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Dear Members:

While attending a church dinner a few years back at a very friendly Byzantine Catholic community, I had an interesting conversation with the parish priest about different styles of chanting in Eastern churches. I was telling him of my Sunday visits to different Byzantine parishes in the area and how different the liturgy sounded at his church compared with another parish with a different ethnic composition. He smiled and said without hesitation: “Well, the liturgy is the same, but our music is much more pleasing!”

The various groups of Byzantine Catholics who have become established in the United States celebrate the same liturgy with actions and texts that are mostly the same and most often in English (often using very different translations, but that’s another matter), yet the sound of the liturgy can be quite different depending on the ethnic and cultural heritage of the community. Because their liturgy is almost completely sung, the sound of the music is clearly an integral element of the celebration in much the same way as—perhaps even more than—the architecture, icons, vestments, furnishings, and other artistic elements.

The issue of sound was raised for me again on February 12 in a lecture by Father J. Michael Joncas at the Washington Theological Union, after he was presented with the Sophia Award by the WTU faculty (see page six). Father Joncas invited his colleagues to look beyond propositional theology to other modes of theological expression, specifically music. Together we listened to three works—a Gregorian Gloria, a brief movement from Bach’s Magnificat, and an eight-part Advent antiphon composed by Father Joncas himself. He analyzed the way that each of the three composers had made use of the music itself to interpret and comment on the words of the liturgical texts. In each instance the music was making a theological statement.

The importance of sound in the liturgy likewise came to mind as I reflected on this issue of Pastoral Music, which features articles on liturgical music in various kinds of communities and groups in the United States that celebrate liturgy according to the Roman Rite. In the case of Vietnamese (page twenty-one) and African American (page twenty-eight) communities, the music of the liturgy takes on distinctive cultural sounds. In cathedrals (page eleven), in rural communities (page eighteen), and among youth (page fifteen), there are numerous factors that influence the choice of repertoire and therefore the sound of the liturgy.

While the Second Vatican Council regarded Gregorian chant as “specially suited to the Roman liturgy” and directed that it “should be given pride of place in liturgical services” (Sacrosanctum Concilium, 116), the sound of the Roman Rite liturgy has become more and more diverse over the past fifty years. The Council’s mandate for active participation, its authorization of musical styles other than chant and polyphony, and its encouragement to draw on the rich musical resources of the Church’s many cultural expressions, have all contributed to this diversity.

If one were to regard Gregorian chant as the only legitimate musical language of the Roman liturgy (which the Council does not), the result would impoverish the Church not only culturally but also liturgically, spiritually, and theologically. The life experiences of Vietnamese and African American Christians have played an enormous role in shaping their religious and liturgical music and allow the entire Church to benefit from the spirituality that is expressed in them. Whether in a cathedral or in a small rural church, the music of the liturgy in whatever style offers performer and listener alike ways of interpreting and appropriating the liturgical texts.

Because music is a genuine liturgical and theological expression, it needs to be carefully judged as part of any overall evaluation. Sing to the Lord (STL) addresses this concern when it frames the musical judgment by asking “whether this composition has the necessary aesthetic qualities that can bear the weight of the mysteries celebrated in the Liturgy” (STL, 134). Such evaluation must always consider the cultural context in which the music will be used, including the age, spiritual heritage, and cultural and ethnic background of a given liturgical assembly” (STL, 70).

Think about the question of sound next Sunday as you sing, play, and lead: What does our liturgy sound like, and how is it shaping our faith?

J. Michael McMahon
President
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Cover: Various communities in various settings sing God’s praise (NPM file photos). Additional photos courtesy of Jale Fancey; St. Joseph Parish, South Bend, Indiana; St. Raphael Cathedral (“Isthmus Catholic”) Parish, Madison, Wisconsin; Catholic Herald, Diocese of Madison, Wisconsin; Office of Campus Ministry, The Catholic University of America, Washington, DC; St. Philip Parish, Phillipsburg, Montana; Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, Atlanta, Georgia; Brother Rufino Zaragoza, ofm; New All Saints Parish, Baltimore, Maryland; St. Francis Xavier Parish, Washington, DC; and St. Edward Parish, Baltimore, Maryland.
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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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Convention Update

In-Depth Learning

This summer’s NPM Convention in Pittsburgh will include three multi-day institutes that engage participants in intensive hands-on learning with respected clinicians:

• **Cantor Institute (five days)** includes sessions on vocal, musical, scriptural, and liturgical aspects of the cantor and psalmist ministries; led by Joanne Werner and Joe Simmons.

• **Children’s Choir Director Institute (five days)** is for experienced and beginning directors alike; led by Donna Kinsey and Lee Gwozdz.

• **DMMD Institute: Celebrating the Liturgical Year—Theology and Music (two days)** is for DMMD members to examine the theology of the liturgical year and its implications for musical liturgy; led by theologian Michael Driscoll and pastoral musician Mark Purcell.

Information on these institutes is available in the convention brochure and online at [http://tinyurl.com/2012NPM](http://tinyurl.com/2012NPM).

If you’re looking for a shorter but still intensive learning opportunity, try one of the three-hour pre-convention sessions on Monday morning:

• **Master Classes** for advanced guitar, piano, or organ;

• **Clinics** for vocal health, gospel piano, or percussion;

• **Intensives** for chant or ensembles;

• **Music Education Morning** for musicians serving school communities.

You can find more information about these sessions online at the NPM convention site.

Interns

Following two years of successful experience with convention interns, NPM is once again offering young people (eighteen to twenty-three years old) an opportunity to experience the convention by assisting as interns. We will be looking for two kinds of interns this year: **technical interns** who will work with anything that needs to be plugged in for breakouts and other sessions, and **roving reporters** who will move through the convention hall and the various events, recording short videos to be posted on the NPM Facebook page, which will give people a taste of the convention and a sense of what it means to be a pastoral musician today.

Details are nearly complete, so watch for announcements about the intern program on the NPM Youth Facebook page, on the NPM website, and in coming issues of *Notebook*.

Testimony from a Former Intern

Elena Feick, from Sarnia, Ontario, served as one of our first convention interns. Her experience at the 2010 Detroit Convention was also her first experience of an NPM convention. Recently, she wrote to encourage other young pastoral musicians to participate in the 2012 Pittsburgh Convention. She said:

If you can go to NPM then do it! Being there a few years ago did so much for my confidence and my music. I always used to say that I’m not a musician but just a singer who could play guitar, and I always thought that I’d never be good enough to be a real musician. But when at NPM there were all levels and types of musicians, I really felt included and began to see that, though I may not be the best in the world, I’m still good enough to get better.

Before I went to that convention in 2010, I was so scared that I was stepping somewhere I don’t belong. By taking the leap of faith and going, I discovered that I did belong, which helped me to feel so much better about my music, myself, and my life in general.

Random, off-the-cuff testimony, I know, but if it is possible for you to get to NPM, then go. If you think it might be possible, but you aren’t sure, check out what options are available* and give it your best shot, because if you go to the convention and participate as fully as you are physically able, you won’t be sorry for it.

* Options include participation as a youth intern and application for an NPM program scholarship: [http://tinyurl.com/programscholarships](http://tinyurl.com/programscholarships).

Children’s Choir Festival

The National Catholic Children’s Choir Festival is an opportunity for children and youth to participate in a two-day festival of singing, learning, and celebration. Choirs may stay for one or two nights or come as commuters. The program is open to children with unchanged voices who have completed third grade by July 2012 through high school seniors with unchanged voices (the repertoire is for treble voices).

The Festival begins on Sunday, July 22, at 1:00 pm and concludes with a Festival Performance on Monday, July 23, 7:15–8:15 pm. The Festival clinician is Mr. Michael Wustrow, co-director of music at St. Agnes Cathedral in Rockville Centre, New York, and director of the Diocesan Choir for the Diocese of Rockville Centre. Michael has extensive educational and directorial experience in the field of sacred choral music, and he has helped to develop a progressive children’s choir program at St. Agnes, including singers from grade one through high school. He has served on the National Board of Directors of Choristers Guild as well as the National Board of the Director of Music Ministries Division of NPM. Michael has been a conductor of Pueri Cantores, AGO, and Choristers Guild festivals around the country as well as of previous NPM Children’s Choir festivals.

The Festival rehearsals will be held at Duquesne University, and excellent housing has been arranged for those choirs coming from outside Pittsburgh. Meals are available as part of the housing, with a meal plan option for commuting choirs as well. The festival performance will be held at Epiphany Parish on Monday evening.

NPM expects that an adequate number of chaperones for each choir will be present at all times during the entire festival. The Code of Conduct for Youth Participating in NPM Conventions must be filled out and signed for each youth participant. Adult chaperones must be trained and/or certified according to their home diocese’s child protection plan. Registration materials, including payments, for all choirs must be received in the NPM office by April 16, 2012.

Additional information is available at http://tinyurl.com/2012NPMchildren.

Early Birds Have Flown, But . . .

Early Bird registration for the 2012 NPM Convention ended on March 1, but you can still register in advance at a substantial saving. The Advance Registration Discount applies to any convention registration received between March 2 and June 22; it offers a savings of $60.00 off the regular/on-site fee. The clergy-musician duo discount is also available at even greater savings. There is a discounted youth registration fee available during this same time. And the group discounts—for NPM chapters and member parishes—are available until June 9. Check the brochure or the NPM website for information about these discounts.

Summer Institutes

In addition to the institutes and intensive sessions available at the 2012 National Convention (see page five), NPM is offering five additional institutes at sites around the country. There will be three Cantor Express programs, our annual Pastoral Liturgy Institute, our Choir Director Institute, and our popular Guitar and Ensemble Institute (now in its twentieth-sixth year).

Information will be available after March 15 on the NPM website, the NPM Facebook page, and in future issues of our membership e-newsletter, Notebook. Once you check the information, if you have any questions, please phone the NPM National Office toll-free at 1 (855) 207-0293.

Members Update

Congratulations, Father Joncas

On February 12, Father Jan Michael Joncas—our Tuesday plenum presenter at this year’s convention—was honored with the 2012 Sophia Award for excellence in theological scholarship by the Washington Theological Union. In response to the award, Father Joncas presented a lecture entitled Heaven’s Harmonies in Human Habitats: Composing for the Church. Father Joncas, a presbyter of the Archdiocese of St. Paul-Minneapolis, Minnesota, is an associate professor of Catholic studies at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul.

Resources for the Roman Missal

NPM’s webpage is rich with resources for learning the music of the Roman Missal. At http://www.npm.org you can find:

- Pdfs and mp3 recordings of the music, including the music of Palm Sunday of the Lord’s Passion and of the Sacred Paschal Triduum;
- CD recordings of the missal chants at very reasonable prices and with bulk discounts;
- a directory of published Mass settings that use the new English translation of the Roman Missal, prepared by Michael Silhavy, that lists publishers, parts of the Mass, voicings, and instruments;
- and links to other Roman Missal resources.

Certification as a Director of Music Ministries

NPM is a member of the Alliance for Certification of Lay Ecclesial Ministers, working with the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC), National Association for Lay Ministry (NALM), the National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL), and the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM).

The Alliance is governed by the Alliance Commission, composed of the chief executive officer and certification chair of each member organization. During 2011, after a years-long process, the Alliance presented to the USCCB Commission on Certification and Accreditation revised standards and procedures to be used in the certification of lay ecclesial ministers represented by the various member organizations. These standards and procedures were approved by the Com-
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Check out our website for applications: www.musicministryalive.com
Don’t be late! Registration Deadline: May 4, 2012

**Youth Track:**
For musically gifted student leaders entering 10th, 11th, and 12th grade, or their first two years of college.

- Early Bird Pricing: $450.00 (must receive on or before March 25)
- March 25 thru May 4: $500.00 (includes registration, meals and housing)

**Adult Track:**
For adult music directors, teachers, religious educators, youth ministers, priests and all who mentor your into ministry leadership roles

- Registration Fee: $425.00 (includes registration and meals)

Limited air-conditioned dorm rooms available for an additional $300.00 (Hurry, space is limited!)
Announcing...

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- Parish Life Coordinator
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- Director of Music Ministries
- Parish Catechetical Leader
- Youth Ministry Leader, including Pastoral Juvenil Hispana
- Diocesan Youth Ministry Leader, including Pastoral Juvenil Hispana

The certification process consists of three steps: Apply, Prepare, Submit. All three steps are done online using the tools provided at www.lemcertification.org.

1. **Apply**: Sign up for an online account, and submit your application materials and fee to the ministry organization that represents your ministry role.

2. **Prepare**: After you receive notice that your application has been approved and you have been accepted as a candidate for certification, build your online ministry portfolio which documents how you meet the national certification standards.

3. **Submit**: When your portfolio is complete, submit your materials for review. If approved by your national ministry organization and the Alliance, you will receive notification that you are certified!

Initial Applications and Completed Portfolios are accepted before the March 1 and October 1 deadlines each year.

Online accounts and application materials will be available in early 2012. Please visit www.lemcertification.org to begin your journey toward certification!

Certification for lay ecclesial ministers is granted by the Alliance for the Certification of Lay Ecclesial Ministers, a partnership of five national ministry organizations:
- Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions (FDLC)
- National Association for Lay Ministry (HALM)
- National Association of Pastoral Musicians (NPM)
- National Conference for Catechetical Leadership (NCCL)
- National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry (NFCYM)

This national certification process and the national standards on which it is based were approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops/Commission on Certification and Accreditation in November 2011.
Hotline Online

Hotline is an online service provided by the Membership Department at the National Office. We encourage institutions offering salaried positions to include the salary range in the ad and to indicate whether that range accords with NPM salary guidelines (http://www.npm.org/Sections/DMMD/salaryguidelines.htm). Other useful information: instruments in use (pipe or electronic organ, piano), size of choirs, and the names of music resources/hymnals in use at the parish.

