

OUR 40th Year

PASTORAL MUSIC

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PASTORAL MUSICIANS

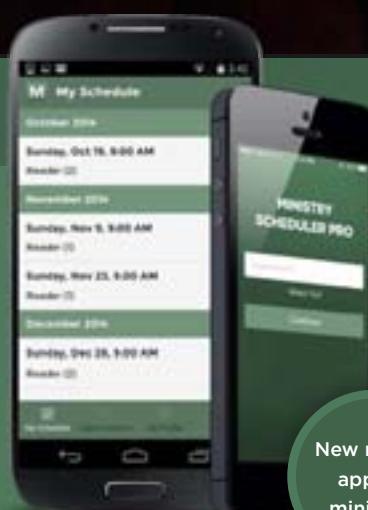
MARCH 2016

Echoes of Mercy

NAM



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Thank you to the 2016 participating choirs for making the 1st Annual Festival For Epiphany a success!

2nd Annual
Youth & Young Adult Choir
FESTIVAL 2017
FOR EPIPHANY



You are invited to join us for the 2nd Annual Festival For Epiphany: December 30, 2016 - January 7, 2017



From the Vatican, 29 January 2016

Dear Conductors and Choristers,

I hereby wish to congratulate you for the exceptional music performed in service on January 6th in St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican, on the occasion of the Eucharistic Celebration presided by the Holy Father, Pope Francis on the Epiphany.

The choirs demonstrated excellent musical training combined with good discipline and high motivation that can only make possible the highest quality of music proper for this setting.

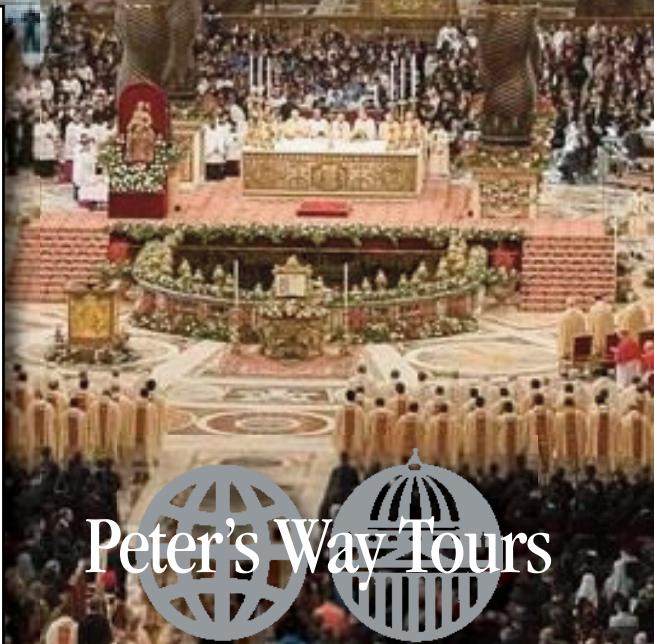
I believe that the fruitful hours we shared together in St. Peter's Basilica on the occasion of Solemnity of the Epiphany can be experienced again next year with musical preparation beginning now.

I thank you again for your dedication and professionalism, and in the hope of meeting again next year, I send you cordial greetings.



Mons. Massimo Palombella
Maestro Direttore

Festival Directors, Dr. John Romeri and Patrick Flahive
The Archdiocesan Boys and Girls Choir of Philadelphia - Michael Zubert, Director
The Pueri Cantores of San Gabriel Valley Choir - Patrick Flahive, Director
The St. Barnabas Festival Youth Choir - Sharon Traditi, Director
The St. Brigid School Honor Choir - Dr. Christoph Tietze, Director
The Most Pure Heart of Mary Schola Cantorum - Dr. Lucas Tappan, Director
The Divine Mercy Children's Choir, Orlando - Elizabeth Moore, Director
The Bishop Amat Choir, Los Angeles - Jennifer Srisami, Director
The St. Anthony Camerata Chorale Festival Choir - Mary Ann Fahey-Darling, Director
The Glen Cove High School Select Chorale - Edward P. Norris III, Director
The St. Joseph Choir - Nelda Chapman, Director



Peter's Way Tours

For more information on
The 2nd Annual Festival For Epiphany
or our 2016/2017 Familiarization Tours
call: 800-225-7662 x12
or E-mail peter@petersway.com



From the President

Dear Members:

“Lord, have mercy!” I suspect that this prayer, this cry, is on our lips frequently in these Lenten days and, in this Jubilee Year of Mercy, perhaps it is something that will extend beyond the Forty Days. The Year of Mercy is not meant to be a blip on the radar or a one-time opportunity but rather an invitation to realize and to accept what has always been freely and readily available to all who call upon the Lord. We have known this all along: The cry for mercy has been part of the Liturgy from the earliest centuries of the “Roman Rite”—*Kyrie, eleison . . . Miserere nobis!* While we may be accustomed to singing this litany occasionally, especially during Lent and Advent, perhaps this year could be a fitting time to focus on or give more attention to the Penitential Act as a means of giving thanks for the gift and blessing of the promise of the Savior’s mercy.

There will, no doubt, be many initiatives during this year to call attention to the gift of God’s mercy and the challenge to reflect that gift in our own lives. We are called to be, as the logo for the Jubilee depicts, “Merciful Like the Father.” Pope Francis continues to show us how to embody God’s mercy as he embraces those who would otherwise be overlooked or forgotten. As music ministers, we have the opportunity to follow Pope Francis’ example in several ways. More often than not, we don’t know the situations or struggles of those who hear our songs, join in singing our refrains, or have their hearts touched by our melodies. Keep in mind the power of your ministry and your song, and be open to the power of the Holy Spirit to inspire your singing and not only the singing but the fully attentive listening of all in the gathered liturgical assembly.

When we gather this summer in Houston for our Thirty-Ninth Annual Convention, we will also celebrate our fortieth year as an Association. We have much to celebrate, and as we look back over forty years of our work as music ministers and the contributions our Association has made to the prayer of the Church in the United States across four decades, we will also look forward to the challenges we face as the Church is called to be face of

God’s mercy in new ways.

This year’s convention will reflect the growing diversity of cultures, languages, and peoples of the Church in America. I have discovered the joy of such diversity in my first year as pastor of a parish that has experienced the blessing of the infusion of a new diversity of cultures. Our parish was founded in the 1840s to welcome and serve Irish immigrants working in the nearby quarries (which, incidentally, furnished the stone for the Washington Monument in the District of Columbia). Today we are welcoming new immigrants from various Latino cultures and Spanish-speaking countries. I have been challenged to extend my own vision and skills. I am learning to speak Spanish now (and I hope that, by the time we meet in Houston, I will have mastered some basic conversational skills!), and I am learning more about how to show mercy as I try to be pastor to all in my community.

I would be remiss if I did not pause to pay tribute to Paul Inwood, a longtime member of our Association, for his contribution to the Year of Mercy. Paul’s composition was selected by the Vatican to become the official hymn of the Year of Mercy. His composition is evocative and prayerful, and it helps us to articulate our cry for mercy as we stand before the Lord, aware of our dependence on his freely-bestowed gift. We offer congratulations to Paul and thanks for what he has provided to assist us as ministers of God’s mercy during this year.

May God’s mercy pour into our hearts during this year, that we may become more authentic voices and witnesses of this precious gift of God.

God’s peace,

Rev. Msgr. Richard B. Hilgartner
President and CEO



NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
PASTORAL MUSICIANS

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PASTORAL Music

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Cover: During his visit to Brazil in 2013, Pope Francis visited people recovering from drug addiction and chemical dependency at Rio's St. Francis of Assisi of the Providence of God Hospital, where he embraced one of the people recovering. Photo by Tomaz Silva, Agência Brasil, used with permission.

Additional photos courtesy of Mark Neyman, Government Press Office, Israel; St. Catherine of Siena Parish, New York, New York; Amblin Entertainment/Universal Studios, Universal City, California; Ron Gilbert, Desert Hot Springs, California; Tabla Rasa Gallery, New York, New York; and NPM file photos.



Mission Statement

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.

The members of the Board of Directors are elected by the NPM Council to serve a four-year term. They may be re-elected once. With some exceptions, elected and appointed members of the NPM Council serve four-year terms, renewable once. Terms begin on January 1 following an election and end on December 31 of the fourth year.

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	Term/End
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Ms. Lena Gokelman	(1/2017)
Sr. Kathleen Harmon, SND de N	(1/2019)
Mr. Jeremy Helmes	(1/2019)
Ms. Meg Matuska	(1/2019)
Rev. Msgr. Richard B. Hilgartner, <i>NPM President</i>	

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Dr. Dolly Sokol, <i>Finance</i>	(1/2016)
Dr. James Wickman, <i>Education</i>	(2/2018)

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Mr. Nicholas Dragone, <i>Pianists</i>	(1/2016)
[Vacant], <i>Pastoral Liturgy</i>	(1/2016)
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Mr. Tom Kendzia, <i>Composers</i>	(1/2016)
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Mr. Rex Rund, <i>Choir Directors</i>	(1/2018)
Lt. Col. Steve Ruiz, USAF (Ret), <i>Musicians in the Military</i>	(1/2016)
Dr. Michael V. Smth, <i>Music Education</i>	(1/2016)
Ms. Angela Stramaglia, <i>Campus Ministers</i>	(1/2016)

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His Eminence Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo, <i>Episcopal Moderator</i>
Ms. Anne Ketzer, <i>Board of Directors Chair</i>
Dr. Anne Sinclair, <i>DMMD Division President</i>
Mr. Peter Maher, <i>NPM Staff Representative</i>

The Association President and the NPM Board members also serve on the NPM Council without a vote.

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CONVENTION 2016

Did You Make the Deadline?

March 31 is this year's deadline for early bird registration—the biggest member savings for the 2016 Convention. But if you miss that deadline, don't panic! You now have plenty of time to register before the advance registration deadline: June 10. Remember: The members' advance fee is a savings of \$105 off the non-members' fee! So get your registration in soon. You can register securely online at npm.org or by mail or (with a credit card) by fax.

And don't forget the group discounts that can save you even more: the clergy-musician duo discount, group parish discount, and chapter discount.

Remember: There are special discounted registration fees for NPM youth members and for seminarians and religious-in-formation.

Institutes in Houston

NPM Institutes are intensely focused opportunities for deepening learning and improving skills. This year, our gathering in Houston offers an opportunity to participate in one of two weeklong institutes. Both institutes begin on Monday, July 11, at 9:00 AM and end on Friday, July 15, at 11:30 AM. Participation in these programs requires full convention registration; the institutes take place during all the breakout sessions, and participants are expected to attend all sessions. Opportunities for liturgical prayer and formation will take place as part of the convention Liturgies, plenum presentations, and events.

The Piano and Organ Institute addresses technique, repertoire, liturgical playing, and improvisation skills at the individual participant's ability level. Bring

..... NPM 40TH ANNIVERSARY

YOU'RE INVITED BẠN ĐƯỢC MỜI
..... ESTÁS INVITADO

THE CHURCH SINGS
LA IGLESIA CANTA
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PASTORAL MUSICIANS
39TH ANNUAL CONVENTION
HOUSTON, TEXAS
JULY 11-16, 2016

NPM

church music to play in a master class setting: hymns, songs, psalm settings, accompaniments, and repertoire. This intense learning experience is taught by the outstanding team of Dr. Lynn Trapp and Dr. James Kosnik.

The Composer and Text Writer Institute focuses on composing music and crafting texts for God's diverse pilgrim Church. The team of Paul Inwood and Rory Cooney offer challenge, encouragement, and plenty of practical help.

Pre-registration is required for either institute, and space is limited. The fee for either program is \$90; there is no on-site registration.

