain good vocal techniques. Whether the ensemble is composed of paid professionally trained musicians or volunteer amateur singers doesn't make a difference when it comes to laying the foundation for good vocal and choral proficiency. A talented choral director must have the know-how to help the members of the ensemble develop these skills. In the early years of my formation as a musician, I had the good fortune to study privately with several very talented choral conductors. One of them told me something that made a

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**"Virtually any group of singers can be formed into a good choir. It's up to the conductor. A choir will only be as good as its director."**

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great impression on me, and I have never forgotten it. He said: "Virtually any group of singers can be formed into a good choir. It's up to the conductor. A choir will only be as good as its director." Over the years, I have found this to be true. When a group performs music well, it is because the director is skilled at preparing them well. When they do poorly, the conductor hasn't done a good job. It's that simple. A choir is just another instrument for making music, much like the piano, guitar, or organ. Unless the music is rehearsed and practiced well, it cannot be rendered beautifully. Good musical skills are primary to the production of good music, including choral music.

Second, the selection of music will take into account the size and makeup of an ensemble. As obvious as this might seem, sometimes a director may choose music that just is not possible for the group to perform. The size of the group, their vocal abilities, and their level of skill development must be considered when selecting repertoire for them. Another consideration is the composition of the group. If you are planning to do music in parts, then it makes a difference how many sopranos, altos, tenors, and basses you have and the ratio of the number in each section. If the choir is made up of four sopranos, eight altos, six tenors, and a bass, doing an SATB piece will not work well. It might be wiser to choose an SAB or even a two-part mixed voice arrangement of the piece, if one is

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available. If that option is not available, then shelve the piece until the group has a better balance of voices and choose something else for the group that exists currently. The group needs to have a good feeling about what it does. The director may challenge the singers and skillfully bring them up to a level of proficiency that will allow them to perform that piece in the future. But if it is significantly beyond them, they probably will perform the piece poorly. Such selection of pieces that are beyond the existing choir's ability may, over time, become very frustrating for them. Choosing music that will meet the needs of this choir's size, composition, and abilities will allow them to grow as well as have a sense of satisfaction with their presentation of the piece and a good feeling of accomplishment.

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### **Our music for liturgy is not just *ars gratia artis* but *sung prayer*.**

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Third, when we are selecting music to be performed at liturgy, we are not dealing simply with the music itself. It is important to remember that our music for liturgy is not just *ars gratia artis* but *sung prayer*. The guidelines in *Music in Catholic Worship* (MCW), first issued in 1972 by the U.S. Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy (and confirmed by the USCCB) and modified somewhat in 1983, apply to all the music that is chosen for worship: congregational, instrumental, solo, and choral. The document outlines a threefold judgment that should be used to choose music for the liturgy. The three parts of that judgment are its musical, liturgical, and pastoral aspects.

The *musical* judgment, the document tells us, should determine that the music being considered for worship

is technically, aesthetically, and expressively good and artistically sound (MCW, 26). This is an evaluation that should be made by competent, well-trained musicians. Without being able to analyze a piece of music critically, it is difficult to determine the value or quality of that piece, its usability in the liturgy, and whether your ensemble would be able to perform it. Otherwise, there is the danger of selecting something that might just appeal to our taste or because we like the sound of it. Some people might raise an eyebrow at that comment and suggest that there's nothing wrong in choosing a piece because we like it and even infer that there is a bit of musical snobbery in that statement. But I would suggest that such a practice in suggesting music is not unlike a nutritionist, whose training and responsibility is in preparing well-balanced meals, just serving foods that appeal to the nutritionist's palate, despite the nutritional needs of the patient. It is important, therefore, not to confuse the quality of a piece of music with its style. "Taste" usually has more to do with the preference for a particular style or genre of music—folk, classical, or contemporary, for example. Taste, of course, will always be a consideration in selecting repertoire, but assessing the quality of a piece of music is something different. And though some musicians have a better "ear" than others for quality in music, one must be able to look beyond pleasing melodies to the harmony, structure, form, and overall texture of a piece to make an informed decision about its musical value. While you don't necessarily need a degree in music to make this judgment, appropriate training in musical knowledge will give you the tools to do it.

The *liturgical* judgment will help us to determine whether the music is appropriate for a particular rite or part of Mass. The nature of the liturgy or a particular part of the rite helps us to select the texts that should be



sung at a particular time. Most rites have particular texts assigned or suggested for singing—texts that could or should be used for a particular ceremony or part of the rite. It is also usually understood that the congregation, when possible, would be singing these texts, but sometimes that is neither practical nor possible. When that is the case, and where the option exists to sing something other than an assigned text, then an appropriate choral piece may be used. To be sure, consideration must be given to the length of a piece. If the music chosen is too long, it may overshadow the meaning and power of the ritual itself. Music at all times should support the ritual action. Music, after all, is a handmaiden to the liturgy: It serves the liturgy and not the other way around.


The *pastoral* judgment asks the question: "Does music in the celebration enable these people to express their faith, in this place, in this age, in this culture?" (MCW, 39). When we apply this judgment in deciding on music for worship in our parishes, it is extremely important to select music that will be most effective in allowing our congregations to express their faith as fully and richly as possible. In the United States, since most parish communities are ethnically and culturally pluralistic, our choral repertoire must reflect that ethnic and cultural diversity. But cultural considerations are not the only ones that we need to keep in mind.

Pastoral musicians share a great responsibility when developing a repertoire for our choirs. The music we choose should represent not only our local communities but also the Church at large. We are a catholic—i.e., a universal—Church, and we are a Church with a rich history of music. When building choral repertoire, we should take care to keep these two points in mind. Music of all styles and ages should be a part of any choral ensemble's repertoire: chant, renaissance polyphony, baroque, classical or romantic motets, spirituals, Gospel, contemporary

**The music we choose should represent not only our local communities but also the Church at large.**

anthems, and contemporary Christian compositions, for example. These are all valid styles of music that can be used at liturgy and can be part of any choir's repertoire. In fact, the bishops have challenged us specifically to "find new uses for the best of the old music . . . , explore the repertoire of good music used in other communions . . . , [and] find practical means of preserving and using our rich heritage of Latin chants and motets" (MCW, 27).

Arrangements that are unison, two-, three-, and four-part or more can have a place in the liturgy. Palestrina's setting of *Panis Angelicus* or Mozart's *Ave Verum* are wonderful "general" pieces to use in reflection on Communion (but not to replace the assembly's song or as a hymn after Communion). G. F. Handel's "Halleluia! Amen!" from the oratorio *Judas Maccabeus* is a delightful SATB anthem



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## National Association of Pastoral Musicians

### Choral Anthem Project

Year - A
Year - B
Year - C

**Introduction:** Around 1993-94 the members of the Education Committee of the Director of Music Ministries Division (DMMD) of NPM, under the chairmanship of Sr. Sheila Browne, RSM, initiated what was to become known as the "Lectionary Project." The vision of the Education Committee was simply to compile a list of choral anthems that would be related to any of the four main scriptures of a given Sunday liturgy. What at first seemed a simple task soon turned into an undauntingly complicated one. The size of the project as well as the fact that music is taken out of print on a regular basis made posed many problems. For example, the original intention of the committee was to publish a book listing all of the material. However, since music is taken out of print on a regular basis, it was felt that the collection would be out of date before it actually was published. So, another vehicle for publishing this information was sought. In 1999 the committee decided to have the material posted on the NPM website.

**Purpose:** to list repertory suggestions for parish choir directors, independent of publishing industry interests, so that those responsible for selecting and preparing choral anthems may have a rich store of selections of high quality choral music related to the Sunday scriptures from which to choose.

**Listing Criteria:**

- Anthems be directly related to the **Old Testament, Psalm, New Testament or Gospel** of the day from the Lectionary or the Entrance Antiphon or Communion Song from the Sacramentary, whether directly quoting the scripture, paraphrasing the scripture or supporting the thematic content of the scripture
- Music for choirs of all sizes, voicing and levels of ability should be included (unison through SSAATTBB, children's ensembles through a full)

The introductory page for the Choral Anthem Project at the NPM website, [www.npm.org](http://www.npm.org).

that would work as a prelude or recessional/postlude on the Third Sunday of Advent. The spiritual "Since I Lay My Burden Down" is a great piece for a choir to sing at a funeral or even at a penance service. "Santo, Santo, Santo" from Argentina is another good song available through several publishers in arrangements from unison through SATB; it could easily be done at the presentation of the gifts. "Do You Know Your Shepherd's Voice" by Suzanne Lord is an excellent contemporary motet for the Fourth Sunday of Easter or at any time that imagery of the Good Shepherd is used in the liturgy. The list is certainly longer than this! We not only have a rich heritage, we also have the luxury of living in an era with many talented composers writing good music for choirs.

### A Great Resource

A great resource for selecting and building repertoire for choirs for the liturgical year is NPM's own Lectionary Choral Anthem Project. This project began in 1993, when members of the DMMD Board of Directors decided to put together a resource that would list anthems, motets, and sacred songs for each Sunday of the church year for all three cycles of the Sunday and festival lectionary. The object of the project was to list "repertory suggestions for parish choir directors, independent of publishing





industry interest, so that those responsible for selecting and preparing choral anthems may have a rich store of selections of high quality choral music related to the Sunday Scriptures from which to choose." There are three criteria for including a composition on the list. First, the anthems must be directly related to the Scriptures of the day, either quoting the text directly or paraphrasing

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### **Good choirs singing music of good quality do play a vital role in today's liturgy.**

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the Scripture or supporting its thematic content. Second, music for all sizes, voicings, and ability levels must be included. Third, the list must include "anthems that are recommended because of the quality of the compositional craft and the relationship of its text to Scripture and have received merit (or demonstrated the potential of merit) through use over time." This music, "in the judgment of the committee, has established its validity through use to be good music and appropriate ritually and/or liturgically for worship."

After a decade of work, the listings are finally being made available through the NPM website: [http://www.npm.org/Choral\\_Anthem\\_Project/index.html](http://www.npm.org/Choral_Anthem_Project/index.html). Once there, just click on year A, B, or C and then on the particular Sunday or feast you are interested in. You will get a listing of anthems related to the text of each reading as well as suggestions for anthems that will supplement the texts

of the entrance chant and the Communion chant found in the *Roman Missal (Sacramentary)*. The music is listed alphabetically by title and gives you the voicing, instrumentation, composer/arranger, publisher, and publisher's number for each anthem. Anthems are listed in voicings from unison through SATB or SSAATTBB. Although there are many anthems listed, the Choral Anthem Project is still in its infancy and is growing daily. When you visit the website, you will also find directions on how to submit anthems that you have used successfully over the years that the committee could consider adding to the list.

### **Transported by Song**

We have all had the experience of hearing a piece of music performed by an ensemble that has brought silence to the congregation as they were transported into the world of sound by the richness and beauty of an anthem. We have had the experience of the hush that falls over us when the beauty of music has lifted us briefly out of the ordinary and has given us a glimpse of the holy in much the same way as we can be overwhelmed by the splendor of a flower, a sunrise, or a child's first smile. Choirs will evoke the "full, conscious, and active participation" of the assembly they serve when good anthems that speak to the liturgical season or ritual moment are presented at liturgy and performed well. Good choirs singing music of good quality do play a vital role in today's liturgy.

# A Place for the Choir: Values, Challenges, Solutions

BY WILLIAM BRISLIN

**L**oft, sanctuary, or transept? Front or rear? High or low? The range of possibilities can be daunting when considering the placement of the choir. A helpful process of discernment should include an articulation of pastoral, liturgical, and acoustical values; challenges of the space which may place these values in conflict; and solutions which realize thoughtfully chosen compromises.

## Values

Pastoral, liturgical, and acoustical values are governed by three key principles: The song of the whole assembly is primary, the choir is part of the assembly with a particular musical-liturgical ministry, and the choir must be heard in order to perform that ministry.

**Song of the assembly.** In the more than forty years since the promulgation of the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, it has become universally accepted that the song of the whole

assembly is primary in vocal aspects of liturgy. The first role of choirs is to support and embellish this song. This is best accomplished when the congregational part of the liturgical assembly hears itself sing and hears the natural support of a choir. Though the choir must also be able to sing alone intelligibly, this second choral function is well served when the first is given proper consideration.

Many liturgical acousticians suggest that a two-second reverberation is the absolute minimum which will allow the assembly to hear its own voice.<sup>1</sup> The exact location of reflective and absorbing surfaces will affect this. Therefore, churches must be designed to facilitate more than one sound source. This contrasts with the reverberation needed in a concert hall which is designed to accommodate one sound source: the stage. However, the acoustics for many worship spaces often muffle the natural sound of the congregation, thus decreasing the vigor of their song. When the major part of the assembly cannot hear its own voice, there is an unfortunate tendency to "fix" the problem by projecting more amplified sound from the musicians. This may overwhelm the congregation, encouraging it to assume a passive role like an audience. Therefore, the

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choir's ability to project into the rest of the worship space without over-amplification is a critical factor in choosing its placement.

**Part of the assembly.** The *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* specifies the placement of the choir this way: "The choir should be positioned with respect to the design of each church so as to make clearly evident its character as a part of the gathered community of the faithful fulfilling a specific function. The location should assist the choir to exercise its function more easily and conveniently allow each choir member full sacramental participation in the Mass."<sup>2</sup> This guideline is echoed in *Built of Living Stones*, the USCCB statement on liturgical environment and art published in 2000: "Because the roles of the choirs and cantors are exercised within the liturgical community, the space chosen for the musicians should clearly express that they are part of the assembly of worshipers."<sup>3</sup>

**Support liturgical action.** The bishops also said: "The ministers of music are most appropriately located in a place where they can be part of the assembly and have the ability to be heard. Occasions or physical situations may necessitate that the choir be placed in or near the sanctuary. In such circumstances, the placement of the choir should never crowd or overshadow the other ministers in the sanctuary nor should it distract from the liturgical action."<sup>4</sup>

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**If the primary function of the choir is to lead the whole assembly, the choir's ability to project natural sound into the room is critical to the fulfillment of this function.**

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If the primary function of the choir is to lead the whole assembly, the choir's ability to project natural sound into the room is critical to the fulfillment of this function. As the need for artificial amplification grows, so does the perception that the choir is performing for the rest of the assembly, thereby diminishing the choir's ability to lead. Specific attention to the presence of reflective surfaces above, below, around, and across from the choir will greatly affect the success of its placement.

Since another vital role of the choir is to sing alone or in alternation with the congregation, texts rendered by the choir must be intelligible. Proper training of the choir in vocal projection and diction will greatly help even in an acoustically challenging space.