A listing may be posted on the web page—www.npm.org—for a period of sixty days ($65 for members/$90 for non-members). Ads will be posted as soon as possible.

Format: Following the header information (position title, church or organization name, address, phone, fax, e-mail, and/or website addresses), ads are limited to a maximum of 100 words.

Ads may be submitted by e-mail to npmmem@npm.org, faxed to (240) 247-3001, or mailed to: Hotline Ads, 962 Wayne Avenue, Suite 210, Silver Spring, MD 20910-4461. When submitting your ad, please include your membership number and the name of the person to whom or institution to which the invoice should be mailed.

Issues We Face: A Webinar Series for Pastoral Music Ministry, 2011–2012


For additional information on these webinars, visit the NPM website: www.npm.org.

Facebook Follies

Keep up to date with NPM through our association’s Facebook page. There’s also a special page for the NPM Section for Youth. Be sure to friend us, and watch for new posts about the convention and other NPM events.

Yale Institute of Sacred Music

CONGREGATIONS PROJECT

Renewing worship, music, and the arts for the life of the world

JUNE 24–28, 2013

*arrive in New Haven the evening of Sunday, June 23; depart Saturday morning June 29.

A weeklong summer seminar in New Haven for leadership teams from selected congregations to

- learn, create, and make connections
- develop a project to deepen and extend their ministries in the areas of worship, music, and the arts
- serve as future resources to other leaders or communities in their region.

Theme for 2013: Outreach

More information and application at www.yale.edu/ism/congregations. Application deadline is October 1.
Rev. Kevin Grove, csc, sings at the first Mass at which he is a priest celebrant (April 11, 2010), at St. Joseph Parish, South Bend, Indiana.
Making a Place for the Whole Assembly: Cathedral Liturgy

By Patrick Gorman

Whether a cathedral is large or small, rich or poor, in the heart of a city or at the edges of a suburb, each is a place where a parish gathers and where the diocesan liturgies are celebrated: the Chrism Mass, the Rite of Election, ordinations, episcopal installations and funerals, and other major moments in the life of the local church. The people who are present for these liturgies often have a very close connection with the Church and some knowledge of the liturgy. Most dioceses marshal their best musical and liturgical forces, and all of those present come ready and willing to pray with full hearts, minds, and, especially, voices. The assembly—composed of people from throughout the diocese—usually disperses inspired by the beauty of the music and the depth of the prayer.

Because diocesan liturgies often are big and all-embracing it is sometimes difficult for people to see them as a model for their parish. Consequently, in many places there is little in common between diocesan and parish liturgies (this often is true even between cathedral parish liturgies and diocesan celebrations prepared by the diocesan office of worship). But the Church reminds us that these liturgies are not a “display of ceremony” but rather models and “shining examples of active participation.”

Shaping and celebrating diocesan liturgies according to this mandate is often easier said than done. In some dioceses there are professional musicians in the choir or playing instruments at the Chrism Mass, while many parishes in the diocese have a more limited talent pool from which to draw each Sunday. One can spend weeks rehearsing ministers and musicians for an ordination Mass at the cathedral, whereas most parish musicians have far less time to prepare many more liturgies. Those attending the funeral of a beloved bishop are far more inclined to participate vocally than are the thirty people attending the 6:30 am daily Mass in a cavernous parish church.

So, is it really possible for diocesan liturgies to serve as “shining examples of participation?” I say yes.

What Can Be Learned from Diocesan Liturgies?

Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship reminds us of the important holistic approach to musical participation that sometimes eludes us. When considering diocesan liturgies as a musical model, people often speak of specific selections from the musical repertoire. “We have to try that hymn at my parish,” or, “My choir (or congregation or priest or deacon) could never sing that!” While diocesan liturgies can model good repertoire, focusing on specific selections is not always helpful since ensembles, budgets, musical forces, and tastes often vary so dramatically among parishes.

By looking at a bigger picture, however, directors of liturgy and music as well as clergy staff at cathedrals may consider how they model good practices and how parishes may then glean some “shining examples” from diocesan liturgies. In this article I describe three important areas, based on the “three judgments” described in Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship (Chapter IV D), through which diocesan liturgies may serve as models for parish liturgy.
St. Raphael Cathedral (above) was destroyed by arson on March 14, 2005. Currently the Cathedral Parish uses the facilities of two historic downtown “isthmus” parishes: Holy Redeemer and St. Patrick.

The Musical Judgment: Striving for Musical Excellence

One myth in the field of church music is that if something sounds “professional,” then it is not prayerful. While the average parish choir won’t be mistaken for professional recording artists, that doesn’t let anyone off the hook.

It is unfair (not to mention unwise) to compare the sound of a cathedral choir of thirty-two auditioned and trained singers to a parish choir of six sopranos, three altos, two tenors (one of whom was a soprano twenty years ago), and one bass (who often forgets his hearing aids). However, what these two ensembles have in common is the desire of each member to use his or her voice to the best of his or her ability to assist the Church’s prayer. Whether professional or amateur, skilled or novice, each singer, each instrumentalist, each ensemble, even each person in the pew is called to give the very best effort and strive for musical excellence.

Musical excellence means that we do the very best that we can, no better and no worse. And “best” for one may be different than the “best” for another. Musical excellence doesn’t necessarily refer to the final product but rather to the effort and commitment put into the preparation. Musical excellence requires good planning, for music selected must be both high quality and within the ability of the singers and other musicians. It is fostered by a director who is organized so that rehearsal time isn’t wasted and people know that their own precious time is respected. Musical excellence is promoted by thorough preparation and is achieved through faithful attendance and diligent rehearsal. Musical excellence compels the director and each participant to take ownership. It abhors the thought of settling for anything less than our very best—whatever that is for this ensemble, not any other—as we offer our God-given gifts back to the Lord.

One doesn’t need to sing Palestrina or Pärt to achieve musical excellence. Neither does one need to sing what was sung at diocesan liturgies. A limited choir singing a quality unison or two-part anthem to the best of its ability is an outstanding example of musical excellence. And this excellence, modeled (one hopes) at diocesan liturgies, opens the door to prayer and participation.

The Liturgical Judgment: Uniting Song and Words

We all know the description of liturgical music’s importance from the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium (SC): “The musical tradition of the universal Church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art. The main reason for this pre-eminence is that, as sacred song united to the words, it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy” (SC, 112). But how have we appropriated that description of “sacred song united to the words . . . of the solemn liturgy”?

Consider this example from the Chrism Mass: Diocesan liturgies often are unique, once-a-year (or even once-in-a-lifetime) events. They have particular needs and often
require a specific repertoire. For example, the appointed text for the procession with the oils at the Chrism Mass is “O Redeemer.” This text has no other liturgical use, but when done at the Chrism Mass its rich text helps reveal another layer of the mystery of the sacraments.

Now while “O Redeemer” may never be sung in a parish, this model of using specific (proper) texts from the Roman Missal or the Gradual can be of great benefit, for this processional hymn indeed weds the sacred song and the words of the liturgy. We have tended to get away from the “propers” (texts assigned to specific days or liturgical actions), yet these can aid the people’s participation.

If you have gotten away from using proper texts, consider following the cathedral’s example and add one or two a year. Chants for these texts can be found in a variety of sources (in both Latin and English), or they may be sung to another musical setting. The ones that seem easiest to find for congregation or choir (or a combination of the two) occur during Holy Week—Palm Sunday’s “Hosanna to the Son of David,” Holy Thursday’s “Mandatum novum” (“I give you a new commandment”), the Good Friday reproaches, or the sequence on Easter Sunday. You’ll be surprised how much easier (and beloved) these become as you return to them year after year.

The Pastoral Judgment: Making a Place for Everyone’s Voice

While diversity has become a bit of a buzz word, cultural and linguistic diversity are vital to the Church and a gift of the Holy Spirit, who “in a wondrous manner, . . . prompt[s] and engender[s] unity in the diversity of [God’s] gifts . . . .” In short, therefore, a diocesan liturgy should look and sound like the diocesan church! The various local languages should be heard, ethnic musical idioms should be honored, and people with disabilities should be given a voice.

Diversity in musical repertoire is challenging, but once again the diocese can model for parishes. “The treasure of sacred music is to be preserved and fostered with great care” (SC, 114). Regardless of one’s personal taste, the Church’s musical treasury is vast and includes music that has sustained Christians for centuries (Gregorian chant, Latin polyphony, hymnody, and other forms) as well as more recently composed music in various idioms and, increasingly, using more ethnologically diverse music. While a single liturgy containing all of these various types of music may be overwhelming, these are the sources to draw from over time.

Diversity isn’t simply about repertoire, however. It also is about who sings. Chapter II of Sing to the Lord offers an excellent overview of the Church’s music makers: bishops, priests, deacons, the gathered liturgical assembly, and the various ministers of music. When all take their part—and only their part—the wonderful variety of the Church’s gifts become much more visible and audible. With this model, singing becomes normative for the presider and deacon, there is no tension between the choir and congregation, and the musical settings enhance everyone’s participation, even if they are sung by someone else. In this way diocesan liturgies can show that music isn’t simply an enhancement provided by music ministers. It is vital to the prayer and isn’t only made by some but by everyone.

Since our assemblies are diverse in language and culture, worship aids that assist non-English speakers (or English speakers unfamiliar with the other languages being used) may be useful. Diocesan liturgies often show special care for people with disabilities (for example, large-print leaflets or assisted-listening devices), reminding us that people with disabilities are part of the “sound” of our liturgies.
Church musicians need a love for the diversity of both the universal and local Church and a desire to select repertoire from both the past and present. They must seek out those who may be alienated because of language or disability and, with them, find ways to have all voices heard in the liturgy and in the world.

**Pray and Listen**

Cathedral and diocesan liturgies play an important role in the liturgical life of the diocese. When participating in them, it is best to pray with full heart, mind, and voice. After the liturgy, take time to reflect on what was done, how it was done, and consider ways that these liturgies can “serve as a model . . . and be shining examples of active participation by the people” of your parish.

**Notes**

1. See *Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship* (USCCB, 2007), chapter II.
Polarized Youth? The Millennial Generation, Chant, and the New Roman Missal

By Rachelle Kramer

Cell phones, smart phones, iPhones, iTunes, and iPads. Facebook, texting, Twitter, and blogs. Most of us who remember the days of VCRs, cassette tapes, perhaps even LPs are amazed at how drastically the world could change in just one decade. But the latest generation—identified as the “Millennial Generation” for those born after 1981—does not know a world without any of these things. Theirs is a generation in which such tools are a “necessity.” Their world is highly globalized, offering them myriad opportunities for travel and study abroad. It is a generation deeply committed to service, one that is open to diversity and differing opinions perhaps more than ever before, and one that, unfortunately, knows the reality of terrorism, unrest, and fear in our world.

With all of this as part of the lives of people in this generation—drastic changes from the world older people know—it should be no surprise that this reality has affected their views of and participation in religion and church life. According to a 2007 article by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, there are certain common trends among young people in relation to religion. Here are some of these trends, although this is certainly not an exhaustive list.

Catholic teenagers are behind Protestant teenagers by as much as twenty-five percentage points on various measures of religious belief, practice, experiences, and commitments; young adult Catholics are not well versed in the core narratives of their faith, a failure attributed to religious education across the country; a diminishment in the institutional commitment to the Church exists as young people see little connection between religion and spirituality; involvement in the Church is seen as optional rather than obligatory; and the credibility of the Church is all but gone due to the sexual abuse crisis and authoritarian structures that appear to dismiss the sensus fidelium, the “sense of the faithful.”

Despite such seemingly dire results, it must be affirmed that there are young people who practice their faith. There is a new movement among a minority of young people—described as “evangelical Catholics,” “neoconservatives,” or “John Paul II Catholics”—who are both strongly ecclesial in their faith and more traditional in their expression. On the other hand, there are also progressive young Catholics fully engaged in their faith and often committed to causes of social justice and Catholic social teaching. Clearly, a huge spectrum exists within the youth population, one that cannot be easily generalized.

Little Boxes

In the past decade we have fortunately seen a much greater interest in and commitment to the topic of engaging young people in ministry. And now, with the recent changes that have occurred in the English translation of the Roman Missal, perhaps even more questions arise. Is it possible to integrate the new, more formal texts and chants into “youth Masses?” Simply stated, yes. As Zack Gietl—a college student himself—stated in a recent article on youth and musical style in Pastoral Music, “If you learn nothing else from this article, understand that youth are not a monolith.”

If we are to make any progress in engaging our young people in the life of the Church, it seems that we need to listen to Zack and to what our young people are telling us: “Don’t put me in a box.” Young people do, in fact, like all styles of music. I would like to take the conversation about musical style in this issue even further by exploring the theological implications involved in the discussion of musical style, contending that the division expressed in differences in the kind of music people prefer is far deeper than matters of taste. It is ideological and perhaps even theological.
The theological implications involved in the diversity of ways we worship has been addressed by Richard Gaillardetz, who asserts that we are living in an era when people want either “community without transcendence” (“low church”) or “transcendence without community” (“high church”). Those who ascribe to the “transcendence” camp believe that culture should adapt to liturgy, that decorum, dignity, reverence, mystery, and awe are of utmost importance in liturgical celebrations. The “community” viewpoint, on the other hand, emphasizes intimacy and hospitality in community, a laid-back and “user-friendly” approach, one devoid of ceremonialism.

Clearly both approaches to liturgical celebration make valid and important points, but too often additional assumptions and theological connotations are attributed to each viewpoint, leading to polarization within the Church. “High church” comes to mean those who are “orthodox” Catholics, those who ascribe to all doctrinal teachings, who value popular piety, Eucharistic adoration, incense, and the structural and hierarchical nature of the Church. “Low church” comes to mean church architecture designed in the round, communities committed to social justice issues, an emphasis on community peopleed by those who may raise questions about the Church’s teaching on social issues or the role of women in the Church, and so on.