Unity Explosion at NPM



Unity Explosion is sponsored by Region X of the USCCB and is hosted by the Catholic Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. It began as a gathering in 1989 in Dallas, Texas, with the vision to recognize, embrace, and share liturgically the gifts

that American Catholics of African descent bring to the universal Church. The mission of the conference has grown to provide an experience that addresses the expressed leadership, ministerial, catechetical, liturgical, and evangelization needs of families, particularly those of African descent. Unity Explosion celebrated its twenty-fifth anniversary in 2015. This year, at the invitation of Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, Unity Explosion 2016 will be celebrated during and as part of the 2016 NPM Convention in Houston. Program elements have been designed as part of our wider gathering, and Explosion participants may register at the NPM members' rate. Spread the word!

NPM at Forty

While he was serving as executive director of The North American Liturgical Conference from 1974 to 1976, Father Virgil Funk recognized the need for a focus on the changes taking place in Catholic Liturgy and especially their impact on church musicians. Using his own savings and working with the mailing list of the former National Catholic Music Educators Association (NCMEA) as well as that association's donated furniture, equipment, and their financial liabilities to their members, he brought a new organization into being on July 1, 1976. There was a staff of two—Father Funk and Sister Jane Marie Perrot, dc (NCMEA's executive secretary at the time), and their first office was in the basement of St. Mark Parish, Hyattsville, Maryland. Because Father Funk saw the value of a magazine or journal to provide contact and services to members, he hired an Episcopal priest—Bill Detweiler—as the yet-unnamed magazine's first editor. Names for the association and its publication soon coalesced. The National Association of Pastoral Musicians would publish *Pastoral Music*. All they needed now were members. Solicitations brought in the first 1,700 members, and the Association was

on its way.

This year in Houston, under the commitment "For the Breadth and Depth of Catholic Music," NPM will celebrate its fortieth anniversary. We begin on Monday afternoon with a performance of some of the music that was commissioned by NPM or premiered at our conventions. Recordings and live performances will take us on a musical journey through some of the Association's contributions to the repertoire. On Monday evening, before the Opening Exhibit Gala and Late-Night Expo, Monsignor Hilgartner will lead us in an anniversary toast (champagne or sparkling grape juice). Complimentary snacks and a cash bar will encourage us to continue the celebration while we visit the exhibits for the first time. Happy anniversary, NPM!

Multicultural Intensive

Woven through the 2016 Convention is the recognition and celebration of the Archdiocese of Houston's diverse population. Between 2000 and 2010, the Houston metropolitan area added more people (over 1.2 million) than any other metropolitan area in the United States. As of 2010, the Houston metropolitan area became the most racially/ethnically diverse large metropolitan area in the nation, and in the Houston region, every racial/ethnic group is now a demographic minority. Like themes that coalesce into a grand musical statement, this focus on cultural diversity, winding through the whole convention week, will be highlighted in a Multicultural Intensive that ends our week in Houston. Beginning with the Conven-

Member Parish Discount

NPM is pleased to offer discounts to member parishes that send five or more people from the parish as full convention attendees. This schedule outlines parish savings for the 2016 NPM Annual Convention based on the member advanced registration fee of \$345.

5–9 attendees:	5% discount (\$328 each)
10–19 attendees:	10% discount (\$311 each)
20–29 attendees:	20% discount (\$276 each)
30 or more attendees:	30% discount (\$242 each)

Stipulations

1. Parish must have a current NPM membership.
2. Parish discount is limited to members of one parish—no grouping of parishes permitted.
3. A registration form with complete information filled out must be enclosed for each and every registrant.
4. No discount on youth, daily, or companion registrations.
5. Only one discount will be given per registrant (that is, the parish group discount cannot be combined with the chapter or clergy-musician duo discount).
6. All convention forms and fees must be mailed together in one envelope.
7. Registrations must be postmarked by May 27, 2016.
8. No additions can be made to the group's registration once the registrations have been mailed to NPM.

Mail completed registration forms with payment before May 27 to: NPM Convention Parish Discount, PO Box 4207, Silver Spring, MD 20914-4207.

tion Eucharist on Thursday evening, we will welcome participants in this intensive, which will last until Saturday afternoon and will include presentations in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese. There will also be special programs for participants of African descent. Those who participate *only* in the Multicultural Intensive may do so at a special price (\$100 for the advance registration fee, March 5–July 10). Convention participants who register for the full convention and want to extend their participation through the Intensive may do so for an add-on price of just \$50.

Program Scholarships

Program scholarships assist with participation in shorter learning experiences such as NPM conventions and institutes. These scholarships are offered by several donors to particular groups of people. **All applications for the 2016 Annual Convention in Houston, Texas, must be received by June 10, 2016. Scholarship applications cannot be reviewed without all completed forms.**

NPM Program Scholarships are made possible through the generosity of NPM members who have made financial contributions to the NPM Program Scholarship Fund. These scholarships are provided to assist pastoral musicians with limited financial resources in taking advantage of opportunities for continuing formation at NPM conventions and institutes. Applicants for scholarships must be NPM members and should be from economically disadvantaged parishes. The financial need of the applicant should be reflected in the application. Scholarship applications are considered on a case-by-case basis. NPM encourages members of all ethnic and racial groups to apply for scholarships. Scholarships for conventions include full convention registration *only*. Scholarships for NPM institutes include the commuter registration fee *only*. All remaining costs

Nominating the Chapter Leader of the Year

An award to recognize the NPM 2016 Chapter Leader of the Year will be presented at the Pastoral Musicians Luncheon on Thursday, July 14, during the 2016 Convention in Houston, Texas.

All completed nominating applications will be reviewed by the Awards Committee of the National Committee for Chapters. The National Committee for Chapters has identified the following attributes that will be considered during its deliberations. Therefore, please include information about the nominated candidate that would relate to any of these attributes. (Note: Candidates must be current national NPM members but need not reflect *all* of the other attributes.)

The Chapter Leader of the Year will

- Be a national member of NPM;
- Serve on national NPM committees and/or the NPM Council or Board;
- Promote national NPM events (i.e. webinars, institutes, and colloquia) to chapter members;
- Attend annual NPM conventions regularly;
- Participate in chapter events at national NPM conventions;
- Establish and sustain healthy relationships with (arch)diocesan personnel;
- Establish relationships with local institutions of higher education with music or theology programs;
- Serve in a leadership role (or roles) in one or more chapters for a minimum of six years;
- Be instrumental in planning and executing excellent programming in the local chapter;
- Demonstrate a vibrancy that contributes to the strength of the local chapter;

- Encourage national membership within the chapter and new NPM memberships within the (arch)diocese;
- Provide opportunities for NPM certification within the chapter;
- Publish pieces related to chapters in local and national publications;
- Have a dedicated, responsible working relationship with the National Committee for Chapters.

Anyone who has worked with the nominee in the ministry of pastoral music may submit a nomination for an NPM national member to be considered for this award (e.g., industry personnel, an NPM member, a priest, [arch]diocesan personnel). NPM members are encouraged to submit applications.

Nominations are to be made in a letter format and sent to:

National Association
of Pastoral Musicians
Attention:
NPM National Committee for Chapters
962 Wayne Avenue, Suite 210
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Or nominations may be emailed to Kathleen Haley, NPM Membership Director, at Haley@npm.org. Please use the email subject: Chapter Nomination.

The nomination letter should contain the name, address, phone number, and email address of the nominee and also of the person submitting the nomination. Nominations for the 2016 Chapter Leader of the Year must be received in the NPM National Office **no later than April 20, 2016**.

Nominating the Chapter of the Year

An award to recognize the NPM 2016 Chapter of the Year will be presented at the NPM Pastoral Musicians Luncheon on Thursday, July 16, during the 2016 Convention in Houston, Texas.

All completed nominating applications will be reviewed by the Awards Committee of the National Committee for Chapters. The National Committee for Chapters has identified the following attributes that will be considered during its deliberations. Therefore, please include information about the nominated chapter that would relate to any of these attributes. (Note: Chapters need not reflect *all* of the attributes.)

The Chapter of the Year will

- Provide substantial programming—five or more locally produced programs in each of the last two years with strong participation of members;
- Offer programs that are educational, musical, and/or spiritual and provide connections to the (arch)diocese and to the community at large;
- Exercise avenues for publicizing the work of the chapter in NPM publications such as “Chapter Happenings” in *Pastoral Music* magazine;
- Maintain an elected chapter director and core committee;
- Encourage a supportive relationship with the local (arch)diocese;
- Exhibit a high (or increasing) ratio of national members, especially in recruiting new NPM members in the (arch)diocese;
- Provide exemplary communications with members (newsletter, website, other);
- Utilize ongoing programs for recruit-

ment and education of local pastoral musicians;

- Meet any significant challenges to chapter development with success;
- Demonstrate a strong representation of chapter members at annual NPM conventions;
- Keep a close rapport with the National Committee for Chapters;
- File reports when requested and maintain an ongoing current listing of all officers and board members with complete contact information in conjunction with the National Committee for Chapters.

Anyone who has worked with the nominated chapter in the ministry of pastoral music may submit a nomination for a local NPM Chapter to be considered for this award. NPM members are encouraged to submit applications.

Nominations are to be made in a letter format and sent to:

National Association
of Pastoral Musicians
Attention:
NPM National Committee for Chapters
962 Wayne Avenue, Suite 210
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Or nominations may be emailed to Kathleen Haley, NPM Membership Director, at Haley@npm.org. Please use the email subject: Chapter Nomination.

The nomination letter should contain the name, address, phone number, and email address of the nominee and also of the person submitting the nomination. Nominations for the 2016 Chapter of the Year must be received in the NPM National Office **no later than April 20, 2016**.

must be borne by the applicant and/or his or her parish. The NPM Scholarship application and parish recommendation forms are available online at http://wwwnpm.org/EducationEvents/program_scholarship/scholarships.htm.

Paluch Family Foundation/World Library Publications Program Scholarships. Available: One \$700 scholarship; three \$600 scholarships. These scholarships are provided to assist pastoral musicians with limited financial resources in taking advantage of opportunities for continuing formation at NPM conventions. These scholarships cover the cost of full advance convention registration (\$345) plus additional funds to be applied to travel or related convention expenses. Applicants for these Paluch/WLP program scholarships must be NPM members and should be from economically disadvantaged parishes. Scholarship applications are considered on a case-by-case basis. Scholarships are awarded depending on the financial need of the applicant. The Paluch/WLP Scholarship application and parish recommendation forms are available online at http://wwwnpm.org/EducationEvents/program_scholarship/scholarships.htm.

Steven Warner and Notre Dame Folk Choir Program Scholarships for Young Pastoral Musicians Serving in Campus Ministry. Available: Five \$450 scholarships. These scholarships are provided to assist pastoral musicians *currently serving in campus ministry* to take advantage of opportunities for continuing formation at NPM conventions. They cover the cost of full advance youth convention registration (\$235) plus additional funds to be applied to travel or related convention expenses. Applicants for these program scholarships must be NPM youth members (under 21 or currently enrolled in full-time undergraduate programs) who are currently working in campus ministry, especially those engaged in music ministry on college campuses. Scholarship applications

are considered on a case-by-case basis. The Steve Warner/Notre Dame Folk Choir Scholarship application and campus ministry recommendation forms are available online at http://www.npm.org/EducationEvents/program_scholarship/scholarships.htm.

College/Postgrad Interns 2016

Internships at the 2016 NPM Annual Convention in Houston, Texas (July 11–16) are available for students who are eighteen to twenty-five years old. We are looking especially for technical interns and also roving reporters.

Breakout Room Technical Interns work with anything that needs to be plugged in. They assist presenters to assure that their computers and LCD projectors communicate with each other, and they trouble-shoot LCD projectors, computers, and portable sound systems. Tech interns have to be familiar with current AV, portable sound system, LCD, and computer (PC and Mac) technology; possess excellent problem-solving skills; and be able to interact in a professional and hospitable manner with speakers, volunteers, and convention participants.

Roving Reporters work in teams of two to explore the convention facilities and various convention events, interviewing speakers and participants, and they upload video and photos to *YouTube*, *Facebook*, and other sites as needed. Reporters should have an outgoing personality and the ability to engage others in conversation; the skill to operate a hand-held video camera for interviews and action shots; and skill in conducting interviews in an interesting, interactive, and respectful manner.