**Summary.** These values may be summarized this way:

1. The natural voices of the choir have an innate ability to animate and lead the song of the assembly. Over-amplification of the choir impedes the ability of the rest of the assembly to hear its own voice.
2. The choir members are members of the worshiping assembly. Lofts on a completely separate verti-

cal plane or areas with obstructed views convey separateness not connectedness.

3. It is not enough to see the choir; they must be heard to minister effectively. However, the placement which allows for this should not distract from the central liturgical action.

## Challenges

The space chosen for the placement of the choir will only be satisfactory if it is surrounded by hard surfaces in such a way that their sound will be projected into the room. Choral singing is effective in leading congregational singing because the choir is singing into the room as are the other members of the assembly. Though some amplification may be necessary to assist articulation and presence, it should always be done to enhance the natural sound projected into the room not to replace it. When artificial amplification is necessary, it should never be so great that the listener perceives any voice—especially the combined voice of the choir—as louder than natural voices. Amplification is helpful when it reinforces natural sound rather than becomes something of its own. Therefore, any placement of the choir should consider the acoustical needs alongside the liturgical desire to allow them full participation as members of the liturgical assembly.

Renovations of older worship spaces present extraordinary challenges. The long narrow church with a small sanctuary and a rear gallery is perhaps the most challenging. In such a setting, it may be necessary to place the choir in the rear loft to avoid the problems of poor projection or undue distraction. However, even when such a compromise is reached, necessary modifications can be made to increase choir members' ability to see and hear the liturgical action and, if possible, the rest of the liturgical assembly itself. Making provision for the choir to receive Communion with the rest of the assembly, rather than in the loft, will also increase their sense of being one with the whole liturgical assembly.

## Solutions

A preferred place for the choir seems to be a position to the left or right of the sanctuary within sight of the congregation and the ministers as well as the altar, ambo, and chair. Architecturally, this placement allows the choir to project into the room with minimal amplification so that the rest of the assembly is supported in their song and additional choral singing is heard and understood throughout the room. Hard surfaces surrounding the choir will assist in creating a satisfactory band shell effect, as long as the location already has some merit as a place from which sound can travel throughout the room. It is easiest to make this placement successful in new construction. Existing buildings may not lend themselves to this adaptation.

Transepts often offer the possibility of satisfactory placement; but the real value of this solution will vary



considerably from building to building. Transept placement may allow for the choir to face the crossing or to face the central nave. This has the advantage of keeping the choir out of a rear loft and out of the sanctuary. Acoustical appropriateness should be carefully tested. The use of permanent choral risers can often help make this placement successful. In the case of a deeply recessed sanctuary, it may be necessary to move the altar, chair, and ambo forward to ensure visibility by those seated in transepts.



Sanctuary placements are particularly challenging since they run the risk of creating a distraction which overshadows the liturgical action. In older churches, the area originally intended for side altars may house a small choir satisfactorily.

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**Though some amplification may be necessary to assist articulation and presence, it should always be done to enhance the natural sound projected into the room not to replace it.**

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The area behind the altar is a possibility, but that placement for the choir often meets with the greatest resistance. In most of our buildings the best sound projection occurs when a choir is placed against a wall of the central axis, i.e., in the loft or the sanctuary. However, many see placement of the choir on the rear wall of the sanctuary as a great distraction to the action at the altar. These placements seem most successful when the rest of the assembly is already seated on three sides of the altar, the choir thereby completing the circle. Additionally, a separate raised platform for the altar serves to give it prominence as an area separate from the choir.

Often, parishes with multiple choirs will find that different placements are preferred for different groups. Multiple instruments or moveable organ consoles increase this flexibility. This way, a smaller choir may be able to minister effectively from a location which has more liturgi-

cal advantages, even if a larger choir is necessarily placed in a loft.

### Best of Both

In their statement *Music in Catholic Worship*, the bishops remind us: "A well-trained choir adds beauty and solemnity to the liturgy and also assists and encourages the singing of the congregation."<sup>5</sup> Effective placement of the choir supports the choir's dual role of leading the assembly and singing alone. Since liturgical considerations are sometimes in conflict with the acoustical constraints of a room, it is not sufficient to place a choir based solely on one or other of the choir's responsibilities. Structural modifications are often necessary to improve a placement option. In the end, thoughtful compromises will most often be made that best serve musical and liturgical values.

### Notes

1. See "A Musician's View—Good Acoustics for Music and Word" in *Meeting House Essays Number Two: Acoustics for Liturgy* (Chicago, Illinois: Liturgy Training Publications, 1991). This article was originally published by The Hymn Society in the U.S. and Canada.

2. *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, third edition (GIRM), 312.

3. *Built of Living Stones* (BLS), 90.

4. *Ibid.*

5. *Music in Catholic Worship*, 36.

# From the Voices of Children, Lord

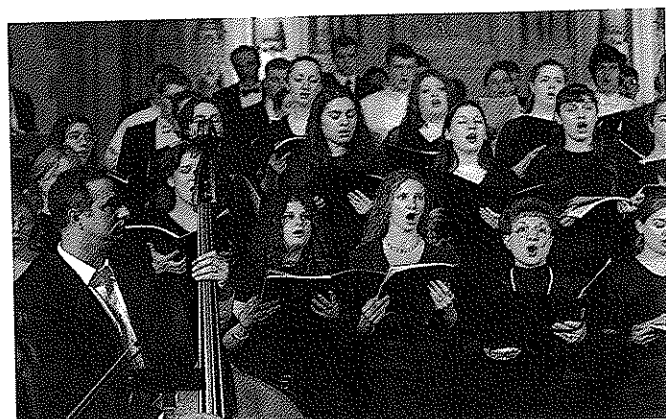
BY MICHAEL WUSTROW

**O**n the evening before an annual liturgy celebrating the Feast of St. Francis, choristers of all ages file into the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, the largest gothic cathedral in the world, located at 110th Street in New York City. Among the 250 singers is a large children's choir that will help present *Missa Gaia*, a Mass setting written in the 1980s by Paul Winter, Paul Halley, and Jim Scott. With so many adult singers forming this vast choir, an observer might wonder why there is even a need for children's voices. Given the cavernous acoustic of the building, after all, how can these children make a difference in the sound of the group? As the rehearsal gets started, the percussion section takes its place with dozens of different instruments from around the world. Paul Winter is nearby with his soprano saxophone, coordinating not only the percussion section but also organ, piano, bass, cello, and oboe. The rehearsal starts, and from an elaborate set of speakers the call of a humpback whale intones the beginning of the *Sanctus*. Soon singers and band are in full force, and twenty dancers carry through the nave and sanctuary banners depicting different kinds of animals.

**A children's choir makes a unique contribution . . . for the sound of children's voices is like no other.**

Surely, the observer thinks, in this gathering of voices, instruments, and movement, the voices of the children will not make much difference! Just then, the dean of the cathedral arrives and welcomes everyone after the first piece is rehearsed. He sets the tone for the evening, explaining how the cathedral has been celebrating the Feast of St. Francis in a very elaborate way long before other churches caught on to the idea. He reminds everyone that

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A small part of the adult choir for *Missa Gaia*

animals of every kind will be welcomed into the space at the liturgy the next morning.

Now animals will be added to the mix, the observer reflects, and surely the children's choir will be overwhelmed, with little to add. But it quickly becomes apparent just how powerful the sound of children's voices can be when we begin rehearsing the *Kyrie*. There is a tenor soloist stationed midway in the cathedral to sing the intonation based on the call of an Alaska tundra wolf. Then the children's choir repeats the same melody, singing in octaves, and everyone gets goose bumps from the pure tone and the haunting, lyrical line. When the adults join them there is a more sophisticated, more cultured sound, and it does not sound as innocent as the children's voices had.

## A Unique Contribution

A children's choir makes a unique contribution to the life of a parish and to whatever music is being sung for the sound of children's voices is like no other. But to understand that contribution more fully, consider the distinction between the message being presented and the messenger doing the presenting. In the case of a children's choir, the message being presented is the message of Jesus Christ. In addition to hearing from the children's choir, the assembly hears that same message proclaimed by the lector, the deacon, the priest, and other choirs. In fact, the congregation itself proclaims the Gospel message through the hymns and sacred songs that the members

sing during the liturgy. What makes the message unique when it comes from a children's choir is how we "hear" the message. At one level there is a greater tendency to block out our pessimistic view of the world because when children sing we are more apt to give them the benefit of the doubt.

Further, when a parish has a children's choir, it says that children have an important place in the worship life of the parish. It is sometimes said that children should be seen and not heard. Not so at liturgy! During those formative years children learn by doing — participating in and experiencing the liturgy through the music they sing.

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### **It is sometimes said that children should be seen and not heard. Not so at liturgy!**

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We need to give them every opportunity to participate. A children's choir is an important part in the sound of a singing assembly, which incorporates every voice from that of babies in their parents' arms making unintelligible sounds to the voices of the elderly, who participate in the song of the assembly with sometimes feeble and frail voices. A children's choir provides the foundation for a full range of choral music ministers that includes youth and adult choirs as well.

In addition to having the right to participate now as members of the singing assembly, the children in the choir are also being prepared to participate in their later years. First, they are learning the importance of singing in the liturgy, so they will be prepared to sing as members of the assembly even apart from their role in a choir. Second, children's choirs are feeders for youth and adult choirs. Many non-Catholic churches (and some few Catholic

churches as well) have a music ministry in place that begins with the "cherub" choir and offers participants choral opportunities at every stage of their development. Some even end with a "senior" choir for older adults.

### **Choral Opportunities**

Sometimes the choir will be singing hymns with the assembly, adding a descant to the last verse which soars above the music of the congregation and organ; at other times they sing by themselves. Perhaps, on the first Sunday of Lent, a children's choir might present a choral setting of a penitential psalm during the preparation of the gifts. (There are dozens written specifically for children's voices, from simple unison settings to elaborate three- and four-part pieces. There are settings of Latin texts from the sixteenth century and others written in the past ten years.) The music takes on a new dimension when it is sung by children and heard by assemblies who marvel at the pure lyrical tone or the hearty excitement of the children's voices.

There can be moments in the liturgy when the choir is in dialogue with the assembly, perhaps when it leads Bernadette Farrell's simple but powerful piece "Everyday God." The children sing the invocations (which might ordinarily be done by a cantor), and the rest of the assembly responds with "Everyday God, O Jesus, O Spirit, come, be with us." If you are unsure what repertoire to use with children, take a look at the music your assembly already knows, and be creative. Look to other musicians for ideas and suggestions about working with a children's choir.

### **Recruiting**

Unlike the members of an adult choir, children outgrow the choir in five or six years, which makes it important to recruit new singers constantly. Yes, it can be challenging to keep recruiting singers. Soccer games, scouting events, academic tournaments, or parental visiting rights are just a few of the conflicts that arise with choir practice and performance, and all these conflicts need to be negotiated. But if you work hard, you will find parents who place a priority on developing their own spiritual lives, and they will also value their children's involvement in church activities like a choir. Reaching out to such parents and communicating your goals to them is the best way to keep the children involved. Even parents who may be a little shaky in their personal commitment to the faith respond well to a children's choir that makes spiritual and musical development a priority.

But it's not all serious: You also need to create social opportunities for the children (and maybe the parents, too!) to interact with one another and create a smaller community within the larger parish community. Remember that the children's choir of today will have a big influence on the church of tomorrow.





# Mission Impossible, or How I Built a Youth Choir in One Year

BY HELEN NATHAN

In the summer of 2003, I felt as if I had suddenly become part of a *Mission Impossible* episode. I could almost hear in Father Bob's invitation echoes of Bob Johnson's recorded voice addressing Mr. Phelps: "Good morning, Ms. Nathan. I'm distressed because all attempts to build a youth choir at St. James have failed. Your mission, should you decide to accept it, is to establish that choir. As always, should you or any member of your team fail, the parish secretary will disavow any knowledge of your actions. This tape will self-destruct in five seconds."

In that summer, I was serving as a cantor at St. James, and although Father Bob, the pastor, knew I had never directed a parish music ministry full-time, he offered me the position of parish director of music and liturgy only three days after the former director resigned. Since I had many years of choir experience and a degree in vocal music education, I eagerly accepted the challenge.

I was granted as much time as I needed to begin, but the goal was to *succeed* at something that had never worked before—forming a youth choir. It was going to be tough, but I had faith that I would be granted the grace and wisdom to make it work.

For new directors facing the challenge of starting a youth choir from scratch, I've outlined in this article ten practical steps that worked well for me.

**1. Take your time!** The parish's Catholic Youth Ministry Choir had disbanded in 2002, and the pastor wanted a youth choir as soon as possible, but I did not start a new one immediately because I needed time to analyze what had gone wrong with the earlier choir. The previous groups, it seemed to me, started out too large, and they quickly spun out of control. Unrehearsed musicians were allowed to show up and "jam"; soloists sometimes went AWOL; members who only came to church if they were singing were allowed to choose music, and most of their selections were unknown to the parish. There was little cooperation or respect, and everyone was unhappy.

*Ms. Helen Nathan is the director of music and liturgy at St. James Catholic Church in Mukwonago, Wisconsin.*



Peter Graves as Jim Phelps in the CBS series *Mission Impossible*.

I vowed not to repeat those mistakes with my group.

**2. Choose your core group carefully.** Our school cantors are drawn from students in the sixth through eighth grades, and our children's choir includes children from third through eighth grade. It was logical to form the youth choir around members of these two groups, since they were already active in our music ministry, knew what was expected of them, and would be around for several years. I decided that the charter members of our youth choir would be my first set of "graduates" from these two groups.

**3. Love working with teens if you expect them to stay involved.** If you don't really care about teens, they will sense it immediately, and I believe you will be doomed to fail, no matter how fabulous your credentials may be. The students think it's cool that I also play guitar, and they enjoy learning traditional hymns as well as some fun contemporary songs.

**4. The adults who work with teens should be prepared to assume adult responsibilities.** Teens don't expect or *want* to be the primary planners. It is the responsibility of the trained adult director to make important decisions for the choir.

**5. Set high standards and motivate teens to do their best.** It's important to establish why the choir exists right from the start: We are not a "rock band" that entertains; we're music ministers in our faith community. In order to put everyone in the proper frame of mind, our rehearsals begin with prayer, and everyone offers special intentions. My few strict rules involve proper behavior and attire. All

**It's important to establish why the choir exists right from the start: We are not a "rock band" that entertains; we're music ministers in our faith community.**

music ministers are taught how to set up properly, handle and put away everything we need, and not to goof around or be careless with the equipment. Our rehearsals are very productive, but they're also quite relaxed and fun. Before each Mass, I remind students of the rules, and for special events they receive a written reminder. I am blessed with a great group of kids who happily do what is expected of



Four members of the St. James Youth Choir—Meghan, Missy, Kirstie, and Annie—sing at the parish festival Mass. Photo: Pat Hitt.

them and strive for excellence.