The musical styles used in worship suffer no different fate. Chant often equals “high church” and “conservatives,” and the music of the St. Louis Jesuits, Marty Haugen, or John Angotti can come to mean “low church” and “liberals.” Just as we place youth in a box, so we place all of God’s people in a box. We distance ourselves from one another, the very opposite of what Jesus desires for us: “that all may be one” (John 17:21). Instead of recognizing that youth can fall into both categories of “high church”—evangelical or neo-conservative—or “low church”—progressive Catholics, or even blend or cross such categories on certain issues, we place them into their own “youth” category, which frequently comes with its own set of expectations. This can leave us blinded about where young people really stand, and so we are often unable to understand how to relate and minister to young people.

Beyond Assumptions

In saying this, I do not wish to assert that youth do not have issues particular to their population that vary from those affecting adults: obviously, they do, and these needs must be addressed. However, the larger—and looming—question seems to be how we can break down assumptions, stereotypes, and generalizations within the Body of Christ. How do we unite rather than divide, build up rather than tear down? How do we end the assumption that those who like chant—young and old alike—are not interested in social justice issues, or the assumption that using drums and John Angotti music means one does not like incense or Eucharistic adoration? (Extreme examples, but you get the point.)

Clearly both approaches to liturgical celebration make valid and important points . . . .

It is time to recognize that these two “camps” are not mutually exclusive, that both can and should somehow exist simultaneously, since they both reflect our Catholic faith. Too many of the terms used today are loaded with multiple meanings, imposed overtones. It is our duty as music ministers to break down these stereotypes and generalizations and to recognize continuity in our faith
tradition, to remember that our tradition is good. So often we fear the word “tradition,” understanding it to mean “doing everything the way it has always been done.” But this is not “tradition” in the Catholic sense of the word. Tradition is not static but living and active. As Robert Taft explains: “Tradition is not past; it is the Church’s self-consciousness now of that which has been handed on to her not as an inert treasure but as a dynamic inner life.”

Our bishops do not call us to use chant in the liturgy because that is “the way it has always been done”; rather they encourage the use of chant because there is something to this music that draws us closer to the divine, something that makes Christ alive and present now.

As we adjust to the recent changes in the English translation of the Roman Missal—the more formal texts and some (perhaps many) awkward sentence structures—it is important not to allow our own theological biases to hinder the work we do as ministers. It is time for us to be open to change within ourselves and to recognize that it is possible to use music such as chant in our youth liturgies, just as it is possible to use this music in a liturgy of any congregation. Making such a change is no easy task; it takes trust, openness, and the ability of each of us honestly to examine our own theological predispositions.

A New Spin

Since we often face resistance from our youth, music ensembles, and assemblies when introducing anything “new” (much less chant), I would like to offer practical suggestions for using chant in liturgies. Something I have found helpful in my work with young people is putting a new “spin” on something traditional. Often it is beneficial to introduce small amounts of the Latin language through contemporary musical idioms in order to prepare the music ensemble and assembly for Latin chants. Bilingual pieces using both English and Latin can be a great place to start, such as John Schiavone’s Litany for the Breaking of the Bread, which sets English, Latin, and Spanish texts. While the congregation repeatedly sings the simple litany “Miserere nobis, dona nobis pacem,” the cantor sings in English or Spanish over this response. It is contemporary and simple musically, and it proves highly accessible for the congregation. (My college students loved it!) Once the congregation becomes familiar with the Latin text, moving to the Latin Agnus Dei, Mode XVIII, in an upcoming liturgical season such as Lent becomes a much more attainable goal. Better yet, the stigmas attached to chant more often than not erode, as Lent becomes a much more attainable goal. Better yet, the stigmas attached to chant more often than not erode, and use creativity to bring something new to the old in our music—and something old to the new—we can accomplish all things and bring unity to the members of the Body of Christ, so that “all may be one.”

Challenges

The challenges we face in light of the new texts of the Roman Missal may seem overwhelming at times, and engaging young people may feel equally daunting. But, as we did in preparing for the missal’s introduction, if we can educate ourselves about this population, become more aware of our own and others’ theological predispositions, work to break down barriers within our Church, and use creativity to bring something new to the old in our music—and something old to the new—we can accomplish all things and bring unity to the members of the Body of Christ, so that “all may be one.”

Notes

Morning news watchers may remember a Today Show piece in mid-December 2011 on the small Montana town of Philipsburg, which lauded the townspeople’s response to the illness of the school superintendent and his pre-teen daughter. For many watchers, the allure of small-town America as presented in that report must have been palpable.¹

The story of Philipsburg could be replicated with other examples of care throughout the Diocese of Helena, and the inclusion of references to the local church communities in such stories would have complemented the overall portraits of the towns.

A Funeral

I recall that story particularly because, a few days after the news feature, in mid-Advent, I received a phone call from the parish administrator of St. Philip Parish in Philipsburg. Vicki was seeking help with preparations for the pending funeral of a parishioner, the elderly mother of the parish organist. Vicki’s most pressing concern was that the assembly would be able to participate fully in the funeral Mass, in light of the language changes of the recently implemented English translation of the third edition of the Roman Missal. A second—and related—concern was that there was no one available to lead the music at the Mass, since the organist was one of the mourners.

Vicki and her husband Chris are completing the candidacy process for Chris’ ordination as a permanent deacon for the Diocese of Helena. While Chris runs the farm, Vicki administers the Flint Creek Catholic Community, consisting of two small parishes (about one hundred families each, thirty miles apart). Vicki and Chris have also participated in several levels of the Diocesan Program of Formation for Lay Ministry, including a one-year session in liturgy, and Vicki serves on the Diocesan Liturgical Commission. The parishes are served sacramentally by available retired priests of the diocese, one of whom drives from Missoula, which is forty-five miles from Drummond, the main parish, for weekend Masses. For this funeral, the available priest drove from his country home in Gold

Sister Mary Jo Quinn, a member of the Sisters of Charity of Leavenworth and NPM Pastoral Musician of the Year 2011, is currently the pastoral associate at Blessed Trinity Catholic Community in Missoula, Montana.
Creek, a distance of about forty miles.

Vicki and her daughters had been in Missoula on December 8 and participated at Blessed Trinity’s evening Mass for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. She was interested in the leaflet that was prepared for that feast, which included all the assembly responses and music selections for the liturgy.

In response to Vicki’s inquiries, I prepared a worship aid and drove to Philipsburg to lead the music for the funeral on a snowless December morning. The assembly was small and warm, just as the morning news spot had described the townpeople. Though the funeral took place in this small town, nothing was lacking that would have been present in the larger parish of Blessed Trinity: The assembly sang, the Word was proclaimed, the homily was engaging, the Eucharist was offered and received, and the mourners were served. Although I led the music that morning, fully engaged sung worship was possible only because that participation is enabled weekly by the leadership of Vicki and Chris and their collaboration with the organist and one or two other volunteers.

Historically, both of the small parishes in the Flint Creek Community had resident pastors, but today neither one has a resident priest—the situation in one of the parishes for at least the past six years. Still, one must attribute the development of liturgical life in these parishes not only to current leadership but also to previous pastors and the determination of the members of these small communities to persevere, both in continued existence and in real, rich community life.

Seeds Sprouting

Perhaps twenty-five years ago, I traveled to Libby, Montana, with Father Ed Hislop: We were the diocesan “worship office” then, very much a virtual reality that came into existence upon request. The new pastor in Libby had asked us to do some liturgy and music formation and ministry training. As I recall, the musicians at that time were asking themselves if they would ever be able to sing more of the responsorial psalm than just the refrain. This past fall, I visited Libby again. Singing the psalm was no longer a question; it was done. This time, the question from musicians and other ministers was: How can we pursue excellence in our ministry?

In recent years, a few pastors have asked for help in formulating a job description and an advertisement to attract qualified applicants to at least part-time positions as music directors in their parishes. The priests’ own understanding of the necessity for good leadership in developing assembly song has grown over these twenty-five years. My contact with the deacon formation program in the diocese has also been an entrance into additional contacts with parishes that need advice with the formation of the musicians already in place. Parish leaders have begun to understand the benefit of offering salaries or stipends to longstanding volunteers who have either assumed music leadership or have been asked to become the music leaders in parishes. Part of every session of the liturgy track in the deacon formation program is devoted to musical issues—formation, music planning and preparation, relationship of music and liturgical practice in each rite that requires or may employ diaconal leadership.

When the diocese gathers during the week before Holy Week for the celebration of the Mass of the Oils (Chrism Mass), a choir of at least sixty members assembles. This is perhaps the rare opportunity for these choir members to sing four-part choral pieces. Every year I hear back from a few of the singers that one or two of the pieces sung during the Mass of the Oils has become part of a parish repertoire—if not with all the choral parts then at least with adaptations for the local assembly and its choir.

At one time, many parishes would excuse themselves from doing this more formal repertoire: There were “not enough people to do the parts,” they would say. “It’s not our style,” they would claim. Now, because of the high level in involvement in all the ministries of the Chrism Mass, I see a new appreciation for what different assemblies are able to accomplish if they have the experience or ability to make needed adaptations.

A Missal Opportunity

Because we knew of the coming revision and re-translation of the Roman Missal, with the leadership of Bishop
George Thomas, several years ago our diocese began a series of events aimed at preparation for this event. The key part of our long-term preparation was a series of guest presenters each year to lead a workshop focused on various aspects of the liturgy before the annual Chrism Mass. Bishop Thomas also asked that each presenter serve as the homilist at the Mass, since this liturgy served as a gathering of the whole diocese in the cathedral. We also invited some experts to the diocese for other workshops on the liturgy, and the diocese hosted one of the national preparation workshops co-sponsored by the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions and the Bishops’ Committee on Divine Worship. Necessarily, all of these events included music formation.

The final diocesan-sponsored event in this preparation for the reception of the revised Roman Missal was titled “Songs of Praise: A Hymn of Hope.” During four repeated evenings around the diocese, Joanne Werner, past chair of NPM’s Board of Directors, led a reflection on Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship, using new and revised Mass settings and several song titles to illustrate her reflections. More than 300 musicians from around the diocese attended the presentations. (The Flint Creek Catholic Community had 100 percent attendance!) The significant numbers of participants was evidence that assemblies understand the need to grow in musical knowledge so that they can be better assemblies of prayer and worship.

Aids to Growth

What is it that aids musical growth in a rural parish? Rarely is the first aid a trained liturgical musician. As I observe the present energy in our diocese, I can point to several markers for success. I list these not in order of priority but remembering Aidan Kavanagh’s frequent advice to parishes in the development and implementation of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. Based on his liturgical theology rooted in “doing” the liturgy, when asked where to start implementing the rituals of adult initiation, he would tell people: “Begin somewhere; do what you can; jump in and keep swimming.” So here are some places to begin and do what you can:

1. Seek pastoral leadership, whether that is from a resident pastor or from a parish administrator, either lay or deacon, who understands the importance of sung worship and is willing to work to develop it.
2. Develop or request a budget line-item earmarked for formation for music leaders.
3. Find a parishioner with musical ability or a parish leader who understands the need for musical ability and seeks to be a music leader. The leader may be a pianist, organist, guitarist, or an individual with enough vocal ability to coach an instrumentalist into becoming a good accompanist willing to share leadership.
4. Welcome and support episcopal and other diocesan leadership that will enable others in the diocese to share in that leadership, whether through an established office of worship or a liturgical commission.
5. Encourage a willingness on the part of the diocese to support efforts to fund the needs of the musical life of the diocese.
6. Encourage diocesan support of lay formation, whether through sequential programs or single events focused on formation.
7. Invest in a good/suitable music resource that will serve the parish for several years.

Keep Swimming

When the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium was promulgated on December 4, 1963, the then-bishop of Helena and later archbishop of Seattle Raymond G. Hunthausen was one of the youngest bishops present. From the time of his return from the first session of the Council, the Diocese of Helena wholeheartedly embraced the spirit of the “new” liturgy. Formation programs were established to help the people and clergy of the diocese claim ownership for the revised liturgy. Whole generations of caring Catholics, enriched by caring leadership and led by the spirit of Vatican II, became dedicated to “full, conscious, and active participation.” Since then, the people of the Diocese of Helena have “jumped in and kept swimming.”

Note

When mainstream—primarily English-speaking—American Catholics hear the term “Vietnamese Catholicism,” what do they think? Do they know enough about the Catholic Church in Vietnam to think of the apparition of Our Lady of La Vang in 1798? Do they picture young Asian women in flowing áo dài dresses doing subtle liturgical movement? Do they know about the heritage of the 117 Vietnamese martyrs? How about the rich blend of Christianity with Confucian and Taoist traditions that gives rise to the reverence of ancestors and honoring elders during Tết (Lunar New Year)? Or the deep respect for parents, as attested in their liturgical repertoire?

In comparison to the influence of other Asian cultures on Catholicism, what is unique and most impressive about Vietnamese Catholicism is the chanting. However, very little about this heritage has been translated into English, and unless one is fortunate to be close to a Vietnamese American community and able to attend Mass in Vietnamese, few mainstream Americans have ever experienced the gentle sonic landscape that permeates the atmosphere of Vietnamese ritual.

Since mainstream Americans speak a non-tonal language, the concept of “đọc kinh” is difficult to comprehend. First, đọc kinh is not a song or a composition created and transcribed by a particular individual, nor is it a traditional folk repertoire—melodies passed from generation to generation with unknown authorship. Although đọc kinh is normally performed a cappella, it is not chant in the genre of Gregorian, Byzantine, or other Orthodox chant traditions.