Assignments will be based on program needs, applicants' preferences, and the number of applications that we receive. We will honor preferences as much as possible, but we may assign applicants to other positions if needed. A training session for

all interns will take place on Sunday, July 10. Interns will be required to work for four to six hours each day, depending on the convention schedule for that day. Each intern will receive complimentary registration for the full convention and housing for five nights in hotel rooms shared with other interns. Interns must cover other costs associated with their participation (e.g., travel and food).

If you would like to apply for a college / postgraduate internship position for the 2016 NPM Annual Convention you need to:

- be an NPM member—youth, individual, or parish group (*campus ministry offices, schools, and other church institutions may join NPM as parish members*);
- be at least eighteen years old but not older than twenty-five;
- have the ability to perform the internship position for which you are applying;
- be in Houston, Texas, for the entire week of Convention including Sunday, the pre-convention training day. Some interns may be asked to work through the Multicultural Intensive on Friday and Saturday (July 16–17); an additional night's hotel room will be provided. This additional service is not mandatory for acceptance into the program.

Application materials must include a completed application form; an essay (1,000 words) describing your previous and current involvement in music ministry and the particular gifts you bring to the internship program; and a letter of reference from your pastor, music director, teacher, campus minister, or equivalent that speaks to your good character and your competence for the particular internship position for which you are applying. These application materials must be postmarked or time-stamped by **May 15, 2016**. Successful applications will be notified no later than **May 31**.

Hotline Online

Hotline is an online service provided by the Membership Department at the National Office. Listings include members seeking employment, churches seeking staff, and occasionally church music supplies or products for sale. 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 sixty days (\$75 for members / \$100 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, email, and/or website addresses), ads are limited to a maximum of 100 words.

Ads may be submitted by email to Haley@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.

Additional information and the application form are available at the NPM website: <http://www.npm.org/EducationEvents/convention/national/interns.htm>.

Convention Hotel

The Hilton Americas-Houston Hotel is our convention hotel. It is large enough, in fact, to house most of the convention—plenum sessions, performances, prayer, and breakouts (some breakout sessions will be

in the neighboring George R. Brown Convention Center, and some performances will be in nearby churches). There are plenty of sleeping rooms for convention participants. Please do not contact NPM for hotel reservations. When you make your reservation, please note these important points:

- Use booking code 1PT to receive the NPM Convention rate. Online room reservations may be made at <http://tinyurl.com/Hilton2016>.
- All reservations must be guaranteed with a one-night deposit charged to a major credit card or paid by check.
- If you have to cancel, the deposit will only be returned if you cancel thirty days before the Convention opens. This policy is required by the hotel to gain us the convention room discount, to make sure that rooms are available for all participants, and to guarantee that NPM is not responsible for covering last-minute cancellations.
- If you join Hilton Honors, you will receive free wi-fi in your room (and other benefits). To join HHonors, go to: <http://tinyurl.com/NPMHHonors>.

Prayers for the Convention

The following prayers are drawn from *The Roman Missal/Misal Romano*. We encourage you to pray one or more of them for the success of the 2016 Annual Convention.

O God, in the covenant of your Christ you never cease to gather to yourself from all nations a people growing together in unity through the Spirit; grant, we pray, that your Church, faithful to the mission entrusted to her, may continually go forward with the human family and always be the leaven and the soul of

human society, to renew it in Christ and transform it into the family of God.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

English translation, *The Roman Missal*, second edition, Masses and Prayers for Various Needs and Occasions; 1B. For the Church.

Oh Dios, que en la nueva alianza de Cristo sigues creándote un pueblo con gentes de todas las naciones

que encuentran su perfecta unidad en el Espíritu,

haz que tu Iglesia, fiel a la misión que recibida,

camine siempre en unión de los hombres, como fermento y alma de la sociedad, que ha de ser renovada en Jesucristo y transformada en familia de Dios.

Por nuestro Señor Jesucristo.

Misal Romano de la segunda edición típica aprobada por la Conferencia Episcopal Española, Misas por diversas necesidades; 1B Por la Iglesia.

We humbly ask you, Lord, lover of the human family,

to pour out more fully upon us the grace of your Spirit,

and grant that, walking worthily in the vocation

to which you have called us,

we may bear witness to the truth before others

and seek with confidence

the unity of all believers in the bond of peace.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity

of the Holy Spirit,

one God, for ever and ever.

English translation, *The Roman Missal*, second edition, Masses and Prayers for Various Needs and Occasions; 17. For the Unity of Christians.

Señor y Padre de todos,

derrama sobre nosotros la gracia de tu

Espíritu,

y concédenos que comportándonos

de una manera digna de la vocación recibida,

demos testimonio de la verdad ante los hombres

buscando la unidad de todos los creyentes.

Por nuestro Señor Jesucristo, tu Hijo que vive y reina contigo en la unidad del Espíritu Santo

y es Dios, por los siglos de los siglos.

Misal Romano de la segunda edición típica aprobada por la Conferencia Episcopal Española, Misas por diversas necesidades; 17A. Por la unidad de los Cristianos.

ACADEMIC SCHOLARSHIPS 2016

Academic scholarships assist with the cost of educational formation for pastoral musicians in formal academic settings. An applicant must be an NPM member with a demonstrated financial need who is enrolled full-time or part-time in a graduate or undergraduate degree program of studies related to the field of pastoral music during the 2016–2017 school year. Applicant should intend to work at least two years in the field of pastoral music following graduation/program completion. NPM encourages members of all ethnic and racial groups to apply for scholarships. Scholarship funds may be applied *only* to registration, tuition, fees, or books. Scholarship is awarded for one year *only*; former recipients may re-apply, but renewal is not automatic.

This year, through the generosity of our members and our academic partners, NPM is offering \$21,000 in academic scholarships. (An additional \$500 is contributed to the Rensselaer Challenge Grant, which is administered and awarded by the Rensselaer Program of Church Music and Liturgy at St. Joseph's College in Rensselaer, Indiana.)

- \$4,000 NPM Members Scholarship
- \$4,000 Nancy Bannister Scholarship
- \$3,000 NPM La Beca Juan XXIII (award-

ed to a student of Hispanic/Latino/
Latina background)

- \$1,500 James W. Kosnik Scholarship
- \$1,000 Funk Family Memorial Scholarship
- \$1,000 Dosogne Memorial Scholarship and the Rendler-Georgetown Chorale Scholarship
- \$1,000 Father Lawrence Heiman, CPPS, Scholarship
- \$1,000 Lucien Deiss, CSSP, Memorial Scholarship
- \$2,500 OCP Scholarship
- \$2,000 GIA Pastoral Musicians Scholarship

Application Deadline: April 8, 2016.

Application Information and Forms:
<http://www.npm.org/Membership/scholarship.htm>.

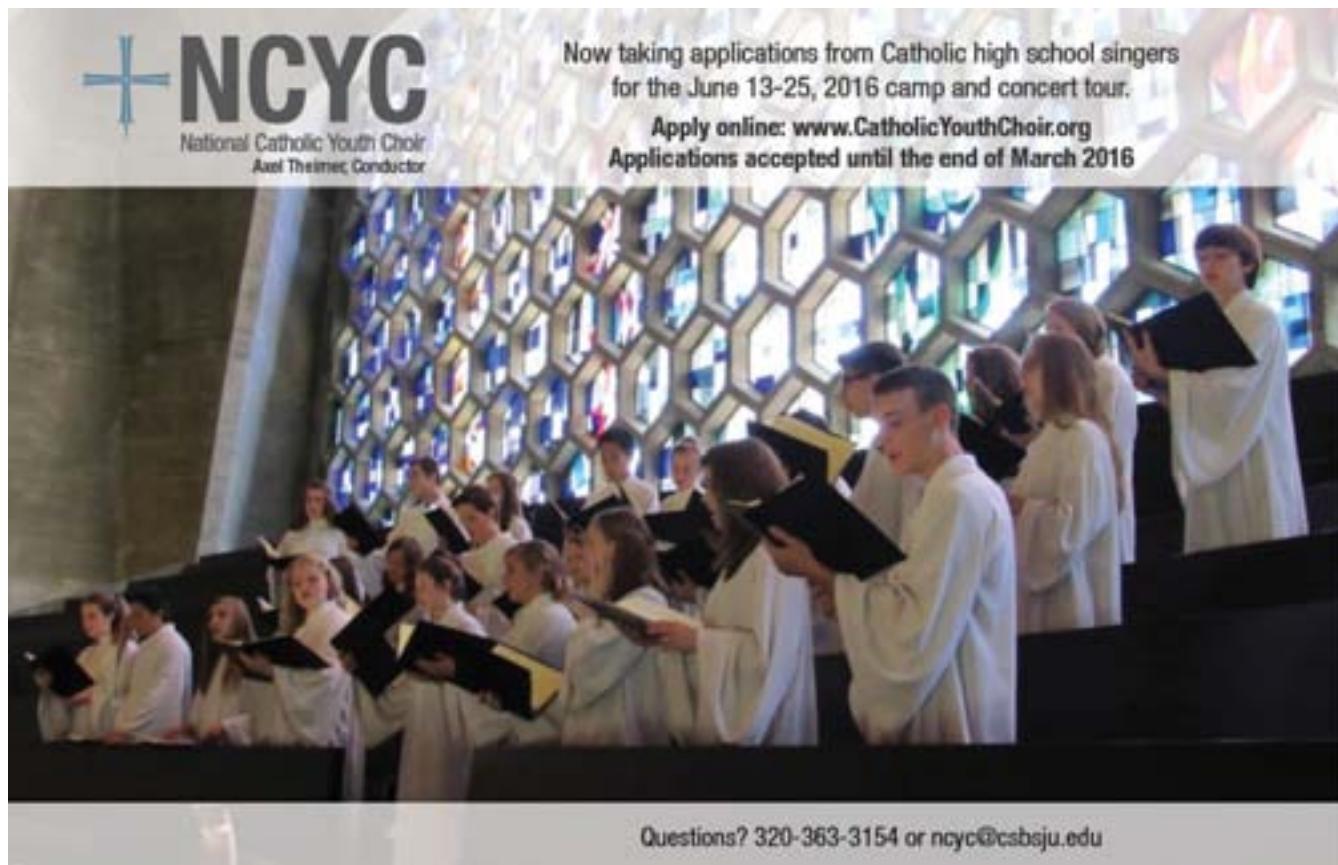
INSTITUTES

This year, NPM is offering five Institutes—intensely focused opportunities for deepening learning and improving skills. Two of them are taking place during the 2016 Annual Convention in Houston, July 6–11. Check the convention brochure in the January issue or online at www.npm.org for information on the **Piano and Organ Institute** and the **Composer and Text Writer Institute**.

The 2016 **Guitar and Ensemble Institute** is scheduled for June 27–July 1 in Milford, Ohio. This five-day intensive training program is intended primarily for guitarists at all levels—beginner, intermediate, advanced—and for instrumentalists who serve as part of worship ensembles. It is also designed for directors of ensembles and for those who lead with a combination of instruments and voice. Additional information is found on page forty-four in this issue.

NPM Institute Plus is a new approach to such learning opportunities. Our first “Plus” is scheduled for June 13–16 in Grand Rapids, Michigan. It is a formational event set in a spiritual context. Father Paul Colloton, OSFS, will be the spiritual director for this program. The rest of the Institute staff includes Steve Petrunak, Mary Dumm, Marc Anderson, Anna Belle O’Shea, Tom Franzak, and Bonnie Faber.

NPM Institute Plus—Bilingüe is a shorter version of the “Plus” Institute offered in English and Spanish. Set in a spiritual, retreat context, this Institute will focus on pastoral musicians—especially guitarists—liturgists, and cantor/psalmists who want to get away for a few days of prayer, reflection, practical skills, and new music. The Institute staff includes Jaime Cortez, Ricardo Lopez, Estella Lopez, Fabian Yanez, Ken Gilman, and Lourdes Montgomery. You’ll find additional information on page forty-five.