**6. Keep it simple but fun.** Directors should resist the urge to add instrumental musicians until after the choir is stable. The function of the choir is to foster “active participation of the faithful through the singing” (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, 103.) Extra instruments are embellishments not requirements. A couple of strong teens singing a cappella in unison can serve the assembly very well, while a large group of poorly-prepared musicians



Youth choir instrumentalists Matt, Bobby, and Chris prepare for the St. James Parish Festival Mass. Photo: Pat Hitt.

and singers serves no one. Schedule a small youth group with your adult or children’s choir if they need support, but remember that quality groups attract quality members. Nobody wants to join an organization that is chaotic or dreadful.

After the choir has sung a few times, add simple percussion with tambourine, claves, bongos, finger cymbals, egg shakers, or several handbells. It’s fun to watch people’s faces light up when they’re asked to play a cowbell or tambourine; some also enjoy simple tasks like filling out the cantor song sheet or announcing the song numbers. These responsibilities can be shared or eventually become someone’s special job.

The kids at St. James are not just the “future” of our church, they are valued members of our music ministry *now* and, I hope, for life. I encourage members to get more involved as they gain experience. In January 2004, the five eighth grade cantors sang at their first Sunday Mass. By September, they were cantoring regularly, and they sang and played handbells at our Parish Festival Mass, supported by our adult choir. That launched our official youth group, which doubled in size and took off like a rocket! Our first instrumentalist—a clarinetist—played the following Christmas.

By Easter 2005, we had grown to fourteen members, and the group was ready to sing for confirmation. That summer, two members became full-fledged cantors. They and our clarinetist now serve with and without the youth choir.

**7. Don’t focus too much on so-called “youth” music.** I find it unnecessary to toss out classics, and we sing some of those, because people of all ages generally respond to any well-crafted piece played with feeling and energy. Breathe new life into traditional hymns with a little brass, strings, or timpani; use a synthesizer if you have one. Just choose good, lasting music of various styles for all your choirs, and perform the music well. Traditional music can sound fresh and new without alienating the assembly. For the most part, our youth choir sings the same lineup sung at all other Masses that weekend. However, they enjoy choosing their favorite songs as preludes, and I encourage and use their creative ideas when appropriate. The right balance of input will keep your choir happy!

“Contemporary” Christian music is not part of Catholic tradition, and much of it was never intended for use at Mass. (Luckily, the teens I’ve worked with don’t particularly like that type of music anyway.) Young adults who outgrow LifeTeen music aren’t magically going to become interested in the adult choir’s music if there is no common ground in the repertoire. So don’t deprive teens of our heritage; given the chance, they sing traditional hymns with just as much gusto as their grandparents. If they have nowhere else to serve, you may lose them forever.

**8. Forget about regular rehearsals for a youth choir—you have to accommodate them.** Scheduling irregular rehearsals requires patience and sacrifice, but that’s what ministry is all about. By the Parish Festival Mass 2005, our group had quadrupled to twenty members, now outnumbering



St. James Parish Youth and Young Adult Choir 2005. Photo: Pat Hitt.

bering the adult choir that had backed them up the previous year! Efficient scheduling was critical in preparing the repertoire for this Mass: Six new musicians were playing, so we had three focused rehearsals: separate sectionals for the cantors and musicians and a dress rehearsal for all. Except for our pianist, each musician only had to learn two or three pieces. Using different combinations of instruments yielded maximum effect with the lowest stress for everyone.

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**Frequent rehearsals are impossible for our group since everyone is over-committed already.**

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Frequent rehearsals are impossible for our group since everyone is over-committed already. Singers arrive one hour prior to weekend Masses to practice for that day only, so ongoing commitments are not required. Whenever musicians want to play or singers want to learn harmony parts or new material, anyone interested rehearses at least once in advance as a group. When nobody can attend an extra rehearsal, new music is sung in unison, except possibly the psalm refrain. But that's still fun anyway; so it's a win-win.

**9. Consider the all-inclusive choir model.** I've sung in two vibrant choirs that welcomed teenagers and adults alike. The adults are mentors to the younger members,

the influx of new teen members keeps the group ever-energized, and people feel comfortable joining at any time in their lives. This is the only choir model that reflects the entire faith community and offers a lifelong home, so for me it's the ideal. Our graduating seniors will be considered "young adults" this summer, and it would be bizarre to tell them they no longer qualify for our youth group. If they stay in Mukwonago, I hope they'll eventually become the mentors of the St. James graduates of 2056!

**10. Make a spark and pray that the Holy Spirit will keep it going.** I started playing guitar at Mass and singing at weddings when I was in the seventh grade, and I continued through high school and college. It was fun getting to share my musical gifts at church, and my service was valued, even as a young teen. Without that foundation, I doubt that I'd have been drawn to music ministry as an adult. Like many, I drifted away as a young adult but, shortly after I returned to church, the desire to serve again was burning in my heart. I joined the choir and began cantoring—seven Masses every weekend for two years!

**D**eveloping this youth choir has been very rewarding for me personally and professionally, and the most exciting aspect is the transformation of "my kids" into confident, mature music ministers. I pray that their involvement in this choir will be powerful enough to keep them active in the faith as adults. Father Bob, that will be a mission worth accomplishing!



# Mickey to Judy: “Let’s Have a Choral Festival!”

BY JAMES CHEPPONIS



Mickey Rooney and Judy Garland. Photo courtesy of MGM.

In the 1930s, Judy Garland and Mickey Rooney were America’s Hollywood sweethearts. In a number of movies which featured their musical talents, their solution to a problem was: “Let’s get the kids together and put on a show!” Flawlessly executed, the show went on.

Fast forward to the year 2005. A group of NPM chapter officers gets together to plan the year’s events. Discussion centers on how to increase attendance at meetings and ways to build unity among the musicians in the chapter and diocese. Someone proposes an idea which gains momentum: “Let’s get the folks together and put on a choral festival!”

Real life rarely mirrors the movies, and with choral festivals much is involved in order for “the show to go on.” This article discusses the many practical details that are involved in producing a choral festival. If haphazardly planned, the experience will be frustrating and a disappointment. If planned well, a choral festival is a rewarding experience full of excitement and joy.

## Defining the Event

Once a chapter or diocese decides to sponsor a choral

*Rev. James Chepponis, a presbyter of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, is the director of the Office for Music Ministry of the Diocese of Pittsburgh and pastor of St. John Capistran Parish.*

festival, the event must be defined. Different formats can be considered. It can be a large-scale concert event with invitations extended to all parish choirs in a diocese or region, or the number of singers could be limited. The massed choir could sing all of the music programmed, or a smaller schola could perform some challenging works that might be difficult for the large group. A few hymn concertatos with assembly participation on certain stanzas would add variety to the program.

Another approach is a parish choir “invitational” event, where each choir is invited to sing a selection of its choice. With this model, a few combined pieces might also be sung.

Instead of a concert, the event might be planned as a worship service such as evening prayer. The choirs could sing preludes and embellish the service music with harmonizations and descants.

## Space Considerations

The format of the choral festival is largely dependent on the space where the event will be held. The number of singers in a massed choir will be determined by the size of a sanctuary or choir loft. The placement of musical instruments in a church is also a very important consideration. If the singers are to be in the sanctuary, the accompanying instruments should be nearby. Although it is not impossible to have the singers in front accompanied by an organ in the balcony, such a division of forces can present many challenges including issues of coordination, rhythm, and volume.

The singers must have good visual contact with the director. This can be accomplished by having the singers stand on the different levels or steps in a sanctuary. However, choral risers may also be necessary, especially if the group is large. Although standing for the length of a concert or service can be difficult for singers, this may be inevitable, since providing chairs for all singers can be a challenge. Moving singers back and forth from the church pews to a sanctuary during the event can be distracting and also cost valuable time.

The acoustics of a space play a large part in the musical success of a choral festival. Choirs sound better in reverberant rooms. The use of a particular space also depends upon the support (and permission!) of a church’s pastor, and the cooperation of the church’s music director. There

are many on-site practical issues that directly involve the local musician. Among these are concerns about opening and closing the church, the location of the lighting controls, the operation of the public address system, set-up, and clean-up.

### The Musical Director

The musical director of a choral festival needs to be someone who is musically qualified and has a lot of patience! Many challenges await a director who works with singers who have never sung together before. The director could be a trusted local person from the chapter or diocese or a guest from outside the area. When a guest director is invited, precise communication with the director is essential. Issues to be determined include the fee, travel arrangements, and accommodations. Don't presume that guest conductors appreciate staying in a busy rectory with a dirty guest room just to save some money! Other hospitality concerns include the provision for meals and comfortable arrangements for travel to and from an airport if necessary.

Whether a local or a guest director is decided on, that person should be consulted about the repertoire used for the choral festival. The director also should give input on the musical order of the event as well as items to be included in a printed program such as the director's photo and biography.

### Organizing the Event

Once you have determined the nature of the choral festival, you need to publicize the event. This involves both the recruitment of potential singers as well as the potential audience or, in the case of a liturgical service, the assembly. Nothing works better than a personal invitation! Other avenues to pursue are diocesan and chapter newsletters, church bulletin announcements, the local diocesan newspaper, and the secular press.

You will also need a process to deal with the registration of participating choir members. Someone needs to be in charge of the details and have the definitive answer to the many possible questions about the event, such as whether or not there is a registration fee for the singers, who orders the music, how the music is distributed to the singers, who pays for the music purchase, whether the registration is open to all, or if there will be an attempt to balance the vocal sections. If all are welcome to participate, there will probably be more women than men, as in many parish choirs, and this should be kept in mind when choosing repertoire.

The coordination of a printed program is an important task, and the person who actually types the booklet and produces the layout must pay attention to many details. If singers' names and parishes are to be included, the information needs to be accurate. If texts to sung anthems

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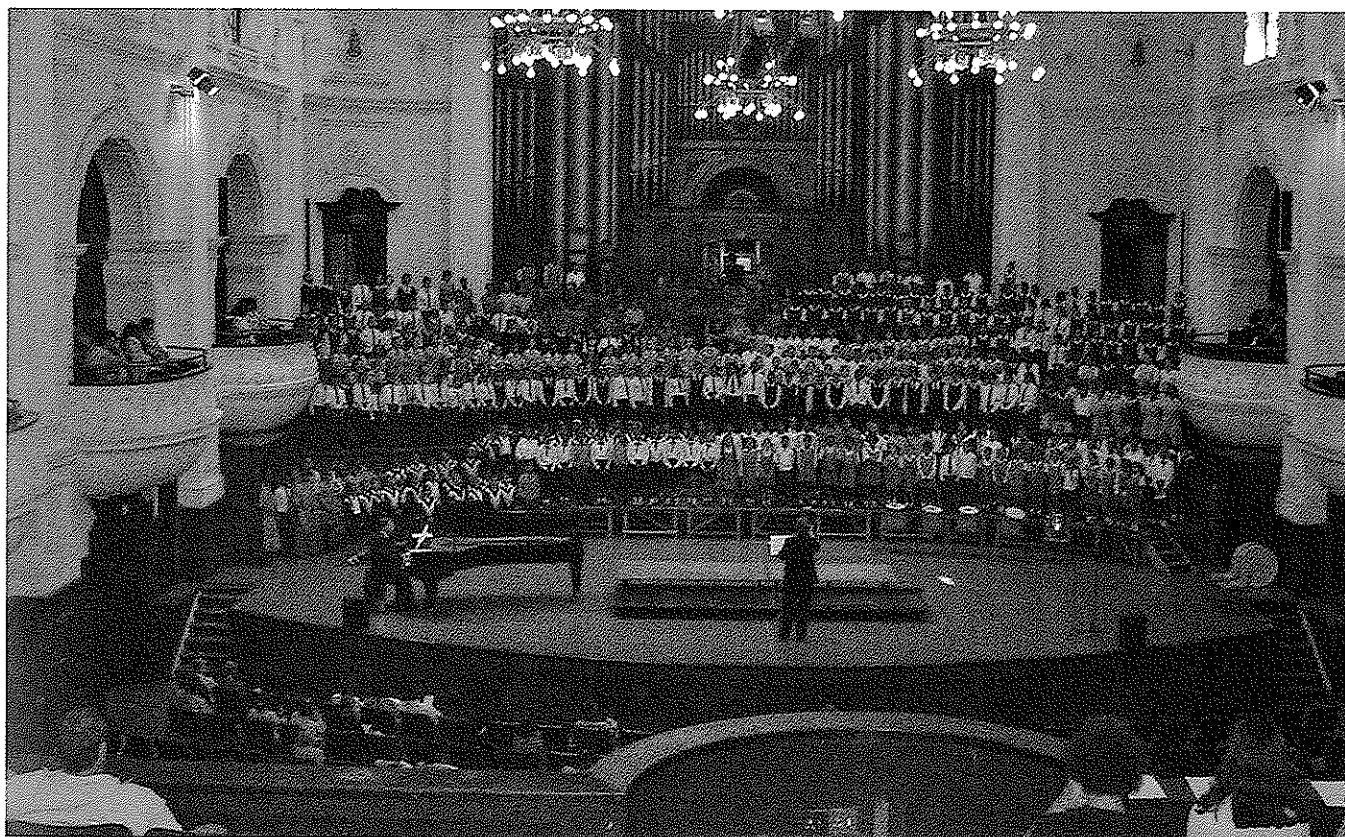
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Choir recruiting poster at St. Ursula Parish, Baltimore, Maryland

are printed, copyright clearances may be necessary. When hymns for the assembly are included, clear directions concerning which stanzas the choir sings alone should be given. Once the program is ready, someone needs to consider questions regarding a printer and costs. Without doubt, an attractive program booklet adds to the importance of the event and serves as a keepsake of the festival.

### Rehearsals

Fruitful rehearsals are crucial to the success of a choral festival. Individual choirs need to learn the music in advance with their parish choir director. If the diocese or chapter encompasses a smaller geographic area, combined rehearsals can be held in a centrally located space. The number of rehearsals would vary according to the needs of the singers and the repertoire chosen. The singers must make a commitment, and the rehearsals should be seen as something mandatory. Combined rehearsals also need a local director and accompanist. Ideally, the accompanist for rehearsals would be the accompanist for the choral



An annual Catholic school choir festival takes place each year in the Town Hall at Cape Town, South Africa.

festival itself.