The Vietnamese enhance their prayer texts by engaging in a vocal technique that has no correlation in Western musical literature. The flow of sound, neither hymn or song, is based on their tonal language. Vietnamese, spoken by more than 94 million people across the globe, is a monosyllabic and tonal language. Each morpheme may have six different meanings, depending on six different tones or accent marks. See the graph of “Vietnamese Tones” on page twenty-three to understand that when one speaks “ma,” it can have numerous meanings, depending upon whether the tone is high, middle, or low, rising or falling in pitch. It may sound to Westerners as though Vietnamese are singing when they speak.

In addition, there are regional variations to these six tones. The fifty-nine provinces of Vietnam can be grouped into three main historical and cultural regions: Northern, Central, and Southern. This gives rise to three dialects (along with regional vocabulary, traditional songs and dress, cuisine, and a character unique to each region). The chart “Musical Transcriptions of Different Accents in Time and Space” on page twenty-three gives an approximate comparison of the Northern, Central, and Southern accents, if they were to be transcribed by phonologists. Note that an 1838 dictionary, attempting to group the entire country’s language onto one chart, had tone #4 mả in a much higher range than usually spoken by those from North or Central Vietnam. Note also that the six distinct tones in the Northern Accent are in essence reduced to five in the Central and Southern Accents (mả = mì).
Praying with Devotion in Liturgy and the Rest of Life

The sidebar on page twenty-five lists several YouTube clips that will give the reader an aural experience of what has been written so far. In the first “Hail Mary” clip, Kyle first speaks one phrase of the Hail Mary prayer. Notice his pitch falling and rising at various words. Then Kyle chants the same phrase in a đọc kinh style; you will notice the same exact falling and rising of pitch. He repeats this couplet with another phrase, and then chants the entire prayer.

The musical notation on the screen and transcription on page twenty-four is an approximation of what Kyle is chanting. Vietnamese do not transcribe đọc kinh. How could they? There are so many minute variations in performance practice. Pitches and slurs are determined by region (Northern, Central, Southern) and various cultural and migration factors. Since Kyle is Vietnamese American, he does not chant in a “pure” Southern accent; he left his homeland when he was a teenager. Across town, in his city of San Jose, California, other Vietnamese Americans would chant the Hail Mary with more use of the “G” note and different slurs. So non-Vietnamese musicians must be aware that Vietnamese Americans across the country will not chant this prayer exactly as transcribed here or as heard on the video clip.

Vietnamese Catholics use the term đọc kinh for this style of chanting. A literal translation of the phrase would be “to read a prayer.” A poetic translation of this phrase—to intone a religious text—would be “to pray with devotion.” Vietnamese have three choices of how to approach a religious text: recite it; intone it, adding breath to the pitch of their tonal language—đọc kinh; or sing the text to a composed melody. All devotional prayers, especially daily morning and evening prayers, are chanted in đọc kinh. They are chanted at home or at church before the early morning Mass or in the evening/night gathering of the family at the designated prayer corner of the household.

Books of Vietnamese Catholic devotional prayers are numerous. The earliest versions were compiled by one of the first missionaries to evangelize Vietnam, Alexander de Rhodes (1591–1660). None of these books contain one note of music, yet all of these prayers are chanted.

For English-speaking Catholics, incorporating the
The practice of “praying with devotion” at Mass might mean enhancing the ritual texts by intoning the dialogues, responses, and prayers. The 2011 English translation of the Roman Missal incorporates revised, adapted, and newly composed chant melodies within the Order of Mass and with the special texts of certain celebrations, placing the notated versions in prominence before the printed texts, signifying that a lyrical liturgy is normative and preferred. If you open the Vietnamese Sách Lễ Rôma, the second edition of the Vietnamese Roman Missal (1983), you will not find one musical note. And if you open the third edition of the Vietnamese Order of Mass, promulgated for mandatory use on Easter, 2006, you will find that the translation is closer to the Latin, perhaps, but again not one note of music can be found. Yet within the Vietnamese Mass, both in South East Asia and overseas, chanting is normative.

The assembly and presider in the three YouTube clips (see the sidebar) have never read musical notes for what they are singing. They have never seen a transcription of their chanting. No choir director taught the melodic patterns to them. It is đọc kinh, a mesmerizing wave of pitch and rhythm during the liturgy that elevates the text with a prayerful, meditative reverence. No one (priest,
deacon, lector, or the whole assembly) is exempt from intoning the prayers or dialogues, because they believe they are “not singers.” That all engage in đọc kinh is the cultural norm. Note in the YouTube clip that the lector intones “The Word of the Lord,” and the rest of the assembly automatically responds in đọc kinh. Most presiders will chant all the orations and the Eucharistic Prayer in đọc kinh. Watch how effortlessly the priest in the third Mass clip segues during the prayer over the offerings from recitation to chanting. For Vietnamese Catholics, chanting prayers is a totally unreflective act. Đọc kinh is part of their blood and bones, instilled since childhood with home devotional practices and reinforced with every experience of liturgy.

Vietnamese Catholics are not unique in tonal chanting. Hmong and Lao Catholics, in South East Asia and abroad, also intone their prayers and Eucharistic liturgy based on the tones of their respective languages. Because of historical evangelization and regional proximity, Vietnamese chanting probably influenced these two ethnic groups. But few scholars, if any, have attempted to research or publish texts on the musical correlation among Catholics in these three cultures.

It is worth noting that the Fujianese, an ethnic group in China, intone their prayers, especially the recitation of the rosary in the Fuzhou dialect. Perhaps other Chinese dialects also chant using the tones of their native language, but again, almost no research has been published in English on this topic.

This raises the question of the origin of tonal chanting. Why do the Vietnamese (influencing the Lao and Hmong) and some Chinese intone prayers, while others do not? Thai, Cantonese, and Taiwanese are tonal languages, but any tourist to Bangkok, Hong Kong, or Taipei who attends Catholic Mass in the native language will not hear the Order of Mass intoned. Since Portuguese and French missionaries did not intone their prayers when they arrived in Vietnam, surely they did not instill this practice. What could be the origin of đọc kinh?

The answer is found in non-Christian and regional practice. In both Chinese and Vietnamese cultures, ancient scholars never read poetry; it was chanted. Whether for the Veneration of the Ancestors at Lunar New Year or at solemn civic proclamations, special texts were always intoned. In Buddhist temples, the monks use a form of heightened speech, based on the tones of the local language, to proclaim teachings, poems, and prayers for ceremonial usage.

Some researchers have postulated that tonal chanting became popular in Vietnam during the Chinese occupation (111 bce to 938 ce). While the Chinese were trying to suppress local culture, the Vietnamese memorized their poetry and literature as a technique of oral preservation. Chanting the texts served as a memory aid. Even today, in both Buddhism and

Mass during a national Vietnamese youth gathering in the United States
Christianity, chanting continues to be used in various Asian cultures as a retention device and especially as a technique used by children to memorize catechism and prayer texts. So from the beginning, when the Gospel first arrived in Vietnam, the Vietnamese were chanting devotional prayers and their catechism—a practice that continues to this day. When the Mass was allowed in the vernacular after Vatican II, it was natural for the clergy and faithful to utilize a đọc kinh technique for honoring the ritual texts with this centuries-old cultural practice.

**Further Explorations and Pastoral Questions for Today**

This article is a mere introduction the multifaceted topic of monophonic chanting in Vietnamese Catholicism. (Note that even this use of the term đọc kinh would be confusing to most Vietnamese Catholics. Ethnic use of the term usually refers to the act of engaging in devotional prayers, not the designation of a performance practice.) Omitted from this overview has been any comparison between đọc kinh and Vietnamese folk poetry and folksongs. In the Catholic realm, we have made no exploration of the relation between đọc kinh and đọc sách (devotional meditative reading) or ca văn (devotional singing). Numerous articles and essays have been published in Vietnamese exploring different melodic formulas (called cung đọc kinh, cung sách, or cung sách) that are a style of cantillation based on the tonal language. The selection and use of these formulas (two-note, three-note, four-note, and five-note) depend on the language tones used in a specific diocese (that is, regional variation), sometimes on the kind of prayerbook being chanted, and mainly on the liturgical season. Examination of these topics would eventually point to an entirely new arena of discussion: the relationship between the Vietnamese tonal language and their Catholic hymns, itemizing a composer’s frequent use of modes as dictated by the rising and falling pitch of the Vietnamese lyrics.

Before concluding, however, it is worth reflecting on how an awareness of Vietnamese chanting can be of service to mainstream—primarily English-speaking—American Catholics. Those involved in intercultural celebrations, especially at the diocesan or national conference level, often default when considering a Vietnamese contribution to the liturgy to a procession of young girls or women in traditional dresses, presenting the gifts to be offered in the Eucharist. Consider, instead, inviting members of the Vietnamese community to chant some prayers in đọc kinh as a prelude, or perhaps ask them to lead the psalm or a post-Communion song in this chanting technique. This contribution will expose the other members of the assembly to the unique sonic landscape of this Asian culture.

Attendance at a Lao, Hmong, or Vietnamese liturgy will instill in seminarians and deacons in ministry formation a comprehension that such liturgy is foundationally lyrical. These communities demonstrate that ritual dialogues are often most successfully performed a cappella. For clergy and music directors, the consistency of the same đọc kinh chant Sunday after Sunday is a reminder that repetition of the chanted Order of Mass and sung dialogues fosters assembly participation, which stands in tension with the American cultural value placed on newness and continual change.

“Vietnamese Catholicism”: Few Americans living in the United States ever encountered a Vietnamese before April 30, 1975, but now they exist in communities across the United States, from Seattle to San Diego and from Washington, DC, to New Orleans. Đọc kinh is just one of their many gifts waiting to be discovered by all American Catholics.

**Vietnamese Chanting on YouTube**

**Learning Vietnamese Pronunciation—Tones.** Numerous clips are available explaining the six tones of the Vietnamese language. One example in which a teacher speaks samples of the same word for each tone can be found at: [http://tinyurl.com/Viettones](http://tinyurl.com/Viettones)

**Vietnamese Chanting: Catholic Mass—Đọc Kinh.** Here are three clips created for this article giving examples of đọc kinh chanting (Southern Accent) from a liturgy in Vietnam. One can hear samples of the dialogues between the priest and the rest of the assembly, the lector intoning the ending of the reading, extended chanting of the Nicene Creed, and a chanted Preface:

Part One: [http://tinyurl.com/VietMass001a](http://tinyurl.com/VietMass001a)

**Vietnamese Chanting: Hail Mary—Đọc Kinh.** A clip created for this article, in which the words of the prayer are first spoken and then chanted in the typical đọc kinh style (Southern Accent), allowing the listener to comprehend the correlation between the spoken and intoned text, is here:

[http://tinyurl.com/HailMarydockinh](http://tinyurl.com/HailMarydockinh)

**Fujianese Catholics Chant the Hail Mary.** Fujianese Americans are based, for the most part, in New York and the East Coast of the United States. Compare the chanting of the Hail Mary in đọc kinh style (Southern Accent) with this intonation of the prayer by a Catholic family originally from Fujian, China, living in Silver Spring, Maryland:

[http://tinyurl.com/Fujianesehailmary](http://tinyurl.com/Fujianesehailmary)

**Hmong Episcopalians Chant the Hail Mary.** Although Hmong membership in the Episcopal Church is small, this video shows Hmong Episcopalians from a church in Saint Paul, Minnesota. Roman Catholic Hmong, based mostly in California, Wisconsin, and Minnesota, use the same Marian text and intonation heard on this clip. Both Hmong and Lao Catholics use their tonal language to chant their prayers and the Mass texts in ways similar to and probably influenced by Vietnamese Catholics:

[http://tinyurl.com/Hmonghailmary](http://tinyurl.com/Hmonghailmary)
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NPM website—www.npm.org—to register.
In his book *Somebody’s Calling My Name*, Wyatt Tee Walker discusses the significance of Black churches which are able to achieve a balance in liturgy through diverse music. He says: “The end product is a worship experience that is both intellectually challenging and emotionally satisfying.” To this end, we constantly strive as a team to develop or discover new methods to deepen and refine the uniqueness and authenticity of the New All Saints Catholic liturgical experience. In the planning process, we strive to include the unique role of the praying community spiritually, physically, and mentally. While being true to Catholic liturgical guidelines, we employ African, African American, and Western musical heritage and tradition in ways that enhance, blend, and bring balance to the active worship expression of the gathered community.

This unique balance of various genres (forms of and forms in music) holds true to the document *Sing to the Lord*, which states: “The role of music is to serve the needs of the Liturgy and not to dominate it, seek to entertain, or draw attention to itself or the musicians.” At New All Saints, we strive to realize what the Black Catholic Bishops of the United States stated in their 1984 letter, *What We Have Seen and Heard*, on celebrating the Sacred Mysteries: “The celebration of the Sacred Mysteries is that moment when the Church is most fully actualized and most clearly revealed.”

Musically, the third edition of the *Roman Missal* offers an opportunity to the present generation of African American musicians to further enrich the liturgy. One key component in this is the ecumenical spirit of the “Black Church.” According to *What We Have Seen and Heard*, the “Black Church” “has no denomination, [and] no formal structure. The Black Church is a result of our common experience and history—it allows Blacks to understand and appreciate each other . . . .”

A New Richness

Today’s generation of musicians in the Black Catholic community is able to pull from the rich musical heritage and diversity found in the “Black Church.” This heritage and diversity offer a new richness that is not transplanted from Baptist, Methodist, or Apostolic/Holiness faith traditions. As Sister Thea Bowman states in “The Gift of African American Sacred Song,” Black musical heritage and culture are “[a] song of the people.” Today’s generation of musicians has the advantage of being able to access the developments and contributions made to Western music and many other forms of sacred music over the past fifty years, contributions reflecting the achievements made as a result of the Black Consciousness movement of the 1960s and 1970s and the spirit of the Second Vatican Council.