NCYC
National Catholic Youth Choir
Axel Theimer, Conductor

Now taking applications from Catholic high school singers
for the June 13–25, 2016 camp and concert tour.

Apply online: www.CatholicYouthChoir.org
Applications accepted until the end of March 2016

Questions? 320-363-3154 or ncyc@csbsju.edu



**“Angels descending bring from above
Echoes of Mercy
whispers of love”**

Fanny J. Crosby, “Blessed Assurance” (1873)



Come, True Light! Come . . .

By GERARD FRANCIK

When I was growing up, my dad had a workshop in the basement where he kept all kinds of things: plumbing supplies, pieces of wood, extra electrical wire. He drove my mother crazy with all the little pieces of things that he saved. “You never know when you might need this,” he would say. And sure enough, some of his greatest and proudest moments were when he needed that one type of bolt or that one little piece of wood molding that fit perfectly and that he had saved in his workshop.

My dad was not overtly religious. Certainly, he went to church and made sure we did as well, but he was never overtly religious in the sense of reading from the Scriptures, talking about God much, or praying the rosary. This was not how he was raised. So it struck me as strange that above his workshop, on this old wooden beam that was part of the structure of the house, he had a large brass plaque that read: “My Jesus, Mercy.”

I remember that plaque well, but I never understood why that plaque was there, and I never asked him about it. It has only been in later years, when, unfortunately, I’ve found myself in many cemeteries, particularly in cemeteries associated with Redemptorist parishes, that I’ve noticed that same phrase on tombstones: “My Jesus, Mercy.” It’s on my father’s gravestone, but I was surprised to see it there after we celebrated his funeral and brought him to the place of burial. It’s obviously a Redemptorist prayer or motto, one that was used many times by this order’s preachers and especially

in their retreats. It echoes the Jesus Prayer, so familiar in Eastern Church spirituality: “Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me a sinner.” Since Mom and Dad

Rev. Gerard Francik, a priest of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, was ordained in 1987. He holds degrees in communication, music, theology, and spirituality. Father Francik has served as an associate pastor, director of a youth retreat house, chaplain and director of campus ministry at Mount St. Mary College (now University) in Emmitsburg, Maryland, and vocations director for the Archdiocese of Baltimore. He serves currently as pastor of St. Mark Church in Fallston, Maryland. This article is based on a keynote presentation for the catechists of the Archdiocese of Baltimore at St. Joseph Church, Cockeysville, Maryland, on September 2, 2015. In that presentation, Father Francik was joined by OCP composer and performer Sarah Hart, whose song “Come, True Light,” written with Dwight Liles, provides the title for this article.

Throughout the article, QR codes and website links¹ will take you to the songs used in the presentation, so that you may listen to the music as you read the article. We are grateful to Bari Colombari and the Marketing Staff at OCP for generously providing the website link to the OCP music.





were married at a Redemptorist parish—Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Highlandtown neighborhood in Baltimore—my mother’s home parish, it seems so natural now that I would have seen it in so many places.

Actually, I believe that mercy as an attitude as well as a prayer was more common in those days; I believe we’ve seen a generational shift away from the language and practice of mercy. Mercy seems to be slowly eroding in our world, our language, and our approach to other people. The new motto seems to be “all or nothing at all.” With the growth of extremist groups, terrorism around the world, and a focus on getting even, there seems to be no room for mercy. You are either with me or against me.

Father Daniel P. Horan, OSF, wrote about this in an editorial in *America* magazine (June 22–29, 2015 issue). He was commenting on the recent case of the death sentence given to Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, the terrorist bomber at the Boston Marathon, and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*’s stand on capital punishment. He proposed that it is time to review our stance as expressed in this book. The *Catechism* (CCC, 2267) states:

The traditional teaching of the Church does not exclude, presupposing full ascertainment of the identity and responsibility of the offender, recourse to the death penalty, when

this is the only practicable way to defend the lives of human beings effectively against the aggressor.

But then it continues, quoting St. John Paul II (*Evangelium Vitae*, 56):

“If, instead, bloodless means are sufficient to defend against the aggressor and to protect the safety of persons, public authority should limit itself to such means, because they better correspond to the concrete conditions of the common good and are more in conformity to the dignity of the human person.

“Today, in fact, given the means at the State’s disposal to effectively repress crime by rendering inoffensive the one who has committed it, without depriving him definitively of the possibility of redeeming himself, cases of absolute necessity for suppression of the offender ‘today . . . are very rare, if not practically non-existent.’”

Father Horan proposes this question: “Are there any circumstances in today’s society where we cannot adequately protect ourselves with incarcerating the criminal?” Is it not simply our need, our desire, our quest for vengeance that promotes the allowance of capital punishment? In other words, where is mercy?

Our media have certainly taken the turn to “all or nothing at all.” Either you are liberal or conservative. You either watch MSNBC or you watch CNN or Fox. The bygone journalistic ideal of an unbiased media that tries to give us the unbiased facts has been replaced by talking heads who spew their own doctrine, hatred, and judgmentalism. Simply turn on any talk show or any news program for any period of time, and you will find people labeling others, judging others, and assuming the worst about “the other.”

For that matter just look at the ongoing campaign for president.

All this is so different from the words of our Holy Father, Pope Francis. Perhaps that’s why many have a hard time hearing his words these days. For example, in speaking about salvation, Pope Francis says: “The Lord has redeemed all of us, all of us, with the blood of Christ; all of us, not just Catholics.” The Holy Father is calling us to be merciful with one another saying: “Do the good! We shall meet there.”

Community of Witnesses

Isn’t this what we’re asked to do as people of faith? We



OCP has generously provided this QR code¹ and the website link¹ below to all of the songs by OCP composers used with the original presentation on which this article is based. You are invited to visit that special page and listen to the music as you read this article.

<http://www.ocp.org/pastoral-music>

are not to be part of the society of judgment, of black-and-white, of hatred and violence. We are being called *this* moment to be the community of mercy. In fact, Pope Francis has instituted the Jubilee Year of Mercy so that we, perhaps, can do just that.

How does this call take root in our heart?

We all know that children and young people—well, all of us in fact—pay more attention to what people do than to what they say. As Pope Paul VI said in his 1975 apostolic exhortation *Evangelii nuntiandi* (EN, *Evangelization in the Modern World*), “Modern people listen more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if they do listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses” (EN, 41).

So our first stance must be to witness. Mind you, this call to witness isn’t even the “New Evangelization” first spoken about by Saint John Paul II. This apostolic exhortation was written by Pope Paul VI in the 1970s, calling us forty years ago to a life as evangelizers!

What, then, does it mean to be a witness? First it means that we must recognize our true dignity as sons and daughters of God. If we cannot or will not claim this for ourselves, it is very difficult to take any next step, much less witness to our young people. In Saint Ignatius of Loyola’s *Spiritual Exercises*, the first week of these exercises focuses on the love of God for us. We may think this is a strange place to begin, knowing (in our current judgmentalism about ourselves and others) that we are flawed. But Saint Ignatius—not from theory but from his own lived experience—knows this is the way to begin our prayer. When we see ourselves as created in the image and likeness of God, then our stance toward God, our stance toward ourselves, and ultimately our stance toward others changes radically. We cannot help our young people reclaim their dignity as sons and daughters of God if we do not recognize it first in our own lives.

Many people have grown up with an image of God as the judge or as a police officer. Many people were taught by catechists who encouraged and enforced this view of God both before and, sometimes, since Vatican II. The great Jesuit author and speaker, Father James Martin, sj, gives an example of such teaching in his book *The Jesuit Guide to (Almost) Everything: A Spirituality for Real Life* (2012). He quotes the *Baltimore Catechism*, the religious instruction book used by many Catholic children from the end of the nineteenth century to the late 1960s (and reproduced again

by some ultra-orthodox publishers since 1985). This was the way we taught faith and God in that catechism, at least in one essay question that has been reproduced in at least one novel about Catholicism in that period:

Giles is murdered by a Communist just as he leaves the church after his confession. Giles has been away from the church for 28 years. He just about satisfied the requirements for a good confession, having only imperfect contrition aroused during this week’s mission. The communist demanded to know if Giles was a Catholic, threatening to kill him if he was. Fearlessly, Giles said: “Yes, thank God!” Did Giles go immediately to heaven or did he go to purgatory for a while? Give a reason for your answer.

I daresay there is mercy in this story for, as Father Martin states, at least Giles was either in purgatory or in heaven! However the view of God that this text proposes is very different, I hope, from the one we share in faith with our young people and children today. However, coming to know that God loves us and how deep that love goes is not a one-time event or simply the answer to a catechism question. The learning takes time, sometimes a lifetime. It is an ongoing process for each of us. It means that we must change and continue to change.

Still, once we have come to a basic understanding of being loved by God, then we also begin to see our faults and our sinfulness and come to understand how the love of God is poured out on us imperfect beings. As Saint Ignatius would say, we begin to see ourselves not just as sinners, but as *loved* sinners.

The contemporary song “Jesus, Lover of My Soul” was written by John Ezzy, Daniel Grul, and Steve McPherson and performed by the group Hillsong.² **Bonus:** Here is also a link² to the hymn of the same name by Charles Wesley (1740) and set to the tune ABERYSTWYTH by Joseph Parry (1879).



HILLSONG: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mff8_hwgWy4



WESLEY: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XFaiiPv-Q6I>



"The notion is too much for him." In the movie *Schindler's List* (Universal, 1993), Amon Goeth takes aim from his balcony.

What Mercy Requires

This experience of God's mercy makes all the difference in the world but only if those who experience it share it. A person who has not experienced mercy in his or her life cannot then extend mercy to other people because they do not know how mercy acts.

There's a very powerful moment in the movie *Schindler's List*. In watching the movie again, I was surprised at how short the moment was. I had recalled the scene taking a number of minutes, when, in fact, it takes just a few seconds.

Here's the scene: The commandant in charge of the concentration camp, Amon Goeth, is a very cruel man but is told by Oskar Schindler that true power is best expressed when one can pardon another person. At first, the commandant does not want to accept this. However, in the following scene, he finds a Jewish boy who is scrubbing his bathtub but who is not able to get it clean because of inadequate supplies. He is immediately angry, as is always his case, but asks the boy: "Do you have only soap to use and no lye?"

The boy, in a panic, answers: "Yes, only soap." Commandant Goeth responds: "I pardon you." He lets the boy go, and the young boy immediately runs away. As the boy is running, the commandant looks in the mirror and says: "I pardon you."

But the notion is too much for him. Mercy and pardon have not been a part of his life, and he just cannot do it. He picks up his rifle, goes to the balcony of his beautiful house overlooking the wretched concentration camp, and begins

to shoot at the young boy who is running for his life.

I believe this short scene tells us several things about mercy:

1. Mercy is not always a natural human instinct. Often our base instincts are for vengeance and justice. Mercy is not always our default human instinct.
2. Mercy requires practice and hard work. This concentration camp commandant spent so much of his life nurturing hatred, resentment, and the quest for power that even when he is presented with true power, he cannot exercise it. This should make us all very nervous. When the hatred and the name-calling and the violent actions continue as they do in our world today, it is so much harder to turn back, to do the right thing, to exercise mercy.
3. Mercy requires honesty. We have to be able to see ourselves as we are before we can experience the true God and our brothers and sisters as they are. We have to admit that we are a mess.

We erroneously believe that mercy is demonstrated more often in the New Testament than in the Hebrew Scriptures. But in fact the Old Testament is filled with examples and true experiences of God's mercy. In the Book of the Prophet Isaiah we hear the prophet recount all the bad things that God's people have done, followed by this affirmation: "For all this, his wrath is not turned back, his hand is still outstretched!" (see Isaiah 9:16d, 20b; 10:4b).