In dioceses or chapters with a wide geographic spread, it can be helpful to have rehearsals in various locations. However, at least one or two combined rehearsals are essential for a local director to make sure all the notes are right and to help shape the music, even if a guest director will be conducting the festival itself.

The most important rehearsal is the "dress rehearsal," often held the evening before the event, when the conductor works to make music from the notes learned by the singers. This is not the time to be teaching individual vocal parts! If additional instrumentalists such as a brass ensemble are participating in the choral festival, they need to be present as well. The final rehearsal is a "warm-up" rehearsal on the day of the event itself.

## The Day of the Festival

You have paid attention to all of the preliminary details, the dress rehearsal has gone well, and now the day of the festival finally arrives! There's a sense of excitement as well as some nervousness. The singers gather, the instrumentalists tune, the warm-up is complete, and the festival begins!

Some final practical considerations you need to take care of for this event include determining who might welcome the assembly and introduce the event and what kind of spoken acknowledgments should be made in front of all who have gathered. Other issues include recruiting greeters to distribute programs, deciding whether or not a

"free will" offering will be taken to help defray expenses, and organizational details of a possible reception after the event.

Once the festival is over, all can bask in its beauty, but the work is not over yet! Bills may need to be paid. Depending on its nature, a choral festival can be produced for a minimal cost, or it could cost thousands of dollars, which might include the fees and expenses of a guest director, music purchase, paid instrumentalists, and program booklet costs. Thank-you notes should be written to significant persons. The event should also be evaluated. How was it successful? Were there any shortcomings? If we do it again, what changes would we make? Were there any hurt feelings? Musicians can be sensitive, and post-event outreach is sometimes necessary.

## Let's Have Another Choral Festival!

If most things went well, the singers as well as the audience/assembly will be asking when the next choral festival is scheduled. There's no doubt that planning and producing a choral festival is a big undertaking, but the sharing of faith, music, and fellowship far outweighs the investment.



Photo courtesy of MGM



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# Professional Concerns

BY LESLIE SELAGE

## Being Professional, Building Relationships

My family and I took refuge at Friendly's on a typical Sunday afternoon. We'd printed, revised, and reprinted worship aids and made sure our reprint permissions were in order. We'd transposed the psalm into two different keys, entered the parts in *Finale*, and rearranged the anthem planned for the 9:45 Mass since three of our four tenors waited until Saturday to tell us they'd be out of town. In addition, we'd prepared three different sets of presider books to accommodate a baptism, a renewal of vows for a fiftieth wedding anniversary, and the commissioning of lectors. The prayers of the faithful had also been adjusted to include these events, and we'd made certain that the cantors could pronounce the names on the sick list with something approaching accuracy. As usual, we'd provided either vocal or instrumental leadership at four Masses, including filling in for a sick cantor. So here we were at Friendly's, about to dig into our well-deserved Fribbles, when a lovely woman I could swear I'd never seen prior to that moment stopped me and proclaimed (in a voice that caused me to make a mental note: Invite her to lector): "You're the one from St. Joseph's! You have a beautiful voice, and you do such a good job. Have you ever thought of being a professional?"

"Being a professional": What might that mean? As an organization, we've done well to make clear to parish and diocesan leadership the need for professionally trained and accountable directors of music ministry. The various certifications offered by dioceses, NPM sections, and the DMMD certification process show our continuing progress. We've also done well with those in the choir lofts and music areas of our parishes. Our choirs love us,

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don't they? For those of us who also lead the liturgical ministries, "love" may overstate our relationship with those ministers, but most of them at least appreciate us. But what about the people in the pews? Should it matter to us what they think? Does the average parishioner recognize a need for professionally led music ministry? Whose responsibility is it to plant and grow that understanding?

### No Inner Sally Field

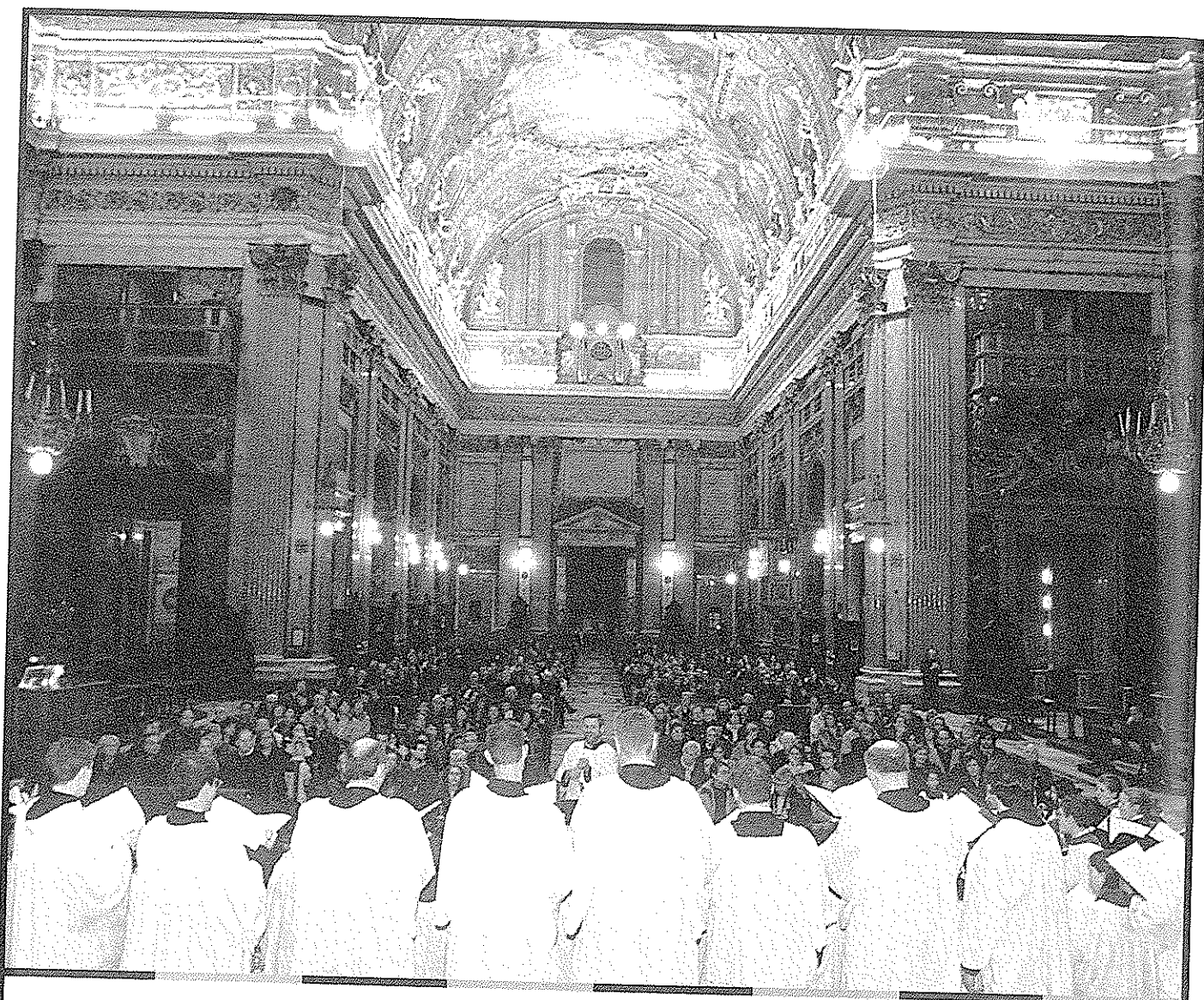
First, we need to put aside our inner Sally Field, who yearns to be liked—to be *really* liked. This allows us to acknowledge that our score on the likeability test is often based on how well the respondent liked the hymn choice last week or if the descant (or the cantor's hemline) was "too high and distracting." I propose that we have a professional obligation to nurture an understanding, in the mind of the average parishioner, of the need for a professionally trained and accountable music ministry. Putting aside my own need for popularity, I'm going to suggest that we, as a ministry, have not done well in building this understanding.



To test my hypothesis in a most unsci-

entific manner, I invited a group of regular (if not weekly) Mass attendees to discuss their perceptions of whom and what a director of music should be. They were gracious and generous in their kind words for the musical ability and the breadth and depth of knowledge held by their directors of music. But we didn't fare quite as well on what it meant to be a professional pastoral musician.

It probably won't surprise anyone that some people in the group have perceived us to be prone to arrogance. Each time we interact with those we serve, we have both the right and the responsibility to go beyond the commercial exchange of a bit of our expertise for their unquestioning gratitude. It is our responsibility to answer questions both professionally and pastorally. "Because it's not liturgically appropriate," may be true, for example, but it's an incomplete and a professionally inappropriate answer. It's not sufficient for us to recite what the documents say or what diocesan norms require, let alone offer our bent on issues of aesthetic or taste. Often, parishioners phrase their questions awkwardly or are hesitant to approach us. We need to accept that their vernacular and ours might be different. They may not have the background or experience to discuss music or liturgics with the same ease we do, so it's *our* responsibility to provide the translation. Once we've built this lingua franca, we can find a common ground to hear and respond to their real questions.



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Some members of my unscientific survey group mentioned that we always seemed to be too busy. I was surprised that many felt that their questions or issues weren't important enough to bother any of the staff for an answer. The too-short break between Masses on Sunday is not the best time to discuss the theological ramifications of singing of our wretchedness, regardless of how important that issue may be to anyone. So it's important that professional directors of music ministries be accessible and visible at other times during the week. Use the bulletin to remind the parish of your office hours. How many of us have set aside an hour or two each month and encouraged parishioners to visit? You don't even have to clean your desk for these visits; invite parishioners into the process. Let them peruse your library. What better way to show that the musical decisions we make aren't capricious but reasoned and researched?

Most Catholics' only face-to-face interaction with a musical and liturgical professional is during the preparation of a wedding or funeral liturgy. Our conventions and conferences are filled with sessions on repertoire for these celebrations, and our contracts and job descriptions outline compensation and bench fees. Perhaps we need to look as well for some pastoral offerings to help us with the communication of our policies. We have parish guidelines for wedding and funeral music, but I was surprised that some people saw those guidelines as a codex of the forbidden rather than a frame on which to hang an appropriate and effective liturgy. Certainly individual directors can't bear the weight of the Church's historic propensity to declare anathema. Instead, we need to look at our guidelines as well as our demeanor from the other side of the desk. Maybe we even need to *move* to the other side of the desk to work as collaborators rather than as adversaries of people who come seeking our expertise and ministerial skills. We need to make certain that our job descriptions—and our schedules—leave us time for these consultations.


## A Practical Reason

There is certainly a practical reason for building the relationships I've suggested here. I'm not the first person to note that our parish pastoral councils and finance boards are filled with people from the pews, many of whom have little or no theological or liturgical formation. We've heard the horror stories of such representa-

tive parish groups removing—or, at least, recommending the removal of—qualified directors of music in order to hire additional support staff because someone's brother can play piano and he'll do it free. In too many places, a parish council or stewardship board has decided that the music needs to be more (or less) upbeat, or louder (or softer), or in Latin (or English or Spanish or Polish), and the board has demanded oversight of future repertoire decisions. While these happenings are

unconscionable, we have to accept a bit of the responsibility for the kind of ignorance which breeds them.


I was in line at my city cashier's office the other day, and I noticed a huge framed poster that read: "You won't care how much we know until you know how much we care." I'm not a fan of sloganeering, but I'm troubled when I have to consider that the politicians and government bureaucrats may be ahead of the pastoral ministers on this one.





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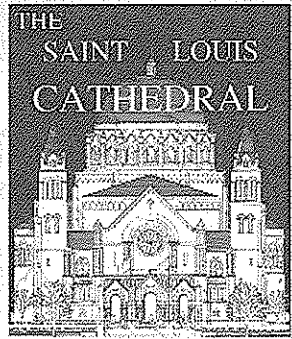
  
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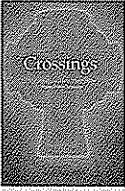
  
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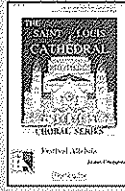
  
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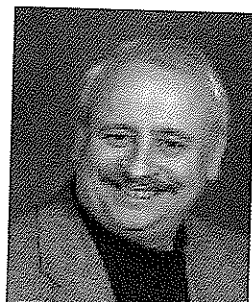
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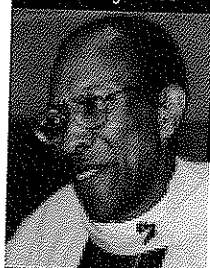
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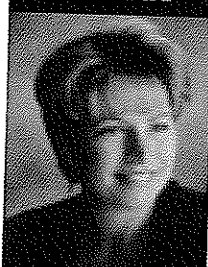
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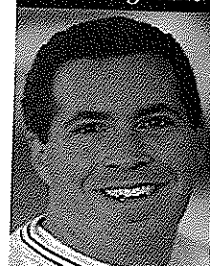
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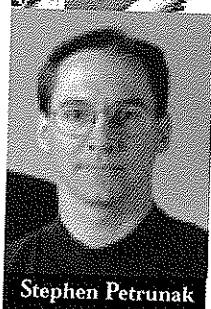
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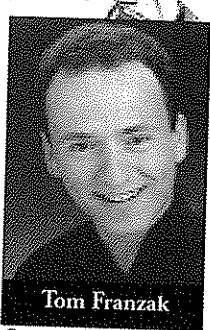
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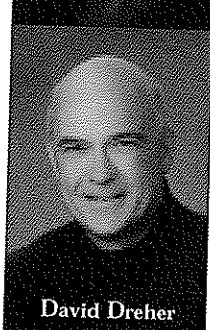
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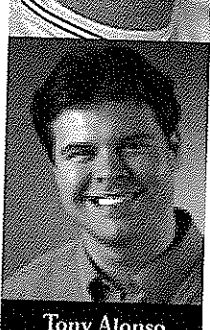
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Cantor, Composer, Associate Director Music Ministry Alive!; Music and Liturgy Coordinator, College of St. Catherine, St. Paul, MN; Workshop Leader

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# Music Education

BY EILEEN BALLONE

## Children's Choirs: Strengthening the Connections

Jesus said it: "Let the children come to me, never hinder them. The kingdom of God belongs to such as these" (Mark 10:14). And if the liturgy of the Church is a foretaste of the heavenly liturgy—of that "song of praise . . . that is sung without ceasing before the throne of God and of the Lamb" (*General Introduction to the Liturgy of the Hours*, 16)—then it is only right that children have a unique and compelling role in leading the church's worship, as they have through the centuries, for only children can bring a distinctive blend of spontaneity, enthusiasm, and pure joy to the worship of God.