For centuries, the world as we know it has been dominated by the thought, traditions, and worldview of Western Europe. This “classical culture” was rooted philosophically and artistically in ancient Greece. This culture developed a normative definition of God, humankind, the family, religion, and the state. The Roman Catholic Church embraced this view of the world. Through the years preceding the Second Vatican Council, the Church was a great preserver and reservoir of classical culture.

Mr. André R. Briscoe, Jr., holds the bachelor of music degree in music history from Howard University in Washington, DC. In 2003, he won the inaugural organ fellowship of the African Heritage and Cultural Institute of America, and in 2007, he was named an Ivan Earl Taylor Scholar. André is the director of music and organist for New All Saints Roman Catholic Church in Baltimore, Maryland.

Rev. Donald A. Sterling, D.Min., is the pastor of New All Saints Roman Catholic Church in Baltimore. He completed his doctorate in ministry at St. Mary’s Seminary, Baltimore, with research on the spiritual development of his congregation.
My Perspective: André R. Briscoe, Jr.

As a recipient of a bachelor’s degree in music from a predominantly Black institution, I was trained as any music major would be who matriculated at any major university or school of music. I was steeped in Western (“classical”) music and tradition but with great exposure to the contributions to Western music by persons of African descent. When I was appointed director of music and organist of New All Saints, I had a unique opportunity. New All Saints is a diverse community comprising African Americans, African Caribbeans, Africans, and Caucasians from different socio-economic backgrounds. The liturgy and culture of the parish reflect these demographics and require a unique musical representation and approach while still being true to Catholic liturgy.

I am familiar with the diverse music traditions of the “Black Church” (i.e. classical, Negro spirituals, hymnody, gospel, contemporary gospel, African American organ literature, and sacred jazz music), but my Catholic liturgical formation has been in the European or classical music aesthetic. Though they are aspects of New All Saints’ liturgy, neither Georgian chant, nor classical music, nor traditional music is the totality of liturgical musical expression in the parish’s liturgy. As a musician, I find that New All Saints offers me ongoing opportunities to learn how it expresses cultural and ethnic diversity, how to maintain the classical tradition, and how to develop a methodology for seeking new opportunities to expand my musical world and my experience. This makes possible the delivery of relevant liturgical celebration to the parish’s diverse cultural background and wide age demographic.

New All Saints Parish, Baltimore, was formed when the existing All Saints Parish merged with Our Lady of Lourdes Parish.

Today we live in a world that favors cultural and ethnic diversity. This pluralistic situation embraces multitudes of differing values, symbols, systems, and traditions—what many experience as confusion and frustration. We are in many ways witnessing the collapse of Western European traditions and philosophy as the shaping and guiding forces in the development and maintenance of a common meaning or understanding of the world.

What many church members once experienced as church—symbols, narratives, rituals, etc.—are now ambiguous at best. Many church members are experiencing this in forms of stress, disorientation, and uneasiness with the institutional church. Today’s church is experiencing a lack of enthusiasm for new rites; declines in attendance; the growing necessity to provide new “rationales” for the continuance of certain once-accepted practices. We witness deep feelings of personal violation, and many question rather than accept the “truth” of one’s religion; cynicism is often commonplace.

To understand Christian spirituality, it is essential that one have an adequate understanding of self. Spiri-
My Perspective: Father Donald Sterling

As a celebrant and pastor, I must admit that the introduction of the third edition of the Roman Missal has been experienced as an interruption to the familiar flow and expression of prayer and musical form. The literal-mindedness of the new prayer forms creates interruptions to the comfortable flow of liturgy and language, in particular. However, the new translation offers an opportunity for Black Catholic liturgical music and expression to evolve beyond the familiar.

Indeed, worship is not entertainment; it is more! Worship is an expression of the living God flowing through his people. It includes all life—challenges, celebrations, highs, and lows! It is Spirit-fueled nourishment, thanks be to God!

When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim (Acts 2:1-4, The New American Bible).

This same Spirit guides and sanctifies the Church today. The Holy Spirit has molded all people and all cultures. The Holy Spirit has distributed gifts in the language, culture, and tradition of each. We experience God worldwide in the history of all people in specific ways. Likewise, we experience God’s movement, way of holiness, and salvation in ways that differ and ways that are simultaneously essentially the same. Hence, we can affirm and act to realize a Black spirituality.

Father Clarence Joseph Rivers reminds us, in an article entitled “The Oral African Tradition Versus the Ocular Western Tradition”:

“A people whose tradition is oral do not have the hang-up of literal-mindedness. They tend to be poetic in their use of language. . . . A people brought up in an oral culture are not only not literal-minded; their whole approach to life is different. They have a different way of knowing and relating to the surrounding world, a way that is based on the way in which the other senses perceive when not dominated and muted by the sense of sight. . . . In this tradition, spirituality itself demands emotional, affective, dramatic, soulful performance in worship. As the original biblical concept of the spiritual, the spirit or the soul is the life principle, the source of life and liveliness, of dynamism and movement, of motion and emotion. That which is unmoved and unmoving is not spiritual; it is dead!”

Notes


4. Ibid.


References


“The Church is sincerely and fundamentally committed to translating its liturgical rites to the many voices of various peoples, creating, it is hoped, one song of praise. . . .

“What Paul VI asked of Africans for the universal Church, the Church in the United States asks of its African American daughters and sons—the gift of ‘Blackness,’ a gift so intensely expressive and so alive that it comes from the very depths of the Black soul, a gift not just to improve the work of evangelization but to further the very Catholic nature that is the Church’s.”

On a bright Sunday morning, the church, filled with first generation Vietnamese-Catholic immigrants, made room for a curious third generation European-American. The priest chanted a cappella in Vietnamese, and the entire assembly chanted their response by heart. There were no hymnals, no texts projected on a screen, and no accompaniment. They sang the liturgy confidently at a gentle pace.

The assembly, gathered in a half-circle around Word and Sacrament, elevated my spirit as they sang the liturgy under a canopy of sweet smelling incense. The experience drew me in and felt prayerful to me. I pondered my response.

I have spent my life studying, teaching, and implementing the principles of the Second Vatican Council with conviction and love. In my young adult years, I happily followed pastoral leaders as we set Gregorian chant aside and replaced it with spoken texts. Latin processional psalms were replaced with melodic English settings. We welcomed the new sound with joy. It was wonderful to understand every word we sang as we discovered the scriptural messages in our liturgical texts.

In previous years, Catholic choirs had assumed the assembly’s role of singing the liturgy. However, the Second Vatican Council recovered the role of the assembly in the liturgy and promoted participation by all both internally and externally. For a while, the idea of a Catholic assembly singing the liturgy was incomprehensible for a few music leaders, and they plowed ahead with choral music, ignoring calls to include the rest of the assembly in sung worship. Some parish choirs “retired” in the late twentieth century because the dynamic of a singing assembly in the liturgy was a difficult concept for their choir to grasp. Other pastoral musicians clearly understood that the primary choir singing the liturgy was now the assembly, and the liturgical choir, a servant of the liturgy, served the singing assembly also.

Rooted in the Word

Today, it is normal to expect the holy People of God to speak their prayer, to gesture, to sing during the processions and to acclaim their faith during key parts of the liturgy. This kind of engagement in the liturgy over the past fifty years has planted the texts of Scripture and the liturgy in the hearts of Catholics all over the world. We can be grateful that the implementation of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium has accomplished so much. As a result, the Catholic fully and consciously participating in the liturgy is indeed filled with the true Christian spirit, as the conciliar reformers hoped. The next move, to permeate society with that spirit, is still evolving.

As we all know, the Liturgy of the Word evokes or reinforces faith. In the Liturgy of the Eucharist, we respond in faith as we come into union as the Body and Blood of Christ. We carry the faith created and celebrated into the rest of life as bearers of the presence of Christ—as missionaries to those around us every day.

So that this missionary faith will take root deeply in our lives, we need the liturgy—our font to which all activity goes and from which all the Church’s power flows.

When the Word of God is implanted in the believer and imbedded in the heart, it becomes second nature to do and be what the Word articulates, that is, a people who instill God’s sense of justice, love, and compassion in society.

To Permeate Society with the Spirit

Professor Mark Searle talked often about this dynamic of the Church. He said that, leading up to the Second Vatican Council, there were two liturgical movements. In
the first movement the liturgy created a renewed sense of Church, and liturgical formation evoked a desire for social transformation. This movement drew Catholics out of individualized devotional prayer in order to become one Body, one Blood in communal liturgical prayer. Searle called this an “objective communitarian rehearsal of our common identity.”

The second movement, he said, involved liturgical change and renewal of Church life. This period of time was affected by sociological events that drew the attention of youth to fascism, socialism, and communism. For the sake of drawing the next generation to the Church, bishops were more concerned with clarifying the essentials of the liturgy than returning it, as had been the goal of one phase of liturgical renewal, to the pristine practices of the early Church. They called for the use of vernacular in the proclamation of the Word, for clear and unencumbered rites, and for the optional use of hymnody that could plant doctrine and Scripture deeply in a singing assembly.

For Searle, these two approaches had a common goal—to permeate all of society with the Spirit that is holy. In other words, Catholics filled with the true Christian spirit would be moved to transform society into one in which God’s sense of justice—the common good of all—was upheld in response to the self-centered demands of the individual.

**Affected by Our Understanding**

Whether we attain “the true Christian spirit” is affected by our understanding of the liturgy. Do we expect the liturgy to be formed by our agendas, or do we submit to what the liturgy demands? Do we plan the liturgy or does the liturgy “plan” us? Do we allow the rite—as it is—to change us? Searle believed that the spirit of the liturgy lifted all believers out of individualism “to engage in something far beyond their ability to create or even imagine.”

Will we be faith-forming missionaries in the “fields” of the United States of America by allowing the liturgy to draw us in, shape us, form us, and send us?

Perhaps it was more than just the chant that moved me when I joined my Vietnamese brothers and sisters in the liturgy. Perhaps it was the witness in faith of Vietnamese Catholics who, fully submitted to the transforming power of the liturgy, moved me. Clearly they were celebrating a communal spirit that, as Searle put it, “went far beyond their ability to create.” And as the Spirit enveloped me in the sounds of the sung liturgy, I found that the faith they expressed transformed me. It was not simply the chant or the language that produced this power. Instead, it was their deeply faith-filled communal prayer—spoken, sung, gestured, and carried out in deepest love with Christ as the “source and summit” of their prayer.

Their lives and their journey to this promised land had been saturated with the Paschal Mystery and its rhythms of suffering, dying, and rising. Their stories, united to Christ’s, form an everlasting bond. Now, with their lives, they reach into the society around them with a fresh perspective about God’s justice for all people.

As leaders, we study the liturgy to know it well so we can submit to its power as we implement it. We minister with the People of God so that by full, conscious, and active participation in the liturgy, every believer will understand the dynamic of the Paschal Mystery and, as a result, be moved to transform society.

Yet, today, some pastoral musicians say that they feel caught up in an international war over ways of celebrating the liturgy. Will we allow ourselves to foment liturgy wars and the divisions among us? Must our neighbors talk about “the Catholics and their problems?” Can we not embrace our baptismal responsibility to give ourselves over to the Church’s liturgy, to incarnate its faith and prayer, and bring the liturgy to a world in need of a compassionate society?
Whether we use chant, hymnody, psalmody or chorale octavo, whether we use English, Vietnamese, Tagalog, or Spanish, let us build upon the cornerstone of Christ so that, one day soon, others will look to us and talk about “the Catholics and the way they love.”

Notes

3. “Sacred Scripture is of the greatest importance in the celebration of the liturgy. For it is from Scripture that lessons are read and explained in the homily, and psalms are sung; the prayers, collects, and liturgical songs are scriptural in their inspiration and their force, and it is from the Scriptures that actions and signs derive their meaning. Thus to achieve the restoration, progress, and adaptation of the sacred liturgy, it is essential to promote that warm and living love for Scripture to which the venerable tradition of both eastern and western rites gives testimony” (SC, 24).
4. “Nevertheless the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; at the same time it is the font from which all her power flows. For the aim and object of apostolic works is that all who are made sons of God by faith and baptism should come together to praise God in the midst of His Church, to take part in the sacrifice, and to eat the Lord’s supper. . . . In the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else; for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit; and therefore pastors of souls must zealously strive to achieve it, by means of the necessary instruction, in all their pastoral work” (SC, 10, 14).
5. See Mark Searle, Liturgy and Social Justice (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 1986), 29: “Like the Word of God in history, the liturgy is the revelation of God’s justice in both event and word, cutting into human life both as good news and as denunciation. It proclaims and realizes the saving presence of the Spirit in the world, brings the presence of the Kingdom, and enables us to realize where this is happening even outside the liturgy. Celebrating the liturgy should train us to recognize justice and injustice when we see it.”
6. Mark Searle (1941–1992) taught at the University of Notre Dame. He was the editor of Assembly magazine, a consultant for the International Commission on English in the Liturgy, and the editor and author of several books. He challenged his readers often by saying: “The whole of the liturgy, beginning with the very congregating of the people, is sacramental.” See http://liturgicalleaders.blogspot.com/2008/09/mark-searle.html.
8. See ibid., 2–10.
10. SC, 10.
Recalling Samuel Coleridge-Taylor

By William Tortolano

Anniversary years for composers come and go, but the centenary of the death of one relatively unknown person deserves recognition. The very gifted Anglo-African composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1875–1912) is an important figure in the rich renaissance of African-American culture. Taylor’s father was a medical doctor from Sierra Leone, who studied and practiced medicine for a short time in London, returning to Africa before he knew he had a son in London.1 There is some controversy about the identity of his mother, but the young man loved and respected his mother. In 1899, he married his Royal College of Music fellow student Jessie (née Walmisley).