And In Psalm 103 we hear:

Bless the LORD, my soul;
and do not forget all his gifts,
Who pardons all your sins,
and heals all your ills,
Who redeems your life from the pit,
and crowns you with mercy and compassion
Merciful and gracious is the LORD,
slow to anger, abounding in mercy (Psalm 103:2–4, 8).

We do not have it all together, but God came to save us anyway. If we can grasp this—the mercy that has been shown to us—then we can begin to demonstrate that mercy to one another.

Demonstrating Mercy

So, in honesty, we are loved sinners. Practically then, if we truly believe in God's mercy and want others to believe it, we have to demonstrate mercy to one another, to our children, and to young people. We may be among the only witnesses of mercy in their lives! Ours may be one of the only calming voices speaking passionately yet lovingly about our world, about God, and about our brothers and sisters. Yours may be the only voice of mercy in the world today, in a world where movies grow more violent, businesses operate on cutthroat policies, and politicians are increasingly willing to find scapegoats for problems that confront our nation.

We must not forget one another in the Church in our demonstration of mercy. We need to be merciful to each other so that we may show that mercy to those we meet. How often do people get turned off from the Church because of the actions of her members who are in a bad mood because of a recent argument with another staff member or another parishioner?

Cardinal Timothy Dolan wrote *Praying in Rome* (2013), an interesting, intriguing, short reflection about events leading up to the election of Pope Francis. In one part he speaks about the discussions the cardinals were having prior to going into conclave. He said this:

Aside from some of the characteristics we claimed we'd like to see in the next pope, we also spoke about the types of changes we'd like to see in the way the Vatican operates. In a way, I suppose, this was our way of letting off steam about some of the criticisms we held toward the Vatican. During one such dialogue, one of the cardinals provided a relevant cross-check.

"You realize," he remarked, smiling, "that as we sit here criticizing the Vatican, our priests at home are sitting around criticizing us and our administration in our diocese. And our priests need to remember there are parishioners sitting at their kitchen tables griping about them." This is a whole cycle, this wise cardinal observed. *Tutti lamentano!* Everyone complains! There's a whole culture of crabbing!

How many times do we crab about our DRE, our pastor, the associate, the parents, the children, the catechists, the director of music, the cantor, or the staff in "that other" parish? The list goes on and on.

Mercy is more than theory. Mercy is more than pie in the sky. Mercy requires practical application. Every day, each of

us must do some soul searching and ask: "If I am complaining or crabbing about someone else, how can I show mercy to that person?"

It comes down, once again, to being a witness. If our children or young people see or hear us complaining about someone else in the Church who is trying to do his or her job, what does that say about the mercy we proclaim in our lives, in our Church, in our Scriptures, in our worship, and especially in this Year of Mercy?

A Cloud of Witnesses

Margaret Mead once told us that we should "never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has." Our Church began with witnesses—witnesses who saw the unjust arrest, cruel torture, and execution of their leader. They, the men and women of Galilee, were torn apart by violence, name-calling, division, religious hatred, and terrorism. After Jesus' resurrection, however, they responded in mercy. These few first witnesses changed the world. We, in mercy, can do the same today, if we choose Christ.

Note

1. The QR code will take you to a special page provided by OCP that features recordings of all the OCP songs associated with this presentation. You will need a QR code reader on your smart phone to use this code, or copy the website link into your online search engine. Then click on each piece of music provided on that page.

2. The QR codes and website links provided here take you to YouTube performances of these songs.





Praying the Psalms of Mercy: Continuity and Discontinuity

By VERONICA LAWSON, RSM

The Book of Psalms resonates with Israel's rich experience of the mercy of God. Echoes of that mercy as expressed in these songs of Israel persist in our liturgical celebrations and in the hearts of those who now make them their own. As we pray the psalms in this Jubilee Year of Mercy, then, we find ourselves deeply connected with those who first prayed them and those who have prayed them across two and a half millennia or more.

The ancient three-tiered cosmogony informing the Bible is evident in Israel's psalms. As contemporary believers who espouse a scientifically sophisticated view of the formation of the universe, however, we no longer accept that view of the



Veronica Lawson, RSM, PhD, is an Australian Sister of Mercy and the first woman to be elected to the presidency of the Australian Catholic Biblical Association (1988–1989). She is probably best known for her online Sunday Gospel reflections which have a global circulation. Her recent publication, *The Blessing of Mercy: Bible Perspectives and Ecological Challenges* (Morning Star Publishing, 2015) has been widely acclaimed as a significant resource for the Jubilee Year of Mercy.

cosmos, but we can surely acclaim the enduring love or mercy of God that brought everything into being. We can do so in the words of the psalms while at the same time informing our prayer with an appreciation that the universe continues to expand and evolve and give glory to God.

In Psalm 136, the formation of the cosmos is celebrated precisely as a manifestation of the mercy or steadfast love of God. With the psalmist and with countless Jewish and Christian believers, we give thanks to the God of Israel whose steadfast love or mercy endures forever in the mysterious workings of the universe and specifically in the Earth commu-

nity. We can likewise praise God for God's work in history, although some aspects of Israel's rationale for praising God's action in history may need to be critiqued and modified if they are to form part of our liturgical or personal prayer. We no longer, for example, affirm the death or destruction of the Egyptians as the work of a merciful God.

The Language of "Mercy" in the Psalms

While mercy in the Bible is generally understood as a characteristic or quality of God, it is also predicated of humans in their relationship with God and with each other. Two Hebrew words or word groups account for most of the references to mercy in the psalms. The most frequently occurring word for mercy in the psalms is the noun *hesed*. Occasionally we find the related adjective *hasid*. The other main word group derives from *rehem*, the Hebrew word for womb, and includes the verb *rahām*, the noun *rahāmîm* and the adjective *rahûm*.

Translators struggle to convey the sense of both of these word groups. The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) usually translates the noun *hesed* as "steadfast love" and the adjective *hasid* as "faithful," "devoted," or "loyal." The New American Bible (NAB), on the other hand, tends to use "kindness" or "mercy" for *hesed* and almost invariably "faithful" for *hasid*. Words like faithful, loyal, and steadfast indicate that the translators detect in mercy an inherent sense of fidelity, of not giving up in the face of difficulty or resistance. The context in which the terms are used is crucial for understanding their meaning.

Rahamîm is translated variously as "mercy," "compassion," or "pity"; *rahām* as "to love"; and *rahûm* as "merciful" or "compassionate." It would be more accurate to translate *rahamîm* as "womb-compassion," *rahām* as "to show womb-compassion," and *rahûm* as "womb-compassionate" and thus honor the fact that this mercy language derives from the female bodily organ, the womb. If the lyricists of Israel name God as "womb-compassionate," then they experi-



Fritz Eichenberg, *The Peaceable Kingdom* (wood engraving, 1950). Photo by Jim Forest, Alkmaar, The Netherlands. Used with permission.

ence their God as showing the deeply felt compassion that a woman demonstrates for the child in her womb.

Two Psalms of Mercy in the Lectionary (Year C)

With these preliminary remarks in mind, let us now turn to the responsorial psalms for the Sundays of this liturgical year (Year C) where the language of mercy appears. The *hesed* group appears some thirty times—twenty-six times as a noun (*hesed*) and four times as an adjective (*hasid*). The *rahāmîm* group appears eleven times—twice as a verb (*rahām*), four times as a noun (*rahāmîm*), and five times as an adjective (*rahûm*).

Psalm 103. Verses taken from Psalm 103, a hymn of praise to God, form the responsorial psalm for the Third Sunday of Lent in Year C. While only eight of the twenty-two verses of the psalm are included in the lectionary (vv. 1–4, 6–8, 11), this is clearly a “mercy” psalm that merits attention in the context of our reflections on mercy. I invite you to take your Bible and read the whole psalm aloud, feeling the rhythm and power of the text and attending to the recurring use of the language of mercy, as many as seven times in the space of twenty-two verses.

The psalmist begins and ends with repeated calls that his/her very being or *nephesh* might bless the God of Israel (vv. 1, 2, 20, 21, 22). We find here an echo of Genesis 2, where the earth-creature (*adam*) becomes a living being or *nephesh*. While *nephesh* becomes “soul” in most English translations, it is not to be understood in a dichotomous way as the spiritual element in distinction from the material. Rather, *nephesh* encompasses the whole person, so that it is the whole person who blesses God and God’s Holy Name.¹ God is immediately identified as a forgiving and healing God, a liberating God who crowns the life of this person with steadfast love or kindness (*hesed*) and womb-compassion or mercy (*rahāmîm*). Forgiveness, healing, and liberation are constituent elements of God’s mercy (vv. 3–4). In praying this psalm, one’s very being becomes a hymn of praise for the steadfast love and womb-compassion of God known through personal and communal experiences of forgiveness, healing, and liberation.

For those who have been oppressed, violated, or defrauded, God brings judicial justice (*mishpat*) and restores right relationship (*sedeqah*) (v. 6). Such action is a function

of God’s mercy. God is “merciful/womb-compassionate [*rahûm*] and gracious [*hannûn*], slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love [*hesed*]” (v. 8). This description of God echoes the definitive description of Israel’s God in Exodus: “a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love [*hesed*] and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love [*hesed*] for the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin” (Exodus 34:6–7).

The boundless nature of God’s mercy is spelled out by the psalmist: “God will not always accuse nor be angry forever. God does not deal with us according to our sins nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is God’s steadfast love [*hesed*] toward those who reverence God; as far as the east is from the west, so far does God remove our transgressions from us” (vv. 9–12).

In verse thirteen, God’s womb-compassion is likened to parental compassion: “As a father has womb-compassion for his children, so God has womb-compassion for those who fear God.” The verb used of both God and a human parent (in this case the father or male parent) is *rahām*. This same verb appears in Psalms 18:1, 102:13, and 116:5. You might notice if you read these verses that the verbal form does not always appear in translation.

As the psalm continues to unfold in vv. 14–17, the transitory nature of human existence is contrasted with the ever-present and everlasting nature of God’s mercy, God’s *hesed*. The interconnectedness of the human with the other-than-human is evoked in the reminder that humans are formed from the dust of the earth. The repetition of *nephesh* in the closing verses alerts us once more to the gift of life that God breathes into us, the life that enables us to sing out in praise to the God of mercy, the God of *hesed* and of *rahāmîm*.

Psalm 145. The verses selected from Psalm 145 for both the Fifth Sunday of Easter (vv. 8–13) and the Thirty-First Sunday in Ordinary Time (vv. 1–2, 8–14) are replete with the language of mercy. God is praised as king. While we may not wish to address God as king in our times, we can acknowledge God’s reign or God’s sustaining creative presence in the still emerging cosmos and in the whole Earth community. We can, with the psalmist, acclaim again and again and meditate on the greatness of God’s wondrous works in our lives and in “our common home.”

Like the psalmist, we can celebrate the abundant good-

“God’s womb-compassion is said to encompass all that God has made . . .”

ness and righteousness of God. With the psalmist, we can name as steadfast love (*hesed*) (v. 8) and as womb-compassion (*rahāmîm*) God’s goodness and righteousness and God’s patience in the face of human sinfulness (v. 9). God’s womb-compassion is said to encompass all that God has made (v. 9). This affirmation is a call to honor “all” that is and to heed the call of Pope Francis in *Laudato Si’* to shift from an anthropocentric or human-centred world view to one that acknowledges the intrinsic value of all that inhabits our common home.

God is described in verse eight as “gracious [*hannûn*] and merciful [*rahûm*]” and in verse thirteen as “faithful [*hasîd*] in word and gracious [*hannûn*] in deed.” When Hebrew words are paired or placed in parallel, one informs the other. In other words, to be gracious is to be merciful and to be merciful is to be gracious. To be faithful is to be gracious and to be gracious is to be faithful. To be merciful is to be faithful in word and gracious in deed. I have commented elsewhere on the relationship between grace and mercy and have suggested that the Greek translation of *hesed* in Esther 2:9 as *charis* permits us to claim grace (*hen*) and its cognates, including *hannûn*, as “mercy” language.² In verse seventeen, God is said to be “just” (*tsaddiq*) and “kind” (*hasîd*). Again, we can assert that to be merciful or kind is also to be just.