### Spiritual Development

The primary goal of the children's choir should be to teach each participant what it means to worship God. Through the efforts of this program, each child should learn to worship effectively and should also develop an understanding of his or her role in worship. Spiritual growth should be encouraged in the children's choir program, for this program gives children a golden opportunity to express their faith through the songs they sing. This is, for many children, the first significant expression of faith.

When they are carefully chosen, songs whose texts are drawn from Scripture or reflect scriptural truth allow children to memorize Scripture. These texts most often stay with children for their entire lives.

Through the ministry of music, chil-

Mrs. Eileen Ballone is the president of the NPM Music Education Division (NPM-MusEd). She is a music teacher at St. Francis of Assisi School in Ridgely Park, New Jersey, and the director of music ministries at St. Margaret of Cortona Roman Catholic Church in Little Ferry. This article is © 2005 Eileen Ballone.

dren experience the glory and majesty of God. The musical compositions they sing express concepts and ideas beyond the limits of the written word.

Liturgically, members of children's choirs are exposed to the liturgical calendar, allowing them to focus on particular events in the life of Jesus Christ. In addition, they learn the order of the liturgical celebration in which they are serving as music ministers and how to participate fully in worshipping God.

As participants in a choir, children also learn about the discipline of regular attendance and the necessity of honoring God with their best efforts (stewardship). They learn a sense of commitment and begin to prepare for lifelong involvement in praising God. Some might become musical leaders in their churches, carrying on the teaching they received. Others will grow up to become active participants in the adult choir. The children's choir definitely serves the church by enabling and preparing young musicians for the life of service to the church.

### Musical Development

It is important for our children to develop musically as well as spiritually. Of course we should encourage the children to enjoy music; they should always be encouraged to participate and never be encouraged merely to perform.

Music literacy should be emphasized because it will enable children to enjoy a lifetime of music. Other important musical skills such as ear training, rhythmic and vocal training, and ensemble skills such as part-singing should be developed, too. Children have a knack for learning these skills when they are young; they learn by hearing, much as they do when they learn a language. Areas of musical growth can be added once the children have the basics—the names of the notes, steps and skips, and dynamics and phrasing are just some topics that can be addressed.

### Social Development

In addition to spiritual and musical

growth, the children's choir offers an opportunity for social development. It is a significant way for the children to learn that they are important, cared for, and loved. They obtain a sense of accomplishment from taking on a task and seeing it through to its conclusion. By participating in a children's choir, they grow in poise and self-confidence, and they learn responsibility and working within a group.

The ministry of children's music is a joyful expression of praise as well as a commitment to developing within each child a deep love and understanding of worshipping God through music.

### Resources

There are many wonderful resources available for children's choir directors. Here are a select few:

Kemp, Helen. *Of Primary Importance*. Garland, Texas: Choristers Guild, 1989.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Of Primary Importance II*. Garland, Texas: Choristers Guild, 1991.

Natstal, David T. *Children's Choir Basics*. Portland, Oregon: Pastoral Press, 1999.

Witvliet, John D., ed., *A Child Shall Lead: Children in Worship*. Garland, Texas: Choristers Guild, 2001.

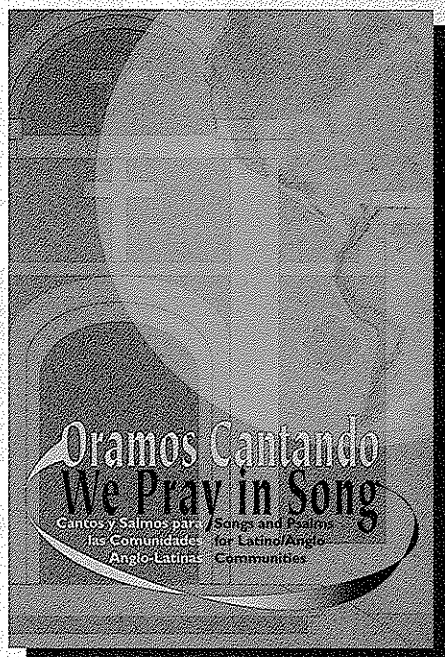
Choristers Guild is a wonderful association for anyone involved with teaching children's choirs. They have a wealth of information in the *Choristers Guild Journal*, published bimonthly.

If you have never attended the NPM Institute for Music with Children, offered every summer, you have missed out! The institute focuses on working with children not only in the classroom setting but also in the children's choir setting. This intense institute is a must for all music educators working in a Catholic setting. When you receive the brochure for the Institute for Music with Children 2006, seriously consider this opportunity for summer enrichment.



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**Cantad al Señor / Sing Praise to the Lord 65**

1. Can - tad al Se - ñor un cón - ti - co nos - va.  
2. El es Cre - a - dor y due - ño de to - do.  
3. Can - tad a Je - sús, por - que Él es dig - no.  
1. Sing praise to the Lord, O sing out a new song.  
2. Cre - a - tor of all, God rules with com - pas - sion.  
3. Ac - claim Je - sus Christ as wor - thy of hon - or.

Can - tad al Se - ñor un cón - ti - co nos - va.  
El es Cre - a - dor y due - ño de to - do.  
Can - tad a Je - sús, por - que Él es dig - no.  
Sing praise to the Lord, O sing out a new song.  
Cre - a - tor of all, God rules with com - pas - sion.  
Ac - claim Je - sus Christ as wor - thy of hon - or.

Can - tad al Se - ñor, Can - tad al Se - ñor!  
Sing praise to the Lord, Sing praise to our God.

4. Es Él quien nos da su Espíritu Santo... 4. Give thanks to the Lord,  
¡Cantad al Señor, cantad al Señor! who sends us the Spirit...  
Sing praise to the Lord.  
5. Cantad al Señor: "¡Aleluya!"... 5. Sing praise to our God.  
¡Cantad al Señor, cantad al Señor! Sing praise to the Lord.  
"Amen, Aleluya!"... Sing praise to the Lord.  
Sing praise to our God.

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# Reviews

## Choral Recitative

All the items reviewed here are from World Library Publications.

**Anthem for the Annunciation of the Lord.** Christopher M. Wicks. SSA. 005867, \$1.25. This chant-like anthem is great for a choir with strong women's voices. The part-writing is very contemporary but not crunchy at all. Rather, Wicks creates a hollow sound, eschewing the expected parallel thirds for a far more open texture. You'll have to get these harmonies in your ear, but once you do, they'll remind you of Hindemith and Barber.

**Behold! I Make All Things New.** Steven C. Warner. SATB, cantor, congregation, flute, trumpet in Bb, organ, opt. string trio and chimes. 007288, \$1.40. There is comfort in this text and strength in the music. Using Bernard of Clairvaux's words, Warner has made something special that a congregation can sing easily and a choir can really sink its teeth into. A strong, forceful declamation of this text should be your first priority, especially in the refrain.

**The Blessing of Blessings.** Laurence Rosania. SATB, descant, cantor, congregation, guitar, and keyboard. 008736, \$1.25. This sweet and lyrical setting of the traditional blessing from Numbers 6 (the blessing of Aaron) could easily become a favorite of both choir and congregation. Perfect as an anthem or postlude, the first two verses are very simple, while the key change for the third verse is adventurous and elevates the work.

**Campanas de Belén.** Arr. Samuel Milligan. SATB, organ, opt. glockenspiel, handbells, and harp. 008768, \$1.40. Milligan uses the glockenspiel and handbells nicely to paint "the Bells of Bethlehem." This is a villancico—an unjustly neglected form once very popular throughout Iberia and the Americas. In keeping with its original formation as a musical composition in the vernacular performed in sacred celebrations, this composition includes both

Spanish and English texts. A light touch with the registration is necessary to keep this piece at its brightest.

**Christ Has No Body But Yours.** Steven C. Warner. SATB, cantor, congregation, flute, guitar, and keyboard. 007284, \$1.30. St. Teresa of Avila's famous prayer is beautifully and dramatically set here. The opening a cappella solo is arresting, and the choral writing is very sweet. The flute and guitar are nice touches but not absolutely necessary for full enjoyment of this work.

**Come to the Manger.** Chrysogonus Waddell, ocso. SATB, cantor, and congregation. 005864, \$1.15. The simple, singable refrain, coupled with verses reminiscent of Brahms's part-songs, will carry this work to many choirs. While some of the cadential formulae may sound a bit too forced, the sweet melody overcomes this problem and will be what most listeners will take away from this piece.

**Concerto on Grosser Gott: Holy God, We Praise Thy Name.** Arr. Paul M. French. SATB, descant, congregation, two trumpets in Bb, horn in F, trombone, tuba, timpani, suspended and crash cymbals, and organ. 008766, \$1.85. This is a beautiful big piece, one that marshals large forces and deploys them well. The choir has it pretty easy, as the part-writing sits well in the ranges. The descant on the fourth verse, after an impressive instrumental interlude, is incredibly dramatic. Your congregation will appreciate joining in for most of the verses.

**Enter with Praise.** Thomas Lucas. SATB, cantor, congregation, guitar, and keyboard. 001211, \$1.25. This jazz waltz is a nice, laid-back gathering song. The choral harmonies are contemporary, while the cantor line has a nice swing to it. The guitar line is a bit tricky, but the keyboard is supportive of the voices. The verses ebb and flow, while the refrain pushes forward with those entering the sacred space.

**Holy Day, Christmas Day.** James V. Marchionda, op. Unison or two-part choir, cantor,

congregation, guitar, and keyboard. 007849, \$1.30. This sweet little piece is easily adaptable to small forces and could serve a children's choir very well. To my ear, the guitar accompaniment alone brings out the simple melody while offering just enough support for the voices. This would be an easy piece to learn and have in your pocket for Christmas.

**Homeward Bound.** Ken Macek. SATB, cantor, congregation, guitar, and keyboard. 008189, \$1.30. I don't know how to classify this piece; I just know that I like it. Its infectious rhythm and great harmonies will soon make it a favorite for many others. While it has a Gospel flair, it doesn't fall into the trap of overmarking the music in a wrongheaded attempt to enforce some swing. Keith Kalembe's piano arrangement and Paul Tate's choral arrangement both capture the pure joy of Psalm 126, celebrating the return of the Jews from Babylon.

**I Believe This Is Jesus.** Arr. Alan J. Hommerding. SATB, descant, cantor, congregation, and opt. keyboard. 005255, \$1.25. Edisto Island, from which this spiritual comes, is one of the barrier islands off the coast of South Carolina. (As a resident of upstate South Carolina, I couldn't pass this one up.) Hommerding has taken what is usually described as a "witness song" and turned it into a nice Communion processional. The rhythm is important here, as the melody is simple—perfect for those without books. Hommerding does not burden this song with too many markings, which is good, because it's almost impossible to mark up a piece well enough to capture the nature of the spiritual. His additional verses make this song appropriate throughout the liturgical year.

**If Today You Hear His Voice.** W. Clifford Petty. SATB, cantor, congregation, guitar, and keyboard. 001214, \$1.25. My favorite setting of this text is an old one from the monks of St. Meinrad. This Gospel version couldn't be further from that setting, but it's a forceful piece in its own right. Unlike many other Gospel pieces, this one doesn't

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try to force the syncopation or mandate vocal pyrotechnics. And, for that, it's all the better, as it sits well in the choir's registers and works well with the whole assembly. Your keyboardist and guitarist will work, but it's worth the effort.

**People, Look East.** Arr. James E. Clemens. SATB. 008752, \$1.40. This is one of the better pieces I have seen in recent years. It has interesting textures and very nice part-writing. I especially enjoy the building of density throughout the work. The text is serviceable, but that's not the point. The tripping melody, which passes through every part, will soon make this a favorite with many choirs.

**Stewards of Earth/This Is My Song.** Music by Jean Sibelius, text of "Stewards of Earth" by Omer Westendorf; text of "This Is My Song" by Lloyd Stone, Georgia Harkness, and Bryan Jeffery Leech; arr. by Jeffrey Honoré. SATB, congregation, trumpet in Bb or C, and keyboard. 007945, \$1.25. Jeffrey Honoré's arrangement and new trumpet line, along with the text of "This Is My Song," are the reasons for buying this edition. The tune FINLANDIA can always bring tears to my eyes, and—with its brilliant mixture of nationalism and universalism—"This Is My Song" should make this your first choice for national holidays.

**Today Is Born Our Savior.** Mark Mellis. Three-part choir, cantor, congregation, flute, guitar, keyboard, and opt. string quartet. 006268, \$1.30. This setting of Psalm 96 is based on the ADESTE FIDELES tune. Since Psalm 96 is the psalm for Christmas Midnight Mass, the tune is more than appropriate. Beyond the clever pairing of text and tune, however, this is a nice setting. Mellis does not merely ape the tune but creates some fine verses here, offering a distinct musical experience.

Joe Pellegrino

## Cantor Recitative

**The Passion of Our Lord According to John.** Rembert G. Weakland, osb. World Library Publications, 005252, \$14.95. A friend to pastoral musicians for many years, retired Archbishop Rembert Weakland, osb, now gives us a chant version of St. John's Passion for narrator, speaker, and Christ. While it is difficult to convey many emotions in chant (and the nature of John's Passion doubles that difficulty), Weakland achieves success in this task through the plaintive descending lines he uses so well.

**Exodus.** Robert W. Schaefer. Two cantors, violin, and organ. World Library Publications, 005781, \$2.50. This dramatic setting of the third reading in the Easter Vigil's liturgy of the Word would be an interesting addition to your Triduum. The cantors move freely from chant to metered notation. Haunting and beautiful, the violin both supports them and engages them melodically. While there are not many liturgical occasions for the performance of this work, I would certainly look for any opportunity to do it as a prelude or as a call to worship.

Joe Pellegrino

## Organ Recitative

**38 Chorales pour orgue.** Lionel Rogg. ECS Publishing, 6210, \$35.00. The composer describes this collection as "distinguished by a variety of styles," many of which "are treated in a Romantic manner, evoking the sound of Brahms or Reger." The collection, based on Lutheran chorales, contains pieces varying in difficulty and style. There are ornamented chorales, trios, and variation sets. Looking at the music puts one in mind of Bach's *Orgelbuchlein* because of thirteen of the actual melodies set here as well as the variety of styles, the general length of each piece, and the fermatas which mark the end of each phrase. Unlike the Bach collection, however, Rogg's are presented in order of composition rather than through the unfolding of the year or alphabetically.