A prolific composer of eighty-two opuses, Coleridge-Taylor enjoyed enormous popularity during his short life of thirty-seven years. Deeply aware of what he called his “Negro background,” Taylor became increasingly involved with the cultural growth of African Americans, especially after his first visit to the United States in 1904. A friend and inspiration to W. E. B. DuBois, Booker T. Washington, Harry Burleigh, Paul Laurence Dunbar, and the Fisk Jubilee Singers as well as many other advocates of African American culture, Taylor’s great fame became their pride.

Although Coleridge-Taylor was the recipient of numerous commissions during his lifetime and was recognized with Sir Edward Elgar as pre-eminent English composers, little of his music is performed today. A pupil of the Irish composer Sir Charles Stanford at the Royal College of Music in London, the African English composer enjoyed instant recognition at age twenty-three with his setting of

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor

Longfellow’s Hiawatha. Taylor would continue his love affair with the American poetic imprints of Longfellow and Walt Whitman and the vernacular language of Paul Laurence Dunbar.

A First Visit

In 1904, Taylor made his first visit to America. He became increasingly caught up in the love and enthusiasm of his heritage. In that year he read the Souls of Black Folk by Dr. DuBois. It made a profound impact on his life, leading him to use Negro folk music from Africa and the United States. Because of his success with Hiawatha and other compositions, Taylor was admired by the Black community in the United States as a leader and indeed as the prototype for the renaissance of Black Culture.2

This admiration intensified his love and enthusiasm for his heritage. Taylor also enjoyed concert performances with Dunbar, who introduced him to a vernacular language with which he was not yet familiar. All this generated a provocative ethnic repertoire. He held that great music is to be found in the folk songs of a people.

During this first visit to America (he made three triumphant tours), Coleridge-Taylor received an invitation from the Oliver Ditson Company of Boston to arrange an album of Negro songs for piano, which he published the following year as Twenty-Four Negro Melodies.3 The melodies were taken from the most authoritative sources. He found valuable material in the Jubilee Songs collected by Theodore F. Seward in the 1870s and made famous by the Jubilee Singers of Fisk University. The second source of the music was Les Chants et les contes des Ba-Ronga by Henri Junod, providing material from the Ba-Ronga district in South Africa.

All of the Twenty-Four are challenging, but each manifests a gem of deep emotion, creative compositional techniques, and spiritual consonance, and each today would make an aesthetic/liturgical enrichment to the liturgy.

Taylor’s religious convictions were strong. His biographer and lifelong friend, W. C. Berwick Sayers, mentions that Taylor rarely discussed his beliefs, but “he had a sure instinct for the Hereafter, and his life was essentially a religious one.”4 Taylor composed a small amount of sacred music. It is all well-crafted and would fit liturgical functions. There are eight anthems, and four of them are still available in publication from Broude Bros. (New York). They are: Break Forth Into Joy; The Lord is my Strength; O Ye, That Love the Lord; and Lift Up Your Heads. Originally published by Novello in 1892, they integrate fine, bold harmonics and phrasing. They are well written for voices and show a nice feeling for the texts.

In addition to the anthems, Taylor composed two settings of church services. The first, Te Deum, was written possibly in 1890, when he was fifteen years old. Not published until 1921, it bears the subtitle “A simple setting for parish choirs.” The second is a more ambitious setting: The Morning and Evening Service in F, op. 18, for mixed voice and organs, composed in 1899 and contained in Novello’s Parish Choir Book. The sections are Te Deum Laudamus,
Benedictus, Jubilate Deo, Magnificat, and Nunc Dimittis. The latter is forthcoming in a new edition (edited by Dr. William Tortolano).

In 1898, Taylor composed Three Short Pieces for the organ for a Novello publication called “The Village Organist.” “Melody”, “Elegy,” and “Arietta” are captivating, charming, and within the capabilities of most organists. They are published by Paraclete Press (ed. William Tortolano) and are also available in the GIA Publication, King of Kings, Volume I, edited by James Abbington. (The titles of these pieces, by the way, should not negate their liturgical use.)

He also composed Three Impromptus, op. 78 (1911). These are more difficult but worth the study. They have been republished by Music Masters Publications.

Deserving a Hearing

Samuel Coleridge-Taylor’s day has come. He deserves to be heard again. He is a great composer and an inspiration to African Americans today, as he was to the key figures of the Harlem Renaissance. It is hoped that this fine composer, who at least deserves a place in the history of Black music, American Indian folklore, and the English choral tradition will find performance and recognition in the centenary of his death.

Notes

1. Born Samuel Coleridge Taylor, he was known as “Coleridge” in his family. Later, however, he hyphenated his middle and last name. Therefore he is variously identified, as in this article, as Coleridge-Taylor and, simply, Taylor.

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By Karen Adams

Seeking Ministry and Employment in the Church

I am a pastoral musician with more than twenty-five years of experience in music leadership in the Church, fifteen years of pastoral and liturgical leadership, and a graduate degree in theology. I have been seeking a full-time position for several years without success, but I have had a wide variety of mostly unprofessional experiences in that search. Employment practices in the Church—including hiring and firing—are definitely not those of the business or corporate sector. Yet I think I have learned some things in this time and during this process which may be helpful for others to know.

These are some websites to visit weekly: NPM Hotline; diocesan websites; other ecclesial music ministry sites such as ALCM or PAM; AGO (unfortunately, you must currently be a member of AGO to access the employment pages on their national site, but sometimes local chapters do not have this block to access); Catholicjobs.com; and churchjobs.com. After contacting the Professional Concerns chair for DMMD, I was also reminded of these helpful resources: an Annual Reviews document (available online), Work and Remuneration, which includes annual salary guideline updates (available online), Hiring a Director of Music Ministries (revised), and A Pastoral Musician’s Employment Resource.

Here, on the other hand, are some of the red flags and problems I have encountered:

• In some cases there has been a lack of communication, from acknowledgement of having received your application to information about the process and whether or not you are still a candidate. If, after several weeks, you have heard nothing, try to initiate contact, using several methods if necessary to reach a real person.

• Sometimes the position is “full-time” but the salary is not. Some dioceses have salary guidelines but many do not, and even when there are guidelines in place, parishes do not have to follow them. Go to the NPM and/or AGO websites (or others) for information about diocesan guidelines. Also figure out in advance if you can survive on or will accept less than the guidelines suggest. Be open and cordial in all discussions. And have some creative ideas ready for improving the bottom line.

Be wary of interview practices that include any of these:

• The pastor is either not present or not engaged in the discussions, and no opportunity to meet with him is provided.

• No detailed job description is supplied in advance.

• The interview period is too brief for you to say and show adequately what you have to offer and to ask questions of the interviewers (this is, after all, a mutual interview in which you interview them and they interview you, so go prepared with your own questions and expect honest answers).

• Information you seek does not always seem to be provided forthrightly.

• Other candidates are in your presence at some point and/or their names are mentioned in your presence.

• There are multiple interviews or auditions. This is not necessarily a bad idea, but if you find your time as a candidate is not respected and valued, then it quite possibly will not be as an employee.

• There is no offer to cover any of the costs to you for the interview(s), such as travel, housing, or food.

• There is a less-than-professional approach to the process. Some churches do not have anyone with an HR background on staff or on the search committees, and they truly often do not realize the need for such a person, though most lay people have certainly dealt with HR procedures in their jobs.

• The position is advertised as one for which you are to have the authority to direct all others in music ministry, except there are several of those people on the interview committee, who apparently have their own agendas.

• You find that the parish can only offer poor instruments and placement of those; there are acoustical problems; there is an inadequate music budget that does not allow for the purchase of choir music as well as the needs of the accompanists; there is insufficient office space and equipment for the position; there is a lack of continuing education funds and support.

• There is no regular prayer with the rest of the staff and/or no regular meetings involving the staff.

• You get indications of a lack of collegiality and respect among the staff and a non-collaborative atmosphere with the clergy.

These are not in any order of importance, but any or all should be viewed as cautionary. If you find just one or two of these circumstances, they should certainly be discussed before you sign a contract; any more could cause you seriously to reconsider your candidacy, no matter how much you need a position. If at all possible, speak with the former music director or someone else in that diocese to get the information you need about the parish, the position, and the staff culture, especially if you are unfamiliar with the parish, diocese, and the clergy.

Finally, consider the importance for your own well-being of having a trusted spiritual director and a confidante, friend, or colleague with whom to share the joys and sorrows of life “inside” the Church.

Ms. Karen Adams is a long-time DMMD member.
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Children’s Recitative

These octavos are from World Library Publications.

Three Angel Prayers: Angel of God; Guardian Angel, from Heaven So Bright; All Night, All Day. Robert Noble. Two-part voices, optional congregation, guitar, keyboard, and handbells. WLP, 007106, $1.40. These three short pieces might best be used in the “domestic church” with young children at the beginning or end of the day or in a school setting as part of a morning prayer. A liturgical use may be appropriate, especially on feasts of the angels. The setting of the spiritual “All Night, All Day” is especially effective, with verses in a call-and-response format and a lively flute part accompanying the singers.

Rejoice! Rejoice! James Marchionda, op, arranged by Jeffrey Honoré. Three-part choir or unison children’s choir, organ, cantor, congregation, guitar, keyboard. WLP, 005762, $1.40. This rhythmic celebration of Jesus’ rising from the dead is fun as well as catechetical. The mixed-meter refrain (alternating 4/4 and 6/8) proclaims that “we are part of the story,” and the verses summarize the Easter narratives from the Gospels according to John and Luke. This piece could be used very successfully throughout the Easter Season in school and religious education settings.

Oh, How Good Is Jesus Christ! ¡Oh, Que Bueno Es Jesús! Arranged by Jeffrey Honoré. Two-part children’s choir, optional descant, guitar, keyboard, optional flute and percussion. WLP, 007146, $1.40. Here we have a traditional Puerto Rican song, presented in Spanish with an English translation by Mary Beth Kunde-Anderson. Appropriate for general use and especially during the Easter Season, this catchy tune is set with an easily learned harmony on verses two and three. The piano and flute parts provide a solid rhythmic foundation, and the optional parts for shaker, claves, castanets, and hand drum add color and vibrancy to the presentation. Enjoy!

I Saw Three Ships. Arranged by Craig Curry. Unison/two-part choir with piano and optional handbells. CGA1229, $2.25. Here is a well-crafted setting of the familiar Christmas carol, with solid part-writing, creative piano accompaniment, and wonderful parts for three octaves of handbells. The first three short verses are sung in unison, with the second voice part entering on verse four. The declamatory treatment in verse five of “and all the bells on earth shall ring” is great, and adds momentum to the piece. The final verse augments the rhythm of the melody, leading to a satisfying conclusion. This is well worth the effort to learn, especially with the handbell part included.

Emmanuel Will Come. Becki Slagle Mayo. Unison/two-part choir with piano and optional handbells, finger cymbals, and tambourine. CGA1227, $1.95. This gentle Advent piece is a good choice for the beginning children’s choir. This song of longing and hope presents a text inspired by Isaiah, encouraging its listeners to “prepare the way of the Lord” and “make a path in the wilderness.” The melody is easily learned, and the secondary theme (which becomes a descant at the end) is a good exercise in the use of head voice for the young singer. The handbell part is simple, as are the optional parts for finger cymbal and tambourine.

Your Servant I Will Be. Mark Patterson. Unison/two-part choir with piano. CGA1215, $1.85. Mark Patterson presents another eminently singable tune, set to a text about discipleship. Gently syncopated, the melody flows unimpeded, with good support from the piano accompaniment. Appropriate for general use, especially when celebrating the call to service.

Come to Me. Margaret R. Tucker. Unison/two-part choir with piano and optional flute. CGA1221, $1.85. Here is a simple song in a refrain-verse format, which speaks to our call to follow Christ. The refrain repeats the phrase “come to me,” and the verses refer to the call of the apostles and the children as well as our own call to “feed the hungry, heal the hurt.” Most musical phrases fall in the upper tessitura, making this another good choice for the development of head voice in young singers. The optional second voice part only appears as a descant on the final refrain and sustains a high “g” at the end of each phrase, requiring developed voices to sing well.

Psalm 121. Timothy Shaw. Unison/two-part choir with piano. CGA1209, $1.85. This straightforward setting of a familiar psalm presents our joyful hope in God’s care and protection. The well-crafted melody flows in a lilting 6/8 meter, with a few intervallic skips that require careful placement. The slower middle section repeats the phrase “The Lord will keep you, now and ever more,” coming to a pianissimo fermata before returning to the joyful theme. The second voice part enters on the final refrain, in imitative style, and both voices combine for a very satisfying ending. The piano accompaniment requires more agility at the keyboard than many pieces for children.

This collection is from Augsburg Fortress.

Children Sing in Worship. Carol Carver and Mark Weiler, editors. Twelve anthems for unison and two-part choir with piano and optional instruments. Augsburg, 978-145140180-6, $24.95. This collection presents an economical way for a children’s choir director to access anthems for the liturgical year, without purchasing indi-
vidual octavos for singers. Reproducible pages are included in the back of the collection at no additional charge. Some songs are most appropriate for young primary-grade singers, such as “Loving Hands of Jesus,” while others present more challenging technical and textual content, such as Marilyn Biery’s setting of “This Joyful Eastertide.” Many interesting sources are drawn on, including a tune by Mozart in “To Love the Lord,” arranged by Ruth Elaine Schram, and the spiritual “Let Us Break Bread Together,” in the piece entitled “Give Us Now Our Daily Bread” by Anne McNair. A seasonal index will aid in programming these anthems throughout the year.