The Liturgy excludes some of the more problematic aspects of Psalm 145, such as God’s readiness to “destroy” the wicked. It is well to exclude them from our prayer and to be alert for other passages that present God as less than merciful or affirm human behavior that negates the ways of mercy and compassion to which we are called.

An Invitation

We have explored just two of the psalms that speak of mercy, psalms that sing of the womb-compassion and steadfast love of God. My hope is that this exploration will have set you free to engage in your own study of the other “mercy” psalms in this year’s lectionary so that mercy might echo in your hearts as you continue to celebrate the Jubilee of Mercy. You might begin with a study of mercy in Psalms 30, 33, and 118 in preparation for the Easter Season. The following list is intended to guide your reflections.³ The “mercy” word or words that appear in any particular psalm (*hesed*, *hasîd*, *rahûm*) are indicated in parenthesis.

- Psalm 16, a psalm of trust (*hesed* and *hasîd*)—Thirteenth and Sixteenth Sundays in Ordinary Time.
- Psalm 30, a thanksgiving psalm (*hasîd*)—Easter Vigil; Third Sunday of Easter; Tenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.
- Psalm 33, a hymn of praise (*hesed*)—Easter Vigil; Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.
- Psalm 63, an individual lament (*hesed*)—Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time.
- Psalm 66, a thanksgiving psalm (*hesed*)—Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.
- Psalm 78, a wisdom psalm (*rahûm*)—Exaltation of the Holy Cross.
- Psalm 90, a psalm of lament (*hesed*)—Twenty-Third Sunday in Ordinary Time.
- Psalm 98, an enthronement psalm (*hesed*)—Twenty-Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time.
- Psalm 100, a hymn of praise (*hesed*)—Fourth Sunday of Easter.
- Psalm 117, a hymn of praise (*hesed*)—Ninth and Twenty-First Sundays in Ordinary Time.
- Psalm 118, a song of thanksgiving (*hesed*)—Easter Vigil; Easter Sunday; Second Sunday of Easter.
- Psalm 138, an individual prayer of thanksgiving (*hesed*)—Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Notes

1. Most English versions translate YHWH, Israel’s name for their God, as “LORD,” following the earlier Jewish practice of avoiding any vocalising of the divine name. In our efforts to be respectful of Jewish practice at one level, we create another problem by employing the language of domination to name God. My practice is to speak simply of “God” or of “the God of Israel” or to use “YHWH,” as is increasingly the practice among contemporary Jewish scholars.

2. See Veronica M. Lawson, *The Blessing of Mercy: Bible Perspectives and Ecological Challenges* (Northcote: Morning Star Publishing, 2015), 38–41, 64.

3. For general commentary on the responsorial psalms for Year C, see Dianne Bergant with Richard Fragomeni, *Preaching the New Lectionary Year C* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 2000).





Welcoming Christ in Strangers and Family

By BARBARA GUENTHER

In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus says: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). One way of understanding that promise is to picture a kind of amorphous presence, but what it means for me is this: When I look around my church on Sunday morning, I see the face of Christ looking back at me. I don't know how to describe it except to say that I love our community gathered at prayer. I love to hear the assembly singing together (there's no better sound in the world). I smile when I see newlyweds coming to church the week after their wedding. My heart aches when I see the face of the woman who just buried her husband. I am amazed by the faith of the couple devastated by the adoption that fell through only to learn a week later that the child is on his way. I marvel at the parishioners who come from far and near because they have found a home in our faith community. I am made speechless by the visitors who tell me that my presence makes a difference in their prayer. Every Sunday, in the midst of all this tragedy and triumph and wonder, Christ is present.



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Welcoming Christ in strangers and family only becomes possible when we are first able to recog-



nize Christ in them. And to see Christ in others we must first acknowledge that we, as baptized Catholic Christians, embody the presence of Christ.

Recognizing Christ in Ourselves

I love the fact that most of the infant baptisms in my parish are celebrated at Sunday Liturgy. It reminds us of our own baptism and our baptismal call to be “clothed” in Christ. I truly believe the significance of these celebrations is less about the baby and more about the community of faith. We were baptized into Christ, and have *clothed ourselves* in Christ, and have become *children of God* by our baptism. We sometimes forget the significance of that.

Recognizing and accepting that Christ dwells within us requires us to examine our own way of being. If we accept that we are spiritually clothed in Christ, then the way we act, speak, and think must change. Our appearance, gestures, and postures must be indicative of the presence of Christ that we bear. The way in which we perform our ministry must be in the manner of Christ.

Each year the youth leadership team of my parish gets a new shirt emblazoned with our parish name and logo. When they are commissioned in their ministry and receive their new shirt, the director of youth ministry tells them that it is not an award but rather an indication of who they are and what they represent. The youth learn that when they wear their parish shirt in public, they are representatives of our faith community and of our archdiocese. They understand that the shirt is a visible, tangible sign that they have been

spiritually clothed in Christ. That awareness of the presence of Christ within themselves impacts their attitude, their behavior, and their speech.

For those of us who serve in Liturgy and music ministry, we need to think about how we bear the presence of Christ every day. It’s much too easy in our world to say we follow Christ and then lose our patience with someone who cuts us off in traffic. We must pay attention to Christ’s presence in our lives by tending to our own daily prayer and participating in the liturgical celebrations of our faith communities. We need to remember that we come to Liturgy first as baptized followers of Christ and then as ministers. Acknowledging that we are bearers of Christ’s presence takes intentional personal reflection, and it is the first step to recognizing and welcoming Christ in others.

Recognizing Christ in Others

It is our task, as ministers of Liturgy and music, to facilitate an encounter with the Risen Christ in our liturgical celebrations. To do this we need to be open to the possibility of an encounter with Christ ourselves so that we can enable others to experience Christ through our ministry. We must be prepared in mind, body, and spirit so that our focus can be directed on the presence of Christ, not on our own ministry. We must put aside our personal preferences and differences and minister in our communities with compassion, kindness, and mercy. We must recognize that we are all on the journey to the Kingdom of God.

Several years ago I heard someone use a phrase that has



Master of Alkmaar (c. 1504), *Werken van Barmhartigheid* (Corporal Works of Mercy), commissioned by the Holy Spirit Almshouse, Alkmaar, now in the

stuck with me. They said it's often easier for us to believe Christ is present in a small round piece of bread than to believe in his presence in the person sitting next to us, or in the one who speaks another language, or in the child kicking the back of our chair. It's true. We tend to think of all these things as distractions. When will the parents take their crying child out of the worship space? Why did that family have to sit next to me? Why do we have to have a bilingual Liturgy; why can't they learn English?

Recognizing Christ in others takes deliberate effort. We need to step out of our comfort zone and sincerely ask ourselves that overused question: What would Jesus do? He would welcome the child, sit next to the sinner, and start a conversation with the stranger. That's what he asks us to do as well. I remind our ministers that their smile, their "good morning," their warm embrace may be the one thing that changes someone's life that day. When we allow Christ to work through us, he opens our eyes to recognize his presence in those we serve.

Coming to our ministry well-prepared is essential to helping others encounter Christ in the Liturgy. And sometimes being well-prepared is a challenge. There are times in my ministry when, while I have prepared all the details for every other minister, preparation for my own role as a minister of the Liturgy has fallen behind. Suddenly Mass is about to

begin and I've barely had time to look at my own texts or music. It is at those times, especially, when I pray that I will stay out of God's way and let the presence of Christ work through me.

Welcoming Christ in Strangers and Family

A few years ago the director of one of our Spanish choirs left the parish. His great concern was who would direct the Spanish choir after his departure. As pastoral associate for Liturgy and music, my immediate response was "I will, of course." Wait. The choir members speak little or no English, and I speak very little Spanish. Talk about stepping out of my comfort zone! What did I do? I contacted a few of the bilingual folks in our parish, asked them to give me some simple phrases in Spanish to get me started, and went to rehearsal. Over the following years, I have come to see Christ in an assembly that prays in a beautiful language, and they see Christ reflected in my effort to keep up in a language not my own.

Stepping out of our comfort zone can be challenging and sometimes a little frightening. I really didn't know what I was getting myself into when I started working with the Spanish choir. Being a Catholic Christian is all about being in relationship with God and with one another, but to be



Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, The Netherlands.

in a relationship means taking a risk. Christ is there in our assemblies but often in disguise. He's the homeless woman lying on the back pew. He's the person who looks different from me and speaks a language I don't understand. He's the one sitting "in my pew," or talking a little too loudly, or sneaking in the back door hoping no one will see him. When Christ appears in these many disguises, he challenges us to step out of our comfort zone and welcome him. Whatever our ministry, whether it's proclaiming the Word, singing in the choir, or taking up the collection, welcoming Christ in stranger and family is a responsibility to answer this challenge posed for each of us.

The one task common to every ministry is so simple yet so difficult: Make eye contact. If we are not able to look at the people to whom and with whom we minister and see the face of Christ in them, how can we possibly hope to encounter Christ ourselves or help others to see him? Welcoming Christ's presence in our midst in the faces of stranger and friend alike is less about *what* we do in our ministry and more about *how* we do it. We may know all the musical notes and texts, all the right postures and movements, but if we don't open our eyes and hearts to see the presence of Christ, it is for nothing. Our ministry in the Liturgy is about understanding our own role and responsibilities and, more importantly, paying attention to those around us.

Last year, when Pope Francis announced the Jubilee Year of Mercy, he issued a call to all Christians to rediscover the corporal and spiritual works of mercy. He wrote:

Jesus introduces us to these works of mercy in his preaching so that we can know whether or not we are living as his disciples. Let us rediscover these corporal works of mercy: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, heal the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead. And let us not forget the spiritual works of mercy: to counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offences, bear patiently those who do us ill, and pray for the living and the dead (Pope Francis, *Misericordia Vultus* [April 11, 2015], 15).

Essentially, these works of mercy are all about how we welcome Christ. They call us to open our eyes to our own need for mercy, and to minister to those around us. When we pay attention to our own prayer and preparation for ministry, we come to recognize Christ within ourselves. When we take notice of those around us, both stranger and friend, we are able to see the presence of Christ in them. Then we can have the courage to step out of our comfort zone, welcome the presence of Christ in our midst, and walk the journey of faith together.



Six Parables of Mercy

BY THE NPM STAFF

With a cry of mercy the liturgy begins, in the litany of “Lord, have mercy.” With a cry for mercy the service of the word concludes, as we pray for all the world’s needy. With a cry for mercy we assemble at the table to claim the bread broken for us. “Mercy,” we cry at the beginning, middle, and end. Mercy is the womb we enter when we worship together.

Gail Ramshaw, quoted in Kathleen Hughes and Joseph A. Favazza, ed., *A Reconciliation Sourcebook* (Chicago, Illinois: Liturgy Training Publications, 1997).



Luke 15: Three Parables of Loss, Finding, and Celebration

The Lost Sheep (15:1–7)

A spendthrift lover is the Lord
Who never counts the cost
Or asks if heaven can afford
To woo a world that's lost.
Our lover tosses coins of gold
Across the midnight skies
And stokes the sun against the cold
To warm us when we rise. . . .

How shall we love this heart-strong God
Who gives us ev'rything,
Whose ways to us are strange and odd,
What can we give or bring?
Acceptance of the matchless gift
Is gift enough to give.



The very act will shake and shift
The way we love and live.

Thomas Troeger, "A Spendthrift Lover" © 1983.

In an alley between two shops, an old woman sat upon the ground; he could just see the rotting and discoloured face: it was like the sight of damnation. Then he heard the whisper, "Blessed art thou among women," and saw the grey fingers fumbling at the beads. This was not one of the damned: he watched with horrified fascination: this was one of the saved.

Graham Greene, *Brighton Rock* (New York, New York: Viking Press, 1938).