The variety of forms represented here includes trios, canonic pieces, toccata-like pieces, and variation sets; the majority requires a two-manual organ with pedal. Most of the pieces present the chorale tune in a straightforward, unornamented manner, though the accompanying voices in some pieces offer a quite interesting contrast. There is a setting of "Vater unser, in Himmereich" which has a *Cromorne a deux parties, en taille* (cantus firmus played in two parts in the tenor voice in an ornamented fashion, using the *Cromorne*). Just as the chorales themselves are quite varied, so are the levels of difficulty. Some are easy, and others will require even keen-sighted readers to spend some time getting acquainted with them. In any case, the music is very satisfying and well worth the time spent.

**At the Cross Her Station Keeping: Fourteen Varied Accompaniments for Use at Stations of the Cross.** Christopher Bord. CanticaNOVA Publications, 6038, \$4.25.

These alternate harmonizations, based on original improvisations from Gary Penkala, are intended to foster meditation on the various stations. They do so effectively. The fourteen accompaniments are all different; the "flavor" of each is based on the action of the station which follows it. Organists will appreciate the variety, especially when they play for stations on a weekly basis.

**Variations on Jesus Shall Reign.** David Cherwien. MorningStar Music, MSM-10-570, \$9.00. Each of the four variations on the tune DUKE STREET is based on a different stanza of the hymn text "Jesus Shall Reign" by Isaac Watts. The first is a lively gigue; this is followed by a more reflective variation for the stanza which begins "To him shall endless prayer be made." The lively third variation—for "Blessings abound"—leads to the final variation, written for the text "Let every creature rise and bring": a brilliant toccata marked "With Fire!"

The marked registrations are quite colorful, like the music itself. However, some organists may find the instrument at their disposal will not accommodate these. Further, although not marked "attaca," the notation suggests a performance of the variations as a set. Use of the usual creativity and imagination required of organists will solve both issues and allow the piece to serve as a recital offering or a dynamic prelude to Sunday worship.

Heather Martin Cooper

## Books

### The Liturgical Ministry of Deacons

Second edition. Michael Kwatera. The Liturgical Press, 2005. 112 pages, paperback. \$9.95.

According to its preface, this book "is offered to all deacons (both permanent and transitional) in the hope that it will promote their formation for service within the Church's Eucharist, other sacramental rites, and communal prayer." The book has three main sections: The first provides background information, the second explores the deacon's role in the various rites of the Church, and the third contains prayers and a listing of additional resources.

In the introduction, Kwatera provides the reader with a brief overview of the history of diaconal ministry in

the liturgy, emphasizing the crucial connection between service to the poor and service within worship. This emphasis is expanded in the first chapter, "Flying Duo in the Liturgy," which comments on the importance of the deacon as sacramental sign in the contemporary Church.

In chapter two ("Some Preliminaries"), the author turns his attention to practical matters such as vesting, ministering with others, and the place of rubrics in the liturgy. The distinctive ministry of the deacon, which Kwatera was careful to defend

in the previous chapter, is minimized by his description of the deacon as an "extra 'chief' server" and his claim that the usual role of leading the intercessions—a prime locus of intersection between liturgy and the rest of life—could be readily left to the reader (page 22). Later, he also suggests that the deacon forego ministering the cup at Communion (page 48). I am concerned that such a functional approach reduces the deacon's ministry to optional tasks rather than one that flows integrally from diaconal identity—a caution of particular

concern in the new *National Directory for the Formation, Ministry, and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States* (see especially chapter one).

I must also disagree with Kwatera's reference to rubrics as simply "friendly guides" (page 24) rather than as binding (albeit to varying degrees) norms. While the liturgy is open to local pastoral adaptation, Kwatera's calls for numerous changes to the rites outside the context of a concrete community give the impression that the deacon is free to do as he wills with the liturgy (for example, moving the nuptial blessing [page 64]). The intimate knowledge of the liturgy and of the local community required for sound adaptation requires a more complete and nuanced discussion.

In the third and longest chapter, "The Deacon's Role in . . .," Kwatera spells out the particular task of the deacon in each of the Church's liturgical rites. Throughout the chapter, he offers liturgical "pearls of great price." The discussions and diagrams relating to choreographing the Gospel procession (pages 37–40) and the marriage rite (pages 62–64) are particularly helpful.

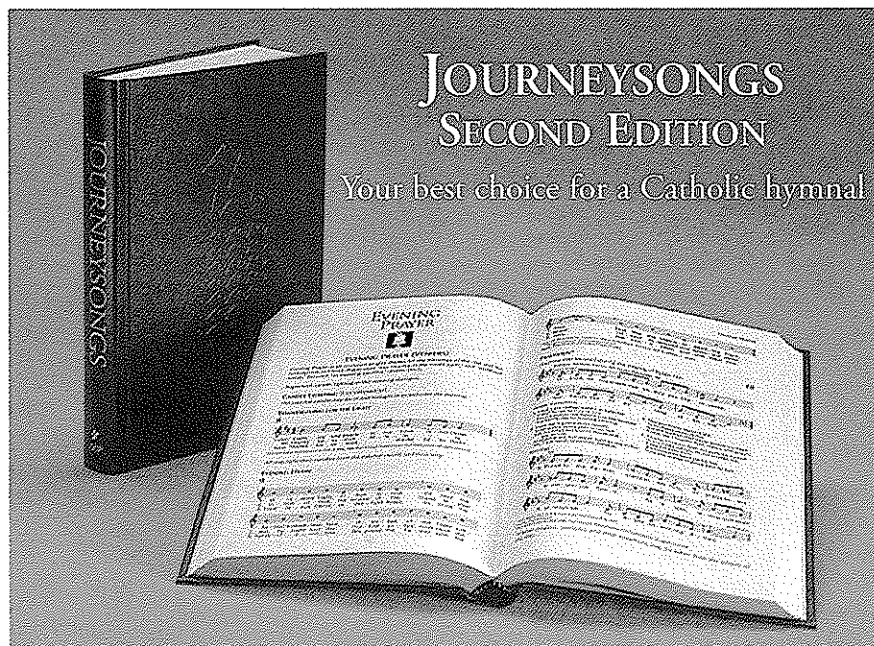
Unfortunately, the book in general—and this chapter in particular—would have benefited from a more deliberate use of current liturgical documents. For example, the deacon with the Book of the Gospels does not lead the entrance procession (see *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* [GIRM] §120), and the water used to purify the Mass vessels is to be consumed and not poured down the *sacarium* (see GIRM §279, which, curiously, Kwatera then quotes). While the dalmatic "may be omitted . . . out of necessity or on account of a lesser degree of solemnity" (GIRM §119), Kwatera overstates the case by calling for its use only during episcopal or Holy Week liturgies (page 19). Most importantly, he fails to distinguish between *Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest* and weekday Communion services, during which the rite found in *Holy Communion and the Worship of the Eucharist outside Mass* is used.

A careful discussion of the role of the deacon when other sacraments are celebrated within Mass or when a presbyter presides at non-Eucharistic rites would have been helpful. In such circumstances, it seems to me that the deacon's role—in keeping with diaconal identity—would be to assist the presider and not to split presidential functions with him.

Overall, Kwatera's treatment of the liturgical role of deacons is uneven and

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idiosyncratic. The historical introduction and his insistence that service within and outside of the liturgy are intimately connected are most beneficial. The treatment of the individual rites contains numerous practical reminders that novice and experienced deacons alike will find helpful. However, the concerns mentioned above limit this book's usefulness, especially as an introductory text for those in formation for the diaconate or for parishes welcoming a deacon's ministry for the first time. *The Liturgical Ministry of Deacons*, as other handbooks in the series, would have benefited from more careful editing.

Frank Agnoli

## The Liturgical Environment: What the Documents Say

Second edition. Mark G. Boyer. *The Liturgical Press*, 2004. 200 pages, paperback. \$17.95.

Anyone familiar with the first edition of Mark Boyer's book will warmly welcome this second edition, necessitated by new or updated liturgical documents like the 2002 *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* (GIRM) and the U.S. Bishops' *Built of Living Stones* (BLS). Liturgical environment is not just about worship space and things used therein but concerns the way in which these affect full and active participation for good or ill. All this is premised on foundational sources: What do the documents actually say? So if BLS is devoted entirely to art, architecture, and worship based on the GIRM, why invest in *The Liturgical Environment*? For its pastoral insight as well as its practicality.

The basic theological principle of Vatican II established in the first chapter centers on the baptized people: The church building is designed around them and their liturgical activity. Successive chapters look at the altar or table, ambo, presider's chair, place for baptism, and tabernacle. Shorter chapters follow on sacramentals like the paschal candle, vesture, the holy oils, and the reconciliation chapel. Two new chapters round off the book. Questions concluding each chapter are thought-provoking and bound to get adult education off to a good start.

This handbook enables us to see the significance of the church environment and its various furnishings and appointments, and it explores prayer texts in order to highlight the meaning. Such formation is essential for improved liturgical participation. Larger chapters on "The Gathering Space of the Community" (chapter

one) and on the baptismal font (chapter five) offer theological depth, nuance, and inspiration. Current Eucharistic theology in "Eucharistic Reservation and the Tabernacle" (chapter six) ensures a balanced presentation to questions sometimes fraught with misunderstanding or half-truths. The chapter on vesture (chapter eight) sits comfortably within the theology of ministry. A sound contemporary introduction to Rome's treatment on the veneration of images in its *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy* appears in "Shrines for Popular Devotion" (chapter eleven). Any one chapter will deepen people's spirituality and practice in churches new or old, renovated or needing further renovation, and all will appreciate the pastoral approach in this book.

Boyer makes numerous interesting points: The bishop who presides over a liturgical function in a parish, for instance, actually reclaims the parish priest's chair as a temporary *cathedra* (page 59). While the final chapter looks at a variety of church items that are minor when compared with ambo and altar—e.g., cups and plates, doors, belfry bells, organ, and sacristy—it makes the point that the blessing of bells emphasizes God's work of calling people together. Salutory in these days are Boyer's reminders that renewed Eucharistic adoration should lead us to "feeding the hungry and caring for the poor" (page 98) and that the active celebration of the Eucharist makes the church building a sacred space—not the presence of the reserved sacrament (page 99).

My only quibble with the book is its repetition in presentation and discussion, probably due to the way material is organized (theology and then the praxis arising from the theology). So, for example, a point about what is placed on the altar, made on pages 20–21, is repeated on pages 38–39. Other reiterated points include the note that the use of incense recalls our dedication to God (pages 28 and 34); appropriate ways to "clothe the altar" (pages 28 and 34–35); and the reasons for use of one cross or crucifix (pages 16–17 and 37–38). While some readers will find such reinforcement of theology helpful, one wonders if there might not be another way to integrate this material—as occurs in the last and newest chapter. The book finishes with a basic bibliography of the documents used, but it omits *Eucharisticum mysterium* (1967), used in chapter 6. The list includes websites for just a few documents, yet most—if not all—are available online.

Good practice, as Boyer asserts

throughout, flows from sound theology. The euchological texts (the prayers used in the rites) are treated well. Use of footnotes instead of endnotes together with the absence of direct quotations (used liberally in the earlier edition) make for easier reading and more effective theological-pastoral interpretation. At the same time, parts of the author's discussion are dense. Reading a prayer for oneself is often easier than reading a lengthy paraphrase.

Parishes and environment ministers who read this work will have cause to reconsider their current praxis, e.g., the placement of altar servers' chairs flanking the presider's chair, which represents a pre-Vatican II arrangement; the use of altar vesture that should not be like that of the old frontals or facades; the use of material for the altar cloth that does not have signs, symbols, or slogans embroidered or painted on the cloth (and the same goes for the decoration of the ambo, which is not a place to hang a banner, affix signs and symbols, or place flowers, nativity scenes, or plants). Boyer includes a pertinent explanation of how signs work (page 129).

This book is a classic for every parish. May ordained ministers and environment ministers have courage to understand what the documents say.

Veronica Rosier, *OP*

## The Art of Discernment: Making Good Decisions

Stefan Kiechle. *Ave Maria Press*, 2005. 128 pages, paperback. \$9.95.

In this small book, Stefan Kiechle provides a very readable overview of the process of prayerful decision making found in the *Spiritual Exercises* of Saint Ignatius of Loyola. The focus of this book is the making of good personal decisions while living in a world with ever-increasing and confusing choices. More particularly, it is targeted at those who want to incorporate spirituality as the basis of their decision making.

Kiechle takes Saint Ignatius's "Rules for Discernment," which can seem complicated—especially to those unfamiliar with the experience of the *Spiritual Exercises*—and illustrates them in the light of contemporary situations. These very relatable scenarios, sprinkled throughout the chapters, help the reader to absorb both the author's and Saint Ignatius's points more easily.

The book opens with a look at the difficulties of discernment, seen through



cameo stories and presented by some of the decisions we face in our time. The author follows this with an introduction to Saint Ignatius and his time. Kiechle then presents the concept of indifference: the inner freedom needed in order to make good decisions and reflect on the things that one might need to be freed from in order to be free "to," which is illustrative of the dynamics of the *Spiritual Exercises*.

Like turning the facets of a prism, Kiechle turns to the light each component part of "making good decisions in your world choices." The book systematically lights up facets of the prism. The final four chapters focus on criteria for discernment, methods of discernment, difficulties during the discernment process, and ten guiding principles of discernment.

In his chapter on criteria, Kiechle explains the Jesuit understanding of "*magis*" and how one might consider "the more." This brief chapter offers thoughts on serving others and on finding increased fruitfulness and spiritual consolation.

The chapter on methods of discernment gives attention to the need for quiet time, to prayer, to finding greater inner freedom, and to use of imagination. Moving to dif-

ficulties, the author considers the painful issues of revising previous decisions (e.g., divorce); becoming aware of individual traps and psychological issues that can derail discernment; and facing decisions at times of crisis and stress.

Throughout the book the frequent use of the life scenarios places the discernment process squarely in our twenty-first century everyday world. These little stories allow the author to say a great deal about the process of discernment in a rather simple and straightforward manner. In fact, the book could be thought of as a discernment self-help book. For someone unfamiliar with the *Spiritual Exercises*, this book provides a solid basic understanding of a discernment process and a sense of the occasions when he or she might need to seek some additional help from a spiritual director.

The book makes clear that discernment is a process of listening to the heart, evaluating with the mind, and paying attention to "gut" feelings. Our personality tends to lead us to prefer a particular way of making decisions: rationally, emotionally, or intuitively. Good decisions come from the input of all three.