**Books**

![Image](https://example.com/book-image.png)

**Thanks, Jim**

Father Jim Challancin has been our book review editor for more than two years, but he has had to give up these responsibilities for health reasons. Father Challancin, ordained to the presbyterate for the Diocese of Marquette, Michigan, in 1968, is currently the pastor of St. Joseph Parish in Ishpeming, Michigan. We offer profound thanks to Father Jim for his service to the members of NPM, and we wish him well as he struggles with his health problems.

**Announcing the Feast**

The Entrance Song in the Mass of the Roman Rite

Jason McFarland

Announcing the Feast provides the most comprehensive treatment to date of the Roman Rite entrance song.

“Announcing the Feast makes a major contribution toward helping us understand just how crucial is the entrance to the Mass itself. I found myself wildly distracted by its contents and argument, and nearly unable to put it down.”

Jeffrey A. Tucker
Managing Editor, Sacred Music Chant Café blog

“Carefully researched, clearly articulated and insightfully argued, Announcing the Feast will stand as a major resource for all involved in the study of liturgical music for years to come. A multidisciplinary tour de force.”

Msgr. Kevin W. Irwin
Dean of the School of Theology and Religious Studies
The Catholic University of America, Washington, DC

**Sacred Treasure**

Understanding Catholic Liturgical Music

Joseph P. Swain

Whenever the matter of liturgical music arises in parishes, episcopal conferences, the academy, or Vatican documents, the nature of the music, as music, almost never affects the discussion. Distinguished musicologist and performer Joseph Swain wants to change that.

“Joseph Swain is among the rare scholars able to make a cogent, compelling case based upon the intrinsic qualities of music, without relying upon highly technical descriptions available only to trained musicians. The trained musician will find much that is new and enlightening here, but the pastor, liturgist, theologian, choir singer, and layperson will be able to follow the argument as well.”

William H. Mahrt
Professor of Music History, Stanford University
President, The Church Music Society
Reflections on Renewal: Lay Ecclesial Ministry


The contributors to this impressive collection of reflections offer critical insights and pose provocative questions concerning the present and future direction of ministry. As co-editor Donna Eschenauer explains, the book supports the 2005 document by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord: A Resource for Guiding the Development of Lay Ecclesial Ministry. At the same time, the essays are intended to “stimulate greater awareness and scholarly research for the twenty-first century,” in the hope of broadening perspectives on ministry and increasing collaboration among all ministers (page xv).

Among the contributors to this volume is Richard McCord, who provides a snapshot of the evolution of lay ecclesial ministry in the United States. It is a story that continues to unfold, which prompts McCord to ask critical questions about the future, such as: “What are the prospects for continuing to build collaborative relationships with ordained ministers,” and will we overcome certain “dead-end arguments that have stalemated the conversation about church ministry in recent years?” (page 9).

Amy Hoey tells us the story of how Co-Workers came to be written, noting that the document is intended as a resource, “a stimulus for reflection and action,” and that it commits the U.S. bishops to “revisit” and “refine” the document. Importantly, Hoey notes that the bishops made clear in Co-Workers that lay ecclesial ministry is “not a response to the declining number of priests,” which, she adds, is too often the context in which the document is discussed (page 16). She also points out that the term “lay ecclesial ministry,” while becoming more widely used, “does not come trippingly off the tongue” (page 15). Other contributors to this volume comment on this term as well, as they consider new ministerial language.

Looking through the lenses of communion and mission, Edward Hahnenberg explores the theological foundations of Co-Workers. According to Hahnenberg, it “is mission that provides both the context for communion and the common goal for all our ministerial efforts” (page 27, emphasis original). Rounding out the first part of the volume is Anthony Cirolla’s examination of the history of ministry from Trent to Vatican II. He looks to the work of Cardinal Avery Dulles and the lives of St. Francis of Assisi and St. Ignatius of Loyola to support an ecclesiology for lay ministry.

The focus of the remaining nine essays of the book is on fostering the conversation about the renewal of ministry in the Church. I will highlight a couple of these reflections, even though each is worthy of significant attention and will undoubtedly stimulate needed discussion about ministry today. Kieran Scott investigates “the link between the current language, ministerial classifications, and institutional form and design in the Roman Catholic Church,” pointing out that “a change of language is inextricably tied to institutional change” (page 53). Scott further suggests that the term “lay ecclesial ministry” is problematic and therefore, “a reshaping of ministerial language is needed” (page 53). His final premise is that the present hierarchical ordering needs to be redesigned “to bring the church more in accord with ‘our modern social imaginary’” (page 54).

Michael Horan takes a fascinating look at lay ecclesial ministry from the viewpoint of religious education and pastoral theology, including a discussion about the “living faith” promoted by the “implicit curriculum” of professional lay ministry, that is, their very presence “implicitly invites all lay people to consider the vibrancy of their own faith” (page 154). Like other contributors, he believes the term “lay ecclesial minister” is ambiguous, and further, he urges that in order to promote the necessary collaboration within the Church, a clear distinction is needed between volunteer, professional lay, and ordained ministers.

The editors effectively bookend the essays with Eschenauer’s Introduction and Horell’s concluding chapter, which names critical issues for the development of lay ecclesial ministry. Questions for discussion are included at the end of each chapter; at the same time, the excellent questions raised within the essays themselves should not be overlooked. The Church—all who are baptized—needs to wrestle with these issues. What is at stake is no less than the present and future states of ministry in the Church.

Anne Koester

Living the Call: An Introduction to the Lay Vocation


God calls each of us at our baptism to accomplish his work, to carry out the divine plan. Through prayer and the sacraments, God offers us the grace to do so, but each person’s call, gifts, and stories are unique. In Living the Call: An Introduction to the Lay Vocation, one can only glance at such a vast topic and its importance to the mission of the Church.

The book begins with a glimpse into the lives of the authors and their own faith journey as lay Catholics. Michael Novak and William E. Simon, Jr. both have achieved great success in life, both have been active in their parishes, and both have wielded influence in the Church in the United States.

They divide their book into two sections. First, they focus on the “natural world” and discuss the realities of serving the Church as a lay person. Secondly, they focus on the “spiritual world,” offering advice on how a modern lay person can become equipped to live out a personal call.

The first section, “The Natural World,” begins with a dizzying array of statistics about the decrease in religious and priestly vocations and the increase in lay vocations. Recent Church documents, such as Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord, are only given nominal attention, and some are ignored altogether, such as Vatican II’s Dogmatic Constitution on the Church Lumen Gentium. Only a few pages are devoted to human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation. In general, the authors treat volunteer opportunities and professional ministry almost equally.

The most endearing and inspirational pages of the book profile nine lay persons who have answered God’s call to service. Each narrative offers a realistic view of the formation, sacrifices, and dedication of ordinary persons doing extraordinary things.

The first three profiles focus on people in Catholic education. Among them is a dedicated educator, the administrator of a New Jersey Catholic high school, helping her students fight societal problems while she faces mounting financial pressures as she works to keep the school afloat.
Then the authors profile three persons who have assumed parish duties in a variety of capacities. Here the outstanding profile is of a social activist who became the parish life coordinator at a wealthy parish in South Pasadena, California. Her story examines her long days of counseling, committees, fund-raising efforts, and other pastoral responsibilities.

Finally, the authors focus on opportunities for lay involvement outside of schools and parish life. In this context, the reader meets an extraordinary young, Black youth minister in New Orleans who, despite great personal loss, led relief efforts after Hurricane Katrina. He enables young people to put their faith into action and provides leadership on the parish, diocesan, and national level.

In section two, “The Spiritual World,” the authors attempt to offer advice on how to prepare oneself to live out the lay vocation. They treat a wide variety of subjects but none of them adequately.

In a reflection on “the soul of the layperson,” they contend that the educational and professional experiences of lay vs. clergy are vastly different, leaving the reader to wonder how collaboration is even possible. From that, the philosophy professor-author breaks into a treatise on love in all its dimensions, most profoundly realized in the caritas of God. Advice on spiritual exercises and retreat opportunities is juxtaposed with suggested spiritual reading, with heavy emphasis on classic thinkers—Thomas Merton, Thomas à Kempis, St. Thérèse of Lisieux, St. Teresa of Avila—and not enough on Scripture. Next, they invite the lay person to consider joining a lay association of the faithful or to become an oblate of a religious order. They reflect on the single life and its call to chastity, followed by marital advice on sexual intimacy and financial responsibility. Finally, they offer a few pages on evangelization efforts.

Since the sacraments are so central to our life as Catholics, I found the most disappointing chapter was the one on the sacraments. In an attempt to explain the incarnational nature of our faith, the authors jump through the topics of baptism, the creed, the Mass, the Eucharist, and reconciliation all within a few paragraphs. At one point, the authors admit to providing “a brief sample—merely suggestive, entirely fragmentary . . .,” and that phrase might sum up the whole book. In an attempt to cover such a broad topic as the lay vocation, Novak and Simon often rely on a stream-of-consciousness approach, using random quotes from documents (sometimes without citations) and proffering advice on an array of topics. They provide random gems but as a whole lack cohesive focus. Simultaneously, the book offers too much and too little.

Rita Thiron

Great Christian Thinkers: From the Early Church through the Middle Ages


In brief, reflective sketches, Pope Benedict XVI presents the great theologians, monks, missionaries, reformers, mystics, and spiritual writers of the Christian tradition, East and West. It is amazing...
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what Benedict is able to communicate in usually just three pages. Each sketch gives biographical information, the historical circumstances, core thinking of the person, the person’s impact on the Church, and a reflection of what the person’s life and thought mean for us today.

Over several years, Pope Benedict originally worked up these sketches for his public audiences. Because of their original use, there is a simplicity and directness to them. The pope also communicates a personal reflectiveness and love about these great figures in the history of the Church.

The book presents the sketches in chronological order, but it also groups them together to give coherence to the particular era in which the person lived. It begins with “Heirs of the Apostles.” If one has studied the documents of the Second Vatican Council, the names of these writers will be very familiar.

The second group is “Great Teachers of the Ancient Church.” Benedict begins with the four doctors of the Eastern Church—St. Athanasius, St. Basil, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, and St. John Chrysostom. The sketches of these doctors, among many other things, show how serious and widespread were the controversies around the Arian heresy.

The Western figures, probably more familiar to us, include St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. Augustine, and St. Leo the Great. Benedict reflects on many others as well.

With his reflections on Augustine, Pope Benedict takes up for the first time the relationship of faith and reason. For Augustine, “I believe in order to understand” and “I understand better to believe” (page 109). This is a major theme in Benedict’s own teaching, and it is mentioned often in the sketches in this book.

The third part is “Monks and Missionaries.” While the first two parts were heavily theological, now the concerns become evangelization, morality, the spiritual life, and ways of prayer. The “Jesus prayer,” very popular today, finds its origins in this period. A relatively unknown figure—John Climacus—saw it as leading “to a state of quiet and inner peace,” an “invocation that is continuous, like breathing” (page 160).

The last grouping is “Mystics, Mendicants, and Scholastics.” In this era, the great preachers and thinkers, not only the mystics, deliberately expressed how their work must be founded in faith and love nourished by prayer.

When reflecting on the vast renewal that the mendicants—the Franciscans and Dominicans—brought to the Church, Benedict carefully notes how renewals like this were always undertaken in communion with the pope. It is an insight into Benedict’s concern for the Church after the Second Vatican Council.

The development of Franciscan theology, not so well known as scholastic theology, finds its place among the sketches. Benedict gives us St. Anthony of Padua, who among the first theology teachers of the Friars Minor, “laid the foundations of Franciscan theology” (page 254). The other figure is St. Bonaventure, “Interpreter of St. Francis” (page 256).

As one would expect, this part of Great Christian Thinkers has many sketches of the great scholastic teachers beginning with St. Anselm, “the founder of scholastic theology” (page 209). With St. Thomas, Benedict once more takes us to the question of faith and reason. He emphasizes how Thomas demonstrated the compatibility of faith and reason and detailed how reason aids faith.

The mystics are represented by the nine sketches of women that Pope Benedict presents. These are probably the most difficult sketches to appreciate as they speak of experiences so different from our own. There are the special revelations and visions, the intimate conversations with Jesus, and God’s love grasped in the graphic details of Christ’s passion. St. Catherine of Siena, for instance, counsels: “Hide in the wounds of the Crucified Christ” (page 312).

Besides their mystical experiences, many of these women were known for embracing poverty and for great charity. Shining among them would be St. Elizabeth of Hungary. St. Catherine of Siena, on the other hand, must be singled out for her great efforts at Church reform, especially the return of the papacy to Rome.

Overall, Great Christian Thinkers weaves together people, theological controversies, monastic development, renewal movements, and mystic prayer. A great picture of the Church as it has developed through the centuries emerges. If it has been some time since one has studied theology, Great Christian Thinkers helps to put it back together, relocating names, theological concepts, and renewal movements in their proper historical context. For the beginner Great Christian Thinkers is a fine “sample.”

James Challancin
is grace!

It is important for us as Catholics to become at home with words like “justification,” even though we may be more at home with a word like “salvation.” In 1999 Catholics and Lutherans signed a Joint Declaration on Justification, a statement essential in the work for unity yet not even on the radar scope of most Catholics, including clergy! A careful study of Romans is most useful for our preparation for ecumenical prayer and shared study.

In Romans 9–11, we have Paul’s great study of the relationship of our Jewish heritage to our Christian faith. Significantly Matera emphasizes that these passages are very useful in combating anti-Semitism. He suggests using the term “Chosen People” in preference to “Israel” because of the contemporary political connotations of the latter.

Matera makes the point several times that by baptismal grace we are one in Christ by the power of his death and resurrection. I wish that the author had said that we are baptized into Jesus’ life as well as his death and resurrection. The baptismal rite says that we are baptized into Jesus as prophet, priest and king, so that what happens between baptism and death is of vital import! There is enough in Paul’s writing that a homilist can preach on the fullness of this faith.