The Lost Coin (15:8–10)

In Graeco-Roman antiquity, a drachma was about equal to a day's wages for a male labourer—two days' wages for a female worker.

Linda Mahoney, "'Swept Under the Rug': Feminist Homiletical Reflections on the Parable of the Lost Coin (Lk. 15.8–9)" in Mary Ann Beavis, ed., *The Lost Coin: Parables of Women, Work, and Wisdom* (London, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 35.

One afternoon at the end of school I felt in my pocket for my car and house keys. Gone! I searched all my pockets, my desk, the staff room, my car and every conceivable place and then I searched them all again.

I needed them to get home and into my house. Eventually I found those keys at the bottom of a box of blackboard chalk where a malicious pupil had hidden them.

From a reflection by John Reed on the parable of the lost coin. <http://www.jrtalks.com/index.html>.

I believe in Jesus
who spoke of God
as a woman seeking the lost coin
as a woman who swept
seeking the lost.

Excerpt from Rachel Conrad Wahlberg, "The Woman's Creed," from the book *Jesus and the Freed Woman* (Mahwah, New Jersey: Paulist Press, 1978).



Photo by Spyros Papaspyropoulos, Rethymno, Greece.



The Lost Son (15:11–32)

Well, father said, “See my son coming home to me
Coming home to me”
Father ran and fell down on his knees
Said, “Sing and praise, Lord have mercy on me”
Mercy
Oh poor boy stood there, hung his head and cried
Hung his head and cried
Poor boy stood and hung his head and cried
Said, “Father will you look on me as a child?”
Yeah

Well father said, “Eldest son, kill the fatted calf,
Call the family round
Kill that calf and call the family round
My son was lost but now he is found
Cause that’s the way for us to get along.”

Excerpt from the song “That’s No Way to Get Along” by Rev. Robert Wilkins, first recorded by him in 1964 for Piedmont Records and covered by the Rolling Stones as “Prodigal Son” on their album *Beggars Banquet* (1968).

There’s just no accounting for happiness,
or the way it turns up like a prodigal
who comes back to the dust at your feet
having squandered a fortune far away.

And how can you not forgive?
You make a feast in honor of what
was lost, and take from its place the finest
garment, which you saved for an occasion
you could not imagine, and you weep night and day
to know that you were not abandoned,
that happiness saved its most extreme form
for you alone.

Excerpt from “Happiness” by Jane Kenyon (1947–1995). From *The Breath of Parted Lips: Voices From the Robert Frost Place*. Used with permission of CavanKerry Press.



This collection of images and reflections was inspired by a traveling set of images and quotations prepared for the Jubilee of Mercy by the Archbishop’s Office for Evangelization of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne, in collaboration with Patricia Murray. http://www.cam.org.au/Portals/52/Year%20of%20Mercy/Parables%20of%20Mercy%20resource_reservationform.pdf.



Luke 10: The Good Samaritan

Beneatha: Love him? There is nothing left to love.

Mama: There is always something left to love. And if you ain't learned that, you ain't learned nothing. Have you cried for that boy today? I don't mean for yourself and the family 'cause we lost the money. I mean for him; what he been through and what it done to him. Child, when do you think is the time to love somebody the most; when they done good and made things easy for everybody? Well then, you ain't through learning—because that ain't the time at all. It's when he's at his lowest and can't believe in hisself 'cause the world done whipped him so. When you starts measuring somebody, measure him right, child, measure him right. Make sure you done taken into account what hills and valleys he come through before he got to wherever he is.

Lorraine Hansberry, *A Raisin in the Sun*, © 1959, 1960, Robert Nemiroff, Executor of the Estate of Lorraine Hansberry (New York, New York: The New American Library, 1966).

I saw a stranger today.

I put food for him in the eating-place,
And drink in the drinking-place,
And music in the listening-place.
In the Holy Name of the Trinity
He blessed myself and my house,
My goods and my family.

And the lark said in her warble,
Often, often, often
Goes Christ in the stranger's guise
O, oft and oft and oft
Goes Christ in the stranger's guise.

Irish rune from George Appleton, ed., *The Oxford Book of Prayer* (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

Matthew 20: Workers in the Vineyard

In an interview with students, Madeline L'Engle said: "Well, most people are both good and evil at once. It's an oversimplification to make people all good or all bad. Here
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Lynn Trapp
James Kosnik
Paul Inwood
Rory Cooney
Trevor Thomson
Roselle Haas, RC
Rachelle Kramer
John Angotti
Jaime Cortez
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Chanticleer
CAAM Choir
James Abbington
David Haas
Carolyn Woo
Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo
Roger Holland
Rodolfo Lopez
Stella García Lopéz
Xuan Nguyen
. . . and many more!



Evening Prayer
Mass
Morning Prayer
Taizé Prayer
Night Prayer
Holy Hour/Adoration
Sacramental Reconciliation
Prayer Chapel

Multicultural Intensive
English
Spanish
Vietnamese
Latin
Showcases
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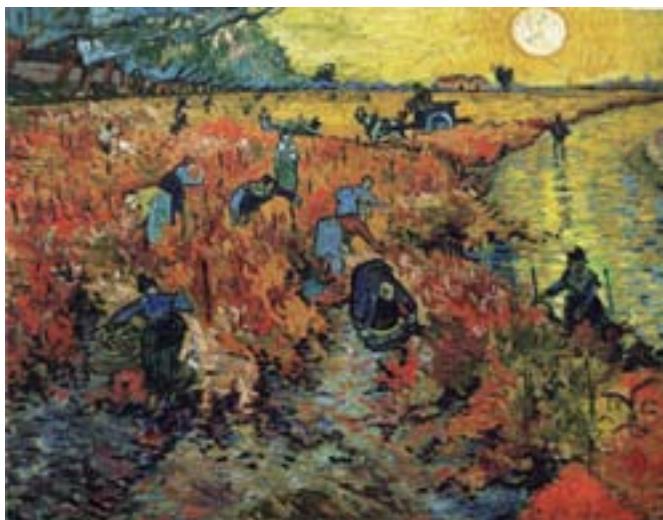
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Children, ranging in age from five to eleven, working a cotton field in Bells, Texas, in 1913. Children under ten provided much of the harvesting power in southern tobacco and cotton fields. (*Library of Congress, from Lewis Hine, Photographs of Child Labor in the New South.*)



Vincent van Gogh, *Red Vineyard*. Pushkin Museum, Moscow.



we get into free will and choice. We have the freedom to say no as well as the freedom to say yes.” But this is her dream:

“All will be redeemed in God’s fullness of time, all, not just the small portion of the population who have been given the grace to know and accept Christ. All the strayed and stolen sheep. All the little lost ones.”

Madeleine L’Engle, *A Stone for a Pillow* (1986).

1 Corinthians 13:7–8 states that “*love always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.*” If indeed God is love (1 John 4:8, 16), then perhaps if grace is true, God just might save every person. Like the shepherd seeking for the lost lamb or the woman searching for her lost coin (Luke 15:4, 8) perhaps the purpose of God’s patience is our salvation, and God will pursue each of us, until we are all brought safely home.

Anonymous reflection.

Matthew 13: A Woman Baking Bread

God, like a bakerwoman,
you bring the leaven which causes our hopes to rise.
With your strong and gentle hands, shape our lives.
Warm us with your love.
Take our common lives and touch them with your grace,
that we may nourish hope among humanity.
We pray trusting in your name, through Jesus our Christ.
Amen.

Ruth Duck, *United Methodist Book of Worship* (1992), No. 469.

The minister is a Congregationalist and wears a white shirt. The man knows God. Once, in the middle of the long pastoral prayer of intercession for the whole world—for the gift of wisdom to its leaders, for hope and mercy to the grieving and pained, succor to the oppressed, and God’s grace to all—in the middle of this he stopped and burst out, “Lord, we bring you these same petitions every week.” After a shocked pause, he continued reading the prayer. Because of this, I like him very much.

Annie Dillard, *Holy the Firm* (New York, New York: Harper and Row, 1977).



I learned, I learned—when one might be inclined
To think, too late, you cannot recover your losses—
I learned something of the nature of God's mind,
Not the abstract Creator but the God who caresses
The daily and nightly earth; the One who refuses
To take failure for an answer till “again and again” is worn.

Patrick Kavanagh, *The Complete Poems of Patrick Kavanagh with Commentary*, ed. Peter Kavanagh (New York, New York: Kavanagh Hand Press, Inc., 1996).

“Appalling Strangeness”

You can't conceive, my child, nor can I or anyone, the appalling strangeness of the mercy of God.

Graham Greene, *Brighton Rock* (New York, New York: Viking Press, 1938).

t is truly right and just
that we should give you thanks and praise,
O God, almighty Father,
Through our Lord Jesus Christ.

For though the human race
is divided by dissension and discord,
yet we know that by testing us
you change our hearts
to prepare them for reconciliation.

Even more, by your Spirit you move human hearts
that enemies may speak to each other again,
adversaries join hands,
and people seek to meet together.

By the working of your power
it comes about, O Lord,
that hatred is overcome by love,
revenge gives way to forgiveness,
and discord is changed to mutual respect.

Eucharistic Prayer for Reconciliation II, English translation of *The Roman Missal*, third typical edition, © 2010 International Commission on English in the Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved. Used with permission.



Francisco de Zurbarán, *Agnus Dei*. Prado Museum, Madrid.





“Be Good and Always Remember: God Loves You!”

BY JAMES WM. BESSERT

In the fall of 1961, I was in the first grade at Brissette School, Kawkawlin, Michigan, going faithfully to weekly CCD class, and preparing to make my first confession (necessary for my reception of first Holy Communion the following spring). As the story has been told to me, there was a bit of a family dilemma. We belonged to Saint Anne Parish in Linwood, Michigan, where the beloved elderly pastor, Father Lucien Bourget (French Canadian), spoke with a thick French accent, and the “weekend associate” (one of the Franciscan Friars who came out from their monastery in Saginaw) spoke with a thick Polish accent. However, at the neighboring parish of Sacred Heart in Kawkawlin was a young, tall, vibrant priest: Father Chester Pilarski (with proud Polish roots), who spoke impeccable English.

So, although not “officially” registered parishioners, my parents decided that they would make arrangements for me to make my first confession with “Father Chet.” Somehow I have forgotten all



Reverend James Wm. Bessert, a priest of the Diocese of Saginaw, Michigan, is the director of the Diocesan Office of Liturgy and chair of the NPM Clergy Interest Section.

the details of my preparation as well as the nervousness of the day prior to my first confession (and, for that matter, I’ve since forgotten what I actually confessed). What I remember now from that first experience of the sacrament was that Father Chet, on the other side of the screen in the confessional, concluded the sacramental encounter with these words: “Well, that wasn’t so bad now, was it?” And,

Vatican Council II decreed that “the rite and formularies for the sacrament of penance are to be revised so that they may more clearly express both the nature and effect of this sacrament.” In view of this the Congregation for Divine Worship has carefully prepared the new *Rite of Penance* so that the celebration of the sacrament may be more fully understood by the faithful.

In this new rite, besides the Rite of Reconciliation of Individual Penitents, a Rite for Reconciliation of Several Penitents has been drawn up to emphasize the relation of the sacrament to the community.

Rite of Penance: “Decree” (3–4)

I delightedly exclaimed (loud enough for everyone in church to hear), “No!” to which Father Chet quickly added, “Be good, Jimmy, and always remember God loves you!”¹

Practical Preparation

Some years after that first experience of the sacrament, I found myself in Penance Practicum class with our instructor, Father Bob Byrne (who also taught moral theology at the former Saint John Provincial Seminary in Plymouth, Michigan, and eventually became the seminary’s rector-president). Now it was the late 1970s and, along with my seminarian classmates, I was preparing for ordination to the diaconate. I guess that Father Bob had probably been ordained for about seven years at this point. In addition to teaching the liturgical, practical, and rubrical preparations to become ministers of the sacrament of penance, I recall the wise and spiritual formation he shared with us about becoming good confessors. He reminded us over and over again that this sacrament is all about God’s mercy. In group discussions, we shared how we all knew members of the Church (some our own family members and others who were friends) whose “bad experience” in the confessional caused spiritual damage and lasting effects. And Father Bob



would remind us that not only was there damage to the penitent but also to all of us, the Church, who as brothers and sisters are such an integral part of the belief in sacramental

In order that he may fulfill his ministry properly and faithfully, understand the disorders of souls and apply the appropriate remedies to them, and act as a wise judge, the confessor must acquire the needed knowledge and prudence by constant study under the guidance of the Church’s Magisterium and especially by praying reverently to God. For the discernment of spirits is indeed a deep knowledge of God’s working in the human heart, gift of the Spirit, and an effect of charity.