The final chapter is an especially useful quick reference. The "Rules for Discernment" are distilled into "ten guiding principles," each one elaborated by a page of explanation. These could provide an excellent tool for the neophyte and a useful reminder for those more seasoned in the spiritual exercises.

Overall, Kiechle's book offers a valuable resource for anyone searching for a way to make and monitor personal decisions that resonate with the integrity of one's soul.

Ellen Crowley

## What Happens at Mass

Jeremy Driscoll, *osb*. *Liturgy Training Publications*, 2005. 144 pages, paperback. \$10.95.

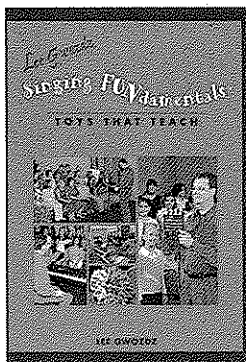
In the Introduction, Jeremy Driscoll states his purpose in writing this volume: "I want to show what the Mass means and where its center is. And I want to stress this word *happens* in the title, for indeed that is the point. Something happens at Mass. God is acting . . . God has concentrated the entirety of His saving love

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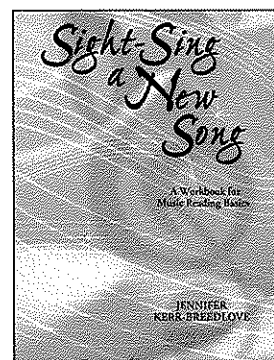
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Jennifer Kerr-Breedlove

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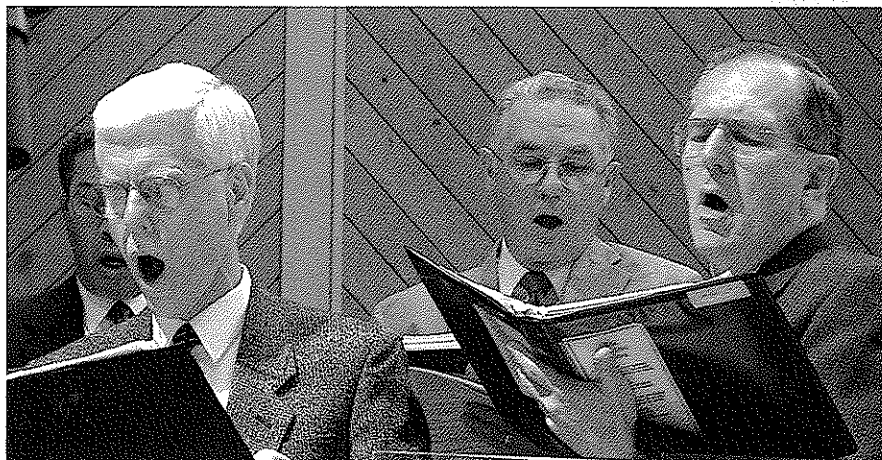
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for the world into the ritual action and words of the [E]ucharistic liturgy. I want to speak of the Mass in these terms." The book is written for any Catholic interested simply in understanding the Mass better. But, he warns, "if I try to speak as simply as possible, I will still be speaking about something that cannot be named, or cannot easily be named, something we call mystery. So I will aim to speak without losing the sense of mystery, for there is no resolving it. But there is a deeper entry into it and a way of learning to move within its spaces. This is what I hope to offer here: *deeper entry and a certain grace of movement within the forms*" (emphasis mine).

The author examines the ritual of the Mass in great detail. "I will look at what we say and do during the Mass, and I will try to say something about all that happens when we say and do that. Paradoxically, to go more deeply into the meaning of the Mass, we must remain also always on the surface, never leaving behind its actual forms." This methodology of paying careful attention to the details of the rite generates in the hands of this author a very rich document. He demonstrates a mature and comprehensive grasp not only of the theology and history of the Eucharist but also of the dynamics of ritual action and people's capacity to enter into it.

Although this is a small book, it will not be read speedily, even by one theologically trained; yet, it is understandable and for the layperson its rich content will best be apprehended in discussion with others. It offers a wealth of new information to the average reader, but—of equal importance—it challenges readers to use their sacramental imagination as they enter into the contemplation of various parts of the Eucharistic rite. This might be the greatest challenge to the reader, a challenge which Driscoll initiates in the first chapter by dealing with the sacraments as "mysteries" and which he continues through the book.

The concern of many who work in liturgy and catechetics these days is to develop a successful method for leading people into a deeper participation in sacramental rites. This is a difficult challenge when dealing with technologically oriented and practical minded people like many Americans—especially Euro-Americans. Some wonder, as Romano Guardini did in 1964, whether Westerners are *capable* of "the liturgical act," that is, capable of entering into a symbolic act. Guardini was thinking of what others have described as "flatmindedness," stemming both from the high valuation placed on



empirically verifiable truth and disinterest in—if not distrust of—metaphor. The language of ritual is symbol which itself has a metaphorical structure, hence the special challenge.

But my experience tells me that the capacity to appreciate symbol has not disappeared in contemporary people; rather, it is like a computer program in the mind that has not been accessed in a long time and that can be awakened. Driscoll's book will be a wonderful tool to use in a formation process precisely because of its combination of sound analysis of the deep patterns of the rite, solid theology, and the rich reflections of one who clearly has an awakened sacramental imagination.

I highly recommend this timely book.

Lawrence J. Madden, SJ

## About Reviewers

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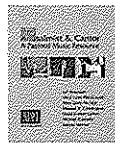
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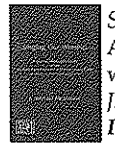
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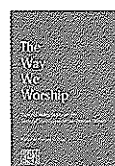
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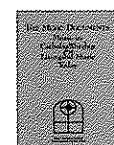
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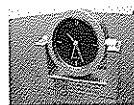
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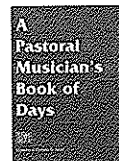
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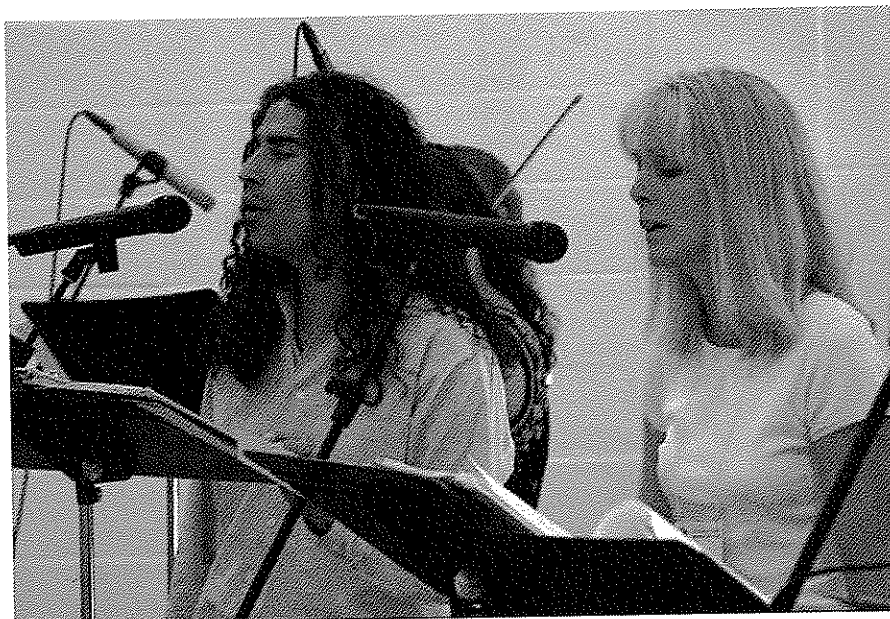
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**Music Director.** Blessed Kateri Catholic Church, 22508 Copper Hill Drive, Santa Clarita, CA 91350-1499. Phone: (661) 296-3180; fax: (661) 296-7854; e-mail: [frields@blessedkateriparish.org](mailto:frields@blessedkateriparish.org). Part-time. Knowledge of liturgy and liturgical music; accomplished instrumentalist (organ or piano); experienced with different styles of music; ability to lead and work as part of a parish team; good communication and organizational skills; ability to train/develop music ministers; degree or

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### CONNECTICUT

**Music Director.** St. Mary Star of the Sea Church/St. Mary School, New London,

CT. Phone: (860) 447-1431; fax: (860) 437-1889; e-mail: [pastor@stmarynewlondon.org](mailto:pastor@stmarynewlondon.org). Multicultural urban parish (with Geddes twenty-six-rank, twenty-one-voice, twenty-six-stop pipe organ) seeking qualified organist/pianist to play two weekend liturgies, all weddings, funerals, and special parish celebrations; direct English-language choir; and collaborate with Spanish-language choir for major feasts (parish uses *United In Christ/Unidos en Cristo*). A good grasp of traditional and contemporary Roman Catholic worship music is essential. Part-time teaching at parish school (pre-K through eight) is also possible as well as accompanying monthly school Masses. Salary dependent on duties; \$30,000 to \$35,000 is likely. Send résumé to Rev. Robert Washabaugh, pastor. HLP-6590.

#### FLORIDA

**Music Minister/Organist/Music Teacher.** St. Anthony Catholic Church, 820 Marcum Road, Lakeland, FL 33809. Fax: (863) 859-1036; e-mail: [yroscoe@stanthonyparish.com](mailto:yroscoe@stanthonyparish.com). We are a faith-filled parish of 1,800 families seeking an energetic, faith-filled person with organ/choral skills and background in variety of liturgical music to be responsible for weekend/holy day Masses. Duties include accompanying cantors, adult/children's choirs, and ability to work well with staff/volunteer ministers. Position can be full-time if person can teach music in elementary school. Salary commensurate with education and experience. Applicants send résumé via fax/e-mail and video or DVD via mail to Music Minister Search Committee. HLP-6613.

#### ILLINOIS

**Contemporary Ensemble Director/Associate Music Director.** St. James the Apostle, 480 S. Park Boulevard, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137. Fax: (630) 469-7590; e-mail: [stjamestheapostle@wideopenwest.com](mailto:stjamestheapostle@wideopenwest.com). Responsibilities include development of contemporary ensemble to lead 11:30 AM celebration of the Eucharist. Also responsible for one other Sunday celebration on rotating basis. Must be collaborative, able to work with people of various ages and musical abilities. Keyboard and/or guitar skills necessary. Position may expand to include some funerals and weddings. Salary commensurate with education and experience. Résumé to Music Search Committee at address above or send via fax or e-mail to Rev. John J. Ouper, pastor. HLP-6586.

**Associate Director of Music and Liturgy.** St. Petronille Catholic Church, 420 Glenwood Avenue, Glen Ellyn, IL 60137. Phone: (630) 469-0404; e-mail: [williams@stpetchurch.org](mailto:williams@stpetchurch.org); website: [www.stpetchurch.org](http://www.stpetchurch.org). Full-time position for suburban, 2,700-family parish where music and liturgy are priorities. Music program includes cantors, two adult choirs, chamber choir, two children's choirs, youth choir, instrumental ensembles, and concert series. Schantz pipe organ; Kawai, Steinway, and Yamaha grands; Whitechapel bells. New music rehearsal suite and offices were completed in 2004. Share liturgy planning, service playing (organ and piano), and conducting duties with director of music and liturgy. Experience in Roman Catholic Church required. Bachelor's in music or liturgy preferred. Salary negotiable, diocesan benefits, teaching privileges. Send résumé and references to: Stephen Williams, Director of Music and Liturgy. HLP-6587.

#### INDIANA

**Director of Music.** St. Bartholomew Catholic Church, 1306 27th Street, Columbus, IN 47201. Phone: (812) 379-9353, ext. 236. Large, lively parish of 1,500 families seeks a full-time director of music. Church seats 900 and has a state-of-the-art choir area and sound system. Applicant should have a working knowledge and understanding of Catholic liturgy; competency expected

in vocal, choral directing, cantor training, and keyboard. We currently have six different choirs with styles ranging from traditional to contemporary. Director of music plans with liturgy coordinator and oversees all music ministries. Some knowledge of Spanish preferred but not required. Full benefits. Salary commensurate with education and experience. Come join us in our new worship space! Send cover letter and résumé to Mr. Bill Algee. HLP-6611.

#### MARYLAND

**Cantor/Director of Music.** Abiding Presence Lutheran Church, 11310 Montgomery Road, Beltsville, MD 20705. Fax: (301) 937-7575; e-mail: [cantor@abiding-presence-beltsville.org](mailto:cantor@abiding-presence-beltsville.org); website: [www.AbidingPresence-Beltsville.org](http://www.AbidingPresence-Beltsville.org). Abiding Presence, a strong evangelical catholic congregation with K-6 day school, seeks cantor/director of music. The cantor provides all musical leadership in the congregation (two Masses each Sunday, plus Advent/Lenten midweek services, holy days, weddings, and funerals) and serves as music educator for the Augsburg Academy. The position reports to the senior pastor. Leads adult choir and intergenerational handbell choir. Position is twenty hours per week. Salary commensurate with AGO/ALCM guidelines and includes health insurance and 403(b) plan. HLP-6585.

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**Director of Music Ministry.** St. Augustine Church, 43 Essex Street, Andover, MA 01810. Phone: (978) 475-0050; website: [www.staugustineparish.org](http://www.staugustineparish.org). Full-time position for 3,300-family parish. Responsible to meet the musical needs in parish celebrations. Music program is well established and includes an adult choir and two youth choirs: teen Mass and three-octave handbell choir; volunteer cantor and junior cantor ministries; wedding and funeral liturgies. Grand piano and two-manual pipe organ. Coordinate and train music ministers. Strong piano and organ skills desired. Voice skills a plus. Salary commensurate with experience. Requires BA with advanced degree or minimum three years experience. Send résumé to Rev. William Cleary, osa (pastor) or to Paul Dollard. Position available July 1, 2006. HLP-6600.

**Director of Music Ministry and Liturgy.** St. Catherine and St. Mary Churches, Charlestown, MA. Phone: (617) 242-4664; e-mail: [JNRonan@aol.com](mailto:JNRonan@aol.com). Full-time position, advanced music degree preferred. Must have strong keyboard skills and liturgical knowledge. Four weekend liturgies. Some vocal ability required. Must recruit and train adult, children's choir, youth music program, and volunteer cantors. Average of thirty weddings and fifty funerals a year. Send résumé to St. Mary Parish, 46 Winthrop Street, Charlestown,

## OHIO

**Director of Music.** St. Joseph Church, 5373 S. Main Street, Sylvania, OH 43560. Fax: (419) 882-5235; e-mail: [wrelation@stjoesylvania.org](mailto:wrelation@stjoesylvania.org). Full-time music director needed for large, active parish. Applicant should be highly qualified with a master's degree and ten+ years experience in a parish setting preferred. Must have a thorough understanding of Catholic liturgy and strong skills in choral conducting, organ, and piano. Responsibilities include five to six weekend liturgies; weekday school liturgies; directing adult and children's choirs; and working collaboratively with parish staff, school staff, and lay leadership to manage and grow a vibrant program. Salary/benefits commensurate with experience. Position available August 2006. Send letter of interest, résumé, and three references to Search Committee, c/o Wendy Relation, at above address. HLP-6607.