Throughout Preaching Romans, I felt very uncomfortable at the rare use of the name of Jesus. After all, “Christ” is a title, and it is hard to have an intimate friendship with a title. If anything, Pope Benedict XVI has as his personal mission for his pontificate the realization of who Jesus is (hence his three-volume work, Jesus of Nazareth). In his catechesis of October 6, 2011, about St. Therese of Lisieux, Benedict said: “This love has a face. It has a name. It is Jesus.”

The expression “Jesus, the Christ” or the “Lord, Jesus, the Christ” could capture Paul’s great love for the one who introduced himself on the road to Damascus: “I am Jesus whom you are persecuting.” And it would bring a warmth and sense of belonging, especially to our youth.

It will be up to the individual homilist to read himself full, to make the words his own, and to invest himself in the love of Jesus. This reviewer would hope that the energy and passion which Paul had for Jesus and his life in us would find joy and a sense of mission as a result of the careful study of Preaching Romans.

Regis Walling

Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals


When the daily office—the Church’s official daily prayer—was revised after the Second Vatican Council as the “liturgy of the hours,” it was hoped that this revision would be adopted not only by those bound to pray the daily office but by all Catholics as “the prayer of the Church with Christ and to Christ (Congregation of Rites, 1971, General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours [GILH],2). Such daily public prayer, “by the people of God is rightly considered to be among the primary duties of the Church” (GILH, 1). It is “not a private matter but belongs to the whole Body of the Church, whose life it both expresses and affects” (GILH, 20).

That goal of widespread acceptance and use of the prayer of the hours has yet to be met, but things are moving slowly in the right direction, at least in some places. There are parish communities that pray one or other of the “hinge hours”—morning prayer and evening prayer—in public daily; others do so seasonally. Other parishes use one of the hours or a significant part thereof (psalm, canticle, intercessions) to begin meetings. Communities without the service of a priest may pray the hours, with or without the distribution of Communion, as an option on Sundays.

The prayer of the hours has become the basis, on many occasions, for ecumenical prayer, particular with communities that have a tradition of ritual, communal daily prayer, such as the Episcopal Church, the Lutheran communions, and United Methodists, each of whom has a revised version of ritual daily prayer similar to that followed by Roman Catholics.

The influence of the reform of ritual daily prayer among all these churches is expressed in a wider study of the psalms among these churches’ members, and its influence is being felt even in so-called “non-liturgical” churches through books like Common Prayer: A Liturgy for Ordinary Radicals. It has been compiled by three activists, primarily from evangelical and Pentecostal traditions, whose main work is social change through what is sometimes called the “new monasticism,” a movement that shares communal life and prayer in traditional (for some) and non-traditional (for others) ways. They see daily ritual prayer as essential to the kind of social change they hope and work for because they understand liturgical prayer as “counterintuitive” and “counter-cultural” and therefore itself part of the social change they promote.

The book is designed for those unfamiliar with ritual daily prayer, to introduce them to this form of prayer, and for those well familiar with ritual prayer, to refresh their understanding of the ritual and to find new sources to enrich their daily prayer. The structure is simple; it combines the repeated familiarity of structured prayer and the variety offered by an annual liturgical calendar and a changing set of readings found in the lectionary.

The warm familiarity of repeated structure is found especially in the week of evening prayers. Each contains a call to worship, a confession of sins, a light service, a profession of faith, prayer for
others, the Lord’s Prayer, a biblical canticle (frequently the Magnificat), a closing prayer, and a final blessing. Variety within a familiar structure is the keynote of morning prayer, which changes daily through an annual liturgical calendar while maintaining a ritual structure that incorporates psalmody, daily biblical readings, intercession, the Lord’s Prayer, and ritual opening and closings. The book also contains a brief form of midday prayer, a collection of prayers for special occasions, and a songbook.

The extended introduction to this book is amazing. In easy-to-follow language, it introduces to those unfamiliar with the terms the meaning of common prayer, liturgy, the worldview behind liturgical prayer, the kind of time evoked in ritual and in a liturgical calendar, and prayer with the saints. The introduction is worth a read even by those most familiar with liturgy, for it offers a fresh light on ritual prayer by those who have discovered and come to love such prayer—and whose view of liturgy is certainly in accord with Roman Catholic understandings.

The book is certainly worth having on one’s resource shelf to enrich personal prayer as well as communal prayer in those circumstances when a full celebration of one of the daily hours might be too much for a particular occasion. Many of the non-Scriptural readings are challenging and beautiful. It is wonderful to see the daily liturgy being embraced and enriched by people in the “non-liturgical” churches, and it is a reminder to those of us who pray the daily liturgy of the hours, especially in common, to love and pray this gift that those of us from the “liturgical churches” have received as part of our ritual heritage.

Gordon E. Truitt

About Reviewers

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El Rito Romano — o el Rito Latino — de la Iglesia Católica es el rito litúrgico de uso más propagado en la Iglesia Católica del mundo occidental. En ese rito piensa la mayoría de la gente cuando habla de la “Eucaristía” o “la Misa”. De hecho, la mayoría de los lectores de este boletín quizás son Católicos Romanos. Su sede es la Diócesis de Roma: en sentido estricto, ese es el rito seguido por los Católicos de Roma. El resto de nosotros, que estamos fuera de los límites de esa diócesis y sus sedes suburbanas, lo hemos adoptado como nuestra norma de veneración ritual.

Por estar tan propagado y por tener libros y normas de práctica oficiales, solemos pensar que los rituales de la Iglesia Romana o Latina se realizan universalmente más o menos de la misma manera. Por supuesto, quienes han tenido la oportunidad de viajar saben que ese no es el caso. Obviamente, el lenguaje del rito y la música cambian de un país a otro. Los colores litúrgicos también pueden variar, lo mismo que la decoración de la iglesia y las formas de participación.

Todos estaríamos dispuestos a aceptar que ese ha sido ciertamente el caso desde la reformas ulteriores al Concilio Vaticano Segundo, pero olvidamos que bajo esas modificaciones hay una historia de cambio en el Rito Romano. La forma más antigua de la Eucaristía practicada en Roma surgió de las prácticas de las comunidades cristianas más antiguas del Oriente, la cuna de la Cristiandad. A finales del siglo IV, había diferencias en la forma en que se practicaba la liturgia en Roma y en la capital del Imperio en ese entonces, Milán, cuyo obispo era San Ambrosio. Cuando San Agustín llegó a Milán, notó que había una práctica de ayuno diferente de la que había experimentado en Roma. Le preguntó a Ambrosio al respecto y el obispo respondió: cuando estoy en Roma, ayuno el sábado; cuando estoy en Milán, no lo hago. Siga la costumbre de la Iglesia donde esté”.

Este consejo se dio en una época en que comenzaba a cambiar lo que la gente conocía como el Rito Romano. Al llegar el siglo VI, bajo la influencia de la forma de culto de los Cristianos de Antioquía y Alejandría, aun el corazón de la Eucaristía — la Oración Eucarística — había tenido un notable cambio. En el siglo VII (y por mucho tiempo después), la liturgia de la Iglesia de Roma fue objeto de cambios de texto, música y ritual bajo la influencia de la Iglesia en Galia (a donde se desplazaba el centro del poder político en Europa Occidental).

La música del Rito Romano tiene su propia historia de cambio. En Europa, el canto monofónico dio lugar al cántico polifónico, y la música vocal sin instrumentos se vio enriquecida al agregarse órganos y otros instrumentos. En otros países, se incorporaron instrumentos locales a la liturgia Católica, incluso los instrumentos de los pueblos indígenas de las Américas y los batintines y tambores de las naciones orientales.

Aun con el cambio continuo, la gente reconocía la estructura básica de la Misa. A pesar de los intentos postconciliares (en este caso, “postconciliares” significa “después del Concilio de Trento”) hechos por frenar esta variedad, el Rito Romano retuvo gran parte de su diversidad dentro de una unidad esencial. Hay un dicho, atribuido a varios autores (en particular a los escritores de la Reforma Europea), citado afirmativamente por el Papa Juan XXIII en su primera encíclica: “En las cosas necesarias, unidad; en las dudosas, libertad; en todas, caridad” (Ad Petri Cathedram [29 de junio de 1959], 72). Esa es la meta de las celebraciones del Rito Romano en todo el mundo.

Por eso, cuando se habla de “liturgia cantada” y se piensa en ella, se observará que la gente le asigna diferentes significados, pero todos trabajan por alcanzar la misma meta. En la obra titulada Cantemos al Señor: La música en el culto divino (STL, 2007, versión en inglés), la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos señaló dos razones principales por las cuáles la “liturgia cantada” puede significar diferentes cosas en comunidades distintas y aun diferentes cosas dentro de la misma comunidad, de vez en cuanto. La primera es la diversidad de asambleas litúrgicas: “la edad, la herencia espiritual y los antecedentes culturales y étnicos de una asamblea litúrgica dada se deben considerar como factores [que influyen] en las formas en que un grupo particular determina que es mejor unir su corazón y su mente a la acción litúrgica” (STL, 70, versión en inglés).

La liturgia cantada varía de la solemnidad a la fiesta, de una temporada a otra. Las decisiones sobre lo que se debe cantar y cómo se canta se rigen por el principio de “solemnidad progresiva”. Eso significa que “entre la forma solemne más plena de celebración litúrgica, en la cual todo lo que exige canto, de hecho, se canta, y la forma más sencilla, en la cual no hay canto, puede haber varios grados según la importancia mayor o menor asignada al canto” (STL, 111, versión en inglés; cita de la Instrucción general sobre la liturgia de las horas).

De manera que, como en otras partes de nuestra vida en común como Cristianos Católicos, cuando se trata del culto cantado, necesitamos observar tres principios: en las cosas necesarias (la importancia del culto cantado), unidad; en las dudosas (la variedad y el estilo de música para comunidades y ocasiones particulares), libertad; y en todas, caridad.
“When in Rome . . .”

The Roman Rite—or Latin Rite—of the Catholic Church is the most widespread liturgical rite used in the Western Catholic Church. It’s the one most people think of when they are talking about “Eucharist” or “the Mass.” In fact, most people reading this are probably Roman Catholic. Its home base is the Diocese of Rome: It is, quite literally, the rite used by the Catholics of Rome. And the rest of us, outside the bounds of that diocese and its suburban sees, have adopted it as our standard for ritual worship.

Because it is so widespread, and because it has official books and standards of practice, we tend to think that the rituals of the Roman or Latin Church are conducted universally pretty much the same way. Those who have had an opportunity to travel, of course, know that this is not the case. Certainly the language of the rite changes, as does the music, from one country to another. Liturgical colors may also vary, as may church decoration and forms of participation.

We would all be willing to agree that this has certainly been the case since the reforms following the Second Vatican Council, but we forget that before those changes there is a whole history of change in the Roman Rite. The earliest form of the Eucharist practiced at Rome developed from the practices of older Christian communities in the East, the birthplace of Christianity. By the end of the fourth century, there were differences in the way the liturgy was practiced in Rome and in what was then the imperial capital, Milan, where St. Ambrose was bishop. When St. Augustine arrived in Milan, he noticed that there was a different practice in fasting from what he had experienced in Rome. He asked Ambrose about it, and the bishop replied: “When I am in Rome, I fast on a Saturday; when I am in Milan, I do not. Follow the custom of the church where you are.”

This advice came at a time when what people knew as the Roman Rite was itself beginning to change. By the sixth century, under the influence of how Christians were worshiping at Antioch and Alexandria, even the heart of the Eucharist—the Eucharistic Prayer—had undergone a dramatic change. In the seventh century (and for some considerable time thereafter), the liturgy of the Church of Rome continued to go through changes in text, music, and ritual under the influence of the Church in Gaul (where the center of political power in Western Europe was then centered).

The music of the Roman Rite has its own history of change. In Europe, monophonic chant yielded to polyphonic song, and non-instrumental vocal music was enriched by the addition of organs and other instruments. In other countries, local instruments were incorporated into Catholic liturgy, including the instruments of indigenous peoples in the Americas and the gongs and drums of Oriental nations.

With all of the continuing change, of course, people still recognized the basic structure of the Mass. Despite postconciliar attempts to rein in this variety (in this case, “postconciliar” means “after the Council of Trent”), the Roman Rite retained much of its diversity within an essential unity. There is a saying, attributed to various authors (especially to writers in the European Reformation) but quoted affirmatively by Pope John XXIII in his first encyclical: “In essentials, unity; in doubtful matters, liberty; in all things, charity” (Ad Petri Cathedram [June 29, 1959], 72). That is the goal of celebrations of the Roman Rite throughout the world.

That is why, when you talk and think about “sung liturgy,” you’ll find that people mean different things, but they’re all working toward the same goal. In Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship (STL, 2007), the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops pointed to two main reasons why “sung liturgy” may mean different things in different communities, and even different things within the same community, from time to time. The first is the diversity of liturgical assemblies: “Factors such as the age, spiritual heritage, and cultural and ethnic background of a given liturgical assembly must be considered [since they influence] the ways in which a particular group finds it best to join their hearts and minds to the liturgical action” (STL, 70).

The second reason is that sung liturgy varies from solemnity to feast, from season to season. Decisions about what is to be sung and how it is to be sung are governed by the principle of “progressive solemnity.” This means that “between the solemn, fuller form of liturgical celebration, in which everything that demands singing is in fact sung, and the simplest form, in which singing is not used, there can be various degrees according to the greater or lesser place allotted to singing” (STL, 111, quoting the General Instruction of the Liturgy of the Hours).

So, as in other parts of our shared life as Catholic Christians, when it comes to sung worship, we need to observe three things: unity in essentials (the importance of sung worship); liberty in doubtful matters (the amount and style of music for particular communities and occasions); and, in all things, charity.
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