## PENNSYLVANIA

**Director of Contemporary Music.** St. Francis of Assisi Church, 4821 Greene Street, Philadelphia, PA 19144. Phone: (215) 842-1287. Part-time director needed at small parish for two weekend liturgies (5:00 Saturday and 9:00 Sunday) plus holy days and special feasts. Must have solid piano/keyboard ability with skills to train

and lead cantors and direct choir of approximately fifteen members. Director will hold regular rehearsals and utilize and expand repertoire from OCP *Breaking Bread* hymnals. Familiarity and comfort with GIA *Lead Me, Guide Me* a plus. Collaborate with parish Gospel choir for special events and work with liturgy committee as needed. Should understand Catholic liturgy and seek full participation of assembly. Position available January 2006. Contact Father Richard Rock. HLP-6612.

## WASHINGTON

**Pastoral Assistant for Music and Liturgy.** St. Mary Church, 4001 St. Mary's Drive, Anacortes, WA 98221. Phone: (360) 293-2101; fax: (360) 293-8556; e-mail: [dlcon@fidalgo.net](mailto:dlcon@fidalgo.net). Full-time position. Our pastoral assistant for music and liturgy must be a skilled singer and choral conductor with a broad knowledge of sacred music from Gregorian chant to renaissance polyphony to the best work of the twentieth century and beyond. Duties: hiring, directing, and arranging music for small instrumental ensembles, since brass and string quartets are often used to enhance special liturgies. Other duties: recruit, train, and schedule altar servers, lectors, and Eucharistic ministers. Finally, the PA for M&L assists with some office work, therefore must possess a reasonable degree of computer literacy and administrative skills. HLP-6596.

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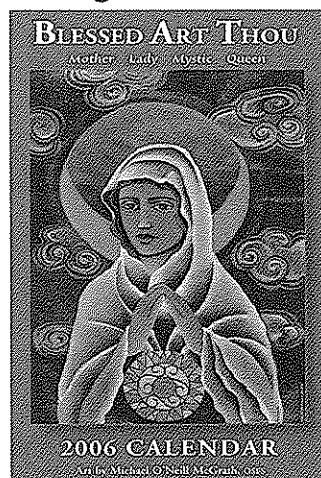
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**Song Books.** We have 155 copies of the *Journeysongs* books (second edition) and Latin supplements (*Laus Tibi, Christe*) available. All books are brand new and have been stored in the church in boxes since they were purchased. The parish ordered more than needed and has stored these books in a climate-controlled room in the sanctuary. The books are for sale with the supplements for \$2,300.00. If interested in purchasing these books, please contact Music Director Steve Jannetti at (904) 285-2698, ext. 110, or e-mail: [sdj@olsspvb.org](mailto:sdj@olsspvb.org). Our parish will cover the cost of shipping the books. If you want to insure the books, the purchaser must cover this expense. HLP-6595.

# Calendar

## Conferences, Workshops

### ARIZONA

Scottsdale  
February 20-23  
NOCERCC (National Organization for the Continuing Education of Roman Catholic Clergy) National Convention. Focus: Continuation of NOCERCC's long-term focus on U. S. Bishops' *Basic Plan for the Ongoing Formation of Priests*. To include dialogues involving bishops and formation directors. Pre-convention seminar with international presbyterates, workshop for new directors of continuing clergy formation. Place: Hilton Scottsdale Resort and Villas. Early-bird registration (with discount) available. Hotel reservation: call (800) 445-8667 or (480) 948-7750. For more information on the convention, call (312) 781-9450 or e-mail: nocercc@nocercc.org.

### CALIFORNIA

Berkeley  
January 26-28  
Living Liturgy Conference with Marty Haugen. Contact: Mary Schaefer at Barbaramarty@aol.com.

### GEORGIA

Decatur  
January 28  
Cantor workshop with James Hansen and Melanie Coddington at St. Thomas More Parish. Contact Joe Messina at (404) 378-4588.

### ILLINOIS

Chicago  
February 16-18  
Chicago Festival of Faith. Place: Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, Rosemont. Events include Saturday choral festival. Keynote speakers, 120 break-outs, spotlight events. Contact: Department of Evangelization, Mary Kofler, sp, at (312) 751-8385. Online registration at [www.catholicfest.org](http://www.catholicfest.org).

### LOUISIANA

Lake Charles  
January 28

Pastoring workshop in multicultural and multiethnic communities. Keynote by Grayson Warren Brown. Our Lady Queen of Heaven Church. Contact Father Keith Pellerin at (337) 478-3845.

### MICHIGAN

Grand Rapids  
January 26-28  
Calvin Symposium on Worship. Place: Calvin College and Calvin Theological Seminary. Seven extended seminars and more than seventy workshops. Musicians include James Abbingdon, Randall Bradley, Jorge Lockward, Ken Medema, Bradley Welch, and Deanna Witkowski. Also preachers, educators, theologians, and visual artists. Information and registration at [www.calvin.edu/worship](http://www.calvin.edu/worship).

### NEVADA

Reno  
January 6-7  
Reno Diocesan Conference. Theme: Blessed Are the Peacemakers/Felices Los Que Construyen la Paz. Friday evening concert with Tony Alonso, John

Flaherty, and Michael Mahler; Saturday workshops for music ministers. Information at [www.catholicreno.org](http://www.catholicreno.org). Contact: Maxine Lavell, Monique Jacobs via e-mail: [MaxineL@catholicreno.org](mailto:MaxineL@catholicreno.org) or [MoniqueJ@catholicreno.org](mailto:MoniqueJ@catholicreno.org).

### NEW MEXICO

Albuquerque  
January 14-15  
Liturgical inculturation seminar with Ricky Manalo at Catholic Center. Contact Dolly Sokol at (505) 831-8194.

### NEW YORK

Brooklyn  
January 24  
Diocese of Brooklyn workshop with David Haas. Contact: Harcourt Religion Publishers, Jeffery Bukholter, at (866) 877-6115.

### OHIO

Cleveland  
January 14-15  
Cantor workshop with ValLimar Jansen at Sacred Heart Chapel. Contact Elaine Dávila at (440) 322-5834.

## Concerts, Festivals, Rallies

### COLORADO

Denver  
January 27-28  
Lenten Joy workshop and concert with

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Full brochures will be sent to all NPM members and subscribers early in 2006.  
Check the NPM website—[www.npm.org](http://www.npm.org)—for the latest information.



Janet Sullivan Whitaker. Contact Gerard DiMartini at (303) 455-3613, ext. 31.

Durango  
January 20  
Intergenerational concert with Jesse Manibusan at St. Columba Parish. Contact Mary Ralph at (970) 247-0044.

#### DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Washington  
January 23  
Pro-life rally with Steve Agrisano at MCI Center. Contact Tom Grenchik at (301) 853-5318.

#### MARYLAND

Burtonsville  
January 23  
Concert by Steve Agrisano at Resurrection Church. Contact Helene Stever at (301) 263-5200, ext. 13.

Laurel  
January 22  
Concert by Sarah Hart at Pallotti High School. Contact Nancy Vawter at (301) 725-3228, ext. 316.

#### MINNESOTA

St. Louis Park  
January 31  
Evening concert with David Haas and friends at Benilde-St. Margaret High School. Contact: Benilde-St. Margaret High School at (952) 927-4176.

#### MISSISSIPPI

Jackson  
January 28  
Youth rally with Jesse Manibusan and Ken Penaliver at Crown Plaza Hotel. Contact Kathie Curtis at (601) 949-6934.

#### OREGON

Forest Grove  
January 13-14  
Workshop and concert with Steve Agrisano at St. Anthony Parish. Contact Carol Merez at (503) 357-2989.

#### PENNSYLVANIA

Pittsburgh  
February 26  
The Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh with guest conductor Joseph Flummerfelt and organist J. Christopher Pardini perform the Fauré and Durufé Requi-

ems. Place: Shadyside Presbyterian Church. Information at [www.shady-sidepres.org](http://www.shady-sidepres.org) or phone (412) 682-4300.

#### Retreats

##### CALIFORNIA

Santa Rosa  
January 21  
Retreat with Steve Agrisano at St. Elizabeth Seton Church. Contact Stan Cordero at (707) 566-3343.

#### Overseas

##### GREECE

Athens, Corinth, etc.  
January 31-February 6  
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continuing education programs for directors of music. Contact Peter's Way at (800) 443-6018; e-mail: [annette@peter-swaysales.com](mailto:annette@peter-swaysales.com).

##### IRELAND

Dublin, Cashel, etc.  
February 6-13  
Land of Saints and Scholars: subsidized continuing education programs for directors of music. Contact Peter's Way at (800) 443-6018; e-mail: [annette@peter-swaysales.com](mailto:annette@peter-swaysales.com).

*Please send announcements for Calendar to: Rev. Lawrence Heiman, C.P.P.S., Saint Joseph's College, PO Box 815, Rensselaer, IN 47978. E-mail: [lheiman@saintjoe.edu](mailto:lheiman@saintjoe.edu).*

## NPM Scholarships 2006

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- \$2,500 MuSonics Scholarship
- \$2,500 Paluch Family Foundation/WLP Scholarship
- \$2,500 OCP Scholarship
- \$2,000 GIA Pastoral Musician Scholarship
- \$1,250 University of Notre Dame Folk Choir Scholarship
- \$1,000 Funk Family Memorial Scholarship
- \$1,000 Dosogne/Rendler-Georgetown Chorale Scholarship
- \$1,000 Dan Schutte Scholarship
- \$500 Steven C. Warner Scholarship

NPM also donates \$500 toward the \$1,000 Rensselaer Challenge Grant which is administered by the Rensselaer Program of Church Music and Liturgy at Saint Joseph College, Rensselaer, Indiana.

### Eligibility Requirements

Applicant must be an NPM member enrolled full-time or part-time in a graduate or undergraduate degree program of studies related to the field of pastoral music. Applicant must intend to work at least two years in the field of pastoral music following graduation/program completion. Scholarship funds may be applied *only* to registration, tuition, fees, or books. Scholarship is awarded for one year *only*; recipient may re-apply, but renewal is not automatic.

### Application Deadline: March 3, 2006

For application or additional information contact:

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# Ministers to Sung Worship: The Choir

When congregational singing was introduced into the celebration of the Sunday liturgy in the 1960s, many musicians, clergy, and ordinary Catholics thought that there would no longer be a need for choirs. As it turned out, however, choirs are more needed than ever. Liturgical documents highlight the choir's ministry, and pastoral experience has demonstrated the choir's importance in supporting and leading the singing of the whole assembly. In fact, many parishes today boast a variety of choirs that sing music in various styles. In addition to the standard mixed-voice adult choir, there are Gospel choirs, contemporary music ensembles, children's choirs, youth choirs, funeral choirs, and family choirs.

The primary ministerial role of the choir is to sing various parts of the Mass in dialogue or in alternation with the rest of the assembly. Some parts of the Mass, like the *Kyrie* and the *Agnus Dei*, have the back-and-forth form of a litany, so they work well as this kind of dialogue. Other parts have a call-and-response form, in which the choir intones a line that is repeated by the congregation. The Gospel acclamation works a bit like this. Other parts of the Mass may be sung in various ways—sometimes by the choir alone, sometimes by the whole assembly, sometimes in alternation between the choir (or a cantor) and everyone else. Two long texts may be sung this way: The *Gloria* may be sung by everyone together, or by the congregation alternately with the choir, or even by the choir alone; and the profession of faith may be sung by all together or alternately between the congregation and the choir. The three major processional chants of the liturgy—the entrance, offertory, and Communion chants—may be sung alternately between the choir and the congregation or even by the choir alone, and the first two (entrance and offertory) may be sung by all together.

The place for the choir in the building reflects its ritual function: The official texts say that the choir should be located where it is clearly part of the whole assembly but also where it can best do its assigned tasks.



Whether singing with the rest of the assembly, in alternation, or alone, the choir's role is always understood in relation to the full, conscious, and active participation of the faithful. When it is not singing its own special repertoire, the choir joins the song of the whole assembly, supporting the congregation and adding beauty and variety to the singing by harmonies and descants.

To perform their liturgical task, choirs need plenty of rehearsal, for it is only when the music is well prepared that the choir can really support the singing of the whole assembly. Thorough preparation is also needed if choral singing is to express the mystery of God through beauty and if it is to foster the dignity of the celebration.

The participation of the assembly receives an enormous boost if a parish has a good liturgical choir, but the role of the choir is always *ministerial*, serving the action of the liturgy and fostering the participation of those who have gathered.





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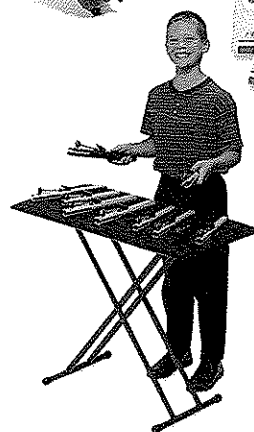
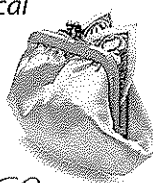
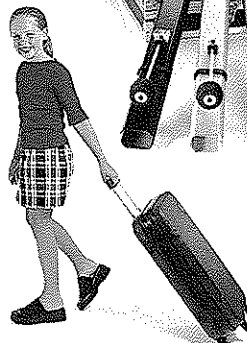
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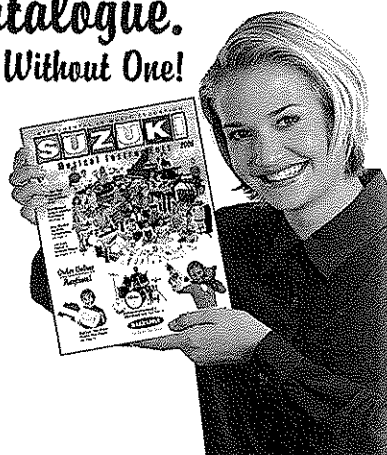
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