Rite of Penance Introduction,
“Minister of the Sacrament of Penance” (10s)

God, the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son, has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; *through the ministry of the Church* may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, [+] and the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

Rite of Penance, “Prayer of Absolution,” (emphasis added)



Pope Francis celebrates sacramental reconciliation during World Youth Day 2014 in Buenos Aires.

forgiveness. He reiterated that the sacrament of penance is a gift of the Church to the Church.

Father Byrne likewise attempted to engrain in our minds (and, he clearly hoped, in our developing “pastoral hearts”) what a holy and sacred moment the celebration of the sacrament of penance is. “And, remember,” he said, “that our common denominator as confessor and penitent is that we are both sinners *and* that we both trust the promise of the Risen Christ to forgive us.”²

Shifting Meaning

Only months after my reception of first Holy Communion, then-Pope (and now Saint) John XXIII opened Vatican Council II. In my experience (and that of many Catholics my age or older), I believe it is safe to say that the notion of confession as the sinner’s “time of judgment” shifted

(thanks be to God!) after the Council with the emergence of a greater understanding and appreciation of the sacrament as the sinner’s “time to be reconciled” through the lens of mercy. The present *Rite of Penance* was promulgated on the First Sunday of Advent (December 2, 1973) by the Congregation for Divine Worship. The “Introduction,” entitled *Mystery of Reconciliation in the History of Salvation*, states at the outset that “the Father has shown forth his mercy by reconciling the world to himself in Christ and by making peace for all things on earth and in heaven by the blood of Christ on the cross,” which clearly suggests what was then a new and fresh approach to understanding this sacrament. Under the heading “Need and Benefit of This Sacrament” (see paragraph 7) it states: “In order that this sacrament of healing may truly achieve its purpose among the faithful, it must take root in their entire life and move them to more fervent service of God and neighbor.”³

Jesus Christ is the face of the Father's mercy

We need constantly to contemplate the mystery of mercy. It is a wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace. Our salvation depends on it. Mercy: the word reveals the very mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. Mercy: the ultimate and supreme act by which God comes to meet us. Mercy: the fundamental law that dwells in the heart of every person who looks sincerely into the eyes of his brothers and sisters on the path of life. Mercy: the bridge that connects God and [humankind], opening our hearts to a hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness.

At times we are called to gaze even more attentively on mercy so that we may become a more effective sign of the Father's action in our lives. For this reason, I have proclaimed an *Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy* as a special time for the Church; a time when the witness of believers might grow stronger and more effective.

Pope Francis, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Year of Mercy *Misericordiae Vultus* (1, 2-3)

Penance in the Year of Mercy

I assume that your diocese, like my own here in Saginaw, actively prepared (through various catecheses and an incredible process of coordination of confessors and locations to celebrate sacramental reconciliation) to execute the request of Pope Francis to celebrate the “Twenty-Four Hours for the Lord” on March 4. I can attest personally that it has been a monumental task! However, regardless of the plethora of logistical preparations and coordination on the part of an army of co-workers in this mercy-vineyard of the Jubilee Year, I hope (in the often-used words of my former bishop, Kenneth Untener) that no one lost sight of the *golden opportunity* to prepare the way for a brother's or sister's profound encounter with the mercy of God in the sacrament of penance.

While our Office of Liturgy is charged with the logistical challenges (in association with an incredible diocesan Extraordinary Jubilee Year Committee who are collaborating on many levels), my greatest apprehension is not whether or not the weather cooperates (remember we are in mid-Michigan on March 4-5) or whether priest confessors remember their appointed time (and none of them get sick or encounter

a pastoral emergency). Rather, my fear is whether or not we as a local church have done our part to re-catechize our faithful so that they understand with mind and heart that the sacrament of penance is a “gift of the Church to the Church.”

In other words, since our most common experience of being Church is within the local parish community, what strides have we made in our parish communities (since the inauguration of this Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy by Pope Francis) to understand and embrace our obligation as disciples of the Lord Jesus to be the “face of mercy” to our family, to other parishioners, to our neighbors, to the stranger, and to the marginalized and most vulnerable? Do the corporal and spiritual works of mercy remain text on a bookmark or pictures on a poster at church, or have we as individual parishioners and as a parish community actively, wholeheartedly, and intentionally integrated these works of mercy into our daily prayers and deeds?

A Profound Question

At one of our early diocesan Extraordinary Jubilee Year Committee meetings, after praying together Pope Francis'

Let the church always be a place of mercy and hope, where everyone is welcomed, loved, and forgiven.

Pope Francis, when he was Jorge Cardinal Mario Bergoglio, Archbishop of Buenos Aires

“Holy Year of Mercy Prayer,” one of the members asked if we thought it was possible to extend mercy if we had not experienced mercy ourselves. It would be impossible here to share the richness of the conversation that followed that question. However, I would encourage each of us—pastoral musician, liturgist, bishop, priest, deacon, seminarian, composer, choir member, cantor, instrumentalist, disciples one and all—to ponder this profound query: Just how is it that we have come to treasure and revel in the mercy of God? I encourage you to pose this question at your family table, your parish meeting, your choir rehearsal, your priest support group, or your small Christian community.

It would be my greatest hope that the more we ask this question, the more the mercy of God will be realized and celebrated. And, dare I say, the authentic way will have been paved for a brother’s or sister’s profound encounter with the mercy of God in the sacrament of penance.

Notes

1. For the record, I returned to CCD classes at Saint Anne Church in Linwood and made my first Holy Communion there at Mass in May 1962 with Father Bourget as the ordained celebrant. In 1972, having attained emeritus status and well-deserved retirement (and already in his eighties), Father Bourget learned that I had entered the college seminary in Baltimore, so he arranged for a driver and rode out to visit me at the seminary, since I was one of his former parishioners. He also met the priest faculty, concelebrated the community Mass, and joined in community meals, all the time bragging to my classmates and friends that he was the priest who gave me my first Holy Communion.

2. For the record, I actually harvested my class notes from Penance Practicum. They were in the bottom drawer of the file cabinet in my office, written with my own pen—no personal computers in those days—and I was amazed at the profound wisdom contained in those pages, which afforded me the formation guidance to serve as a priest-confessor these thirty-five years. Thanks, Father Bob Byrne!

3. For the record, my dear friend Rita Thiron always says how incredibly important are the *praenotanda* of our liturgical ritual books—companions of *The Roman Missal*—what a rich gift they are to the Church, and how they provide such a profound theology for us better to understand what it is that we are celebrating when we use these rites. If you have never done so, I absolutely encourage you to find a copy of the *Rite of Penance* and read the “Introduction.” If you have read it, but it has been a while since you did so, I encourage you to re-read it. I believe it will assist you in appreciating the Paschal character of the sacrament of penance and how relevant the mercy of God appears in its liturgical language.



“One of the members asked if we thought it was possible to extend mercy if we had not experienced mercy ourselves.”



Mercy in a Border Community

By CRAIG COLSON

As a young child in New York, getting up for school during the week was tough for me, so it seemed to me only right that the weekends should be my time to sleep in. I got away with it on most Saturdays, but I could forget about sleeping in on Sundays. Sunday was the Lord's Day, and we got up early for church. As a cradle Catholic with a good Italian mother, I still had to be awakened several times every Sunday morning; there was a lot of screaming about that from me and maybe, from time to time, a wooden spoon was involved in Mom's encouragement that I get out of bed. Now, that same wooden spoon, later in the day, was used to stir homemade Italian spaghetti sauce that was most always paired with huge homemade meatballs and, if we were lucky, homemade lasagna! No one made lasagna like my mom, and people would come from all over just to eat it at our house. Even some Jewish friends of ours cherished my mom's amazing cooking and would call to find out when they could come over and devour this delicious Italian meal. Basically, then, while I was growing up, Sunday was a day of church and food, and I never gave a second thought to it. We were Italian, and that's what we did on Sundays. We went to church and then came home and feasted and then took long naps on the couch.

When I was thirteen years old, my dad got offered a new job across the country—in Arizona. My mom hated the cold winters we had to endure every year in New York, so my parents decided that we were moving out West. We came to live in a town called Scottsdale, which was a middle- to upper-class city, occupied mostly by people like me, whom I learned

Craig Colson has been ministering in the area around Phoenix, Arizona, since 1993. He is currently the Music and Liturgy Director at Saint Francis Xavier Catholic Church in Phoenix, where he ministers with his wife, Kristen. They have been featured as speakers on programs for LifeTeen music conferences and at National Association of Pastoral Musicians conventions. Craig's latest contemporary liturgical album, published with WLP, is *I Am the Way*.



to call “Anglos.” As I grew up and began to work as a music and Liturgy director, one of the first parishes in which I worked was located in what used to be a predominately Anglo neighborhood that was quickly changing as more and more immigrants from Mexico moved in. The parish staff quickly realized that we needed to begin to offer opportunities in Spanish for those new parishioners. We started with a bilingual Mass, which many thought would be a good compromise, as many parishioners and even staff members were resistant to offering a Mass solely in Spanish. The Mass was poorly attended; a few surrounding parishes offered Masses all in Spanish, which seemed to be the preference of the new people in the community. We next translated the English texts of songs into Spanish, so that everyone was singing the same music at all the weekend Masses, but that innovation did not seem to meet the needs of the people either. A few years later, we decided to turn the bilingual Mass into an all-Spanish Mass, and the response was huge! Within two or three weeks of the change, the church was full for this Mass. Word had gotten out that the parish closest to where most of the Spanish-speaking parishioners lived was offering a Spanish Mass, and the people came in huge numbers.

Growing Division

Much as it was in my childhood growing up in an Italian community, Sundays for the Hispanic families revolved around church and food. The Spanish Mass attendees would stay at the church for hours after Mass was over, cooking food and having social time. The Spanish-speaking members of the community began ministries for this part of the community as well, booking facilities at the parish for Bible studies, prayer groups, and other ministries. What we saw happening was very life-giving, but it was not perceived that way by all the parishioners. Many longtime Anglo parishioners began to show their true colors, stating angrily that they were the ones who built this church and saying things like “We speak English in this church.” (Many other things were said as well that I won’t repeat here.) It was a sad reality that so many Anglos were not accepting the Hispanic community and wanted them to go to the other churches that offered Spanish Masses and activities.

As I reflected on this, I asked myself: “What is different

about these immigrants coming here to make a better life for themselves than my grandparents, who came to America from Italy to make a better life for themselves and their families?” Almost everyone in America is from somewhere else and, in essence, aren’t we all immigrants? (Even the “first peoples” came here from somewhere else.) The challenge that we had to face is in the Golden Rule: “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you” (Matthew 7:12; Luke 6:31). Where is the mercy in shunning people or talking about them behind their backs—or to their faces, for that matter—in a negative or demeaning way?

Responses to the Challenge

Working in several parishes over the years, I have seen many different approaches to the challenge of welcoming people from backgrounds other than that of the current parishioners. I have witnessed and participated in various attempts to unite parishes with different cultures into one community. One of the parishes in which I worked had two separate youth groups; one group was in Spanish, and one was conducted in English. Since all of the teenagers spoke English, the Spanish youth group actually did most of their talks and activities in English but sang some songs in Spanish. This attempted compromise actually caused a lot of division in the parish, and even when these two groups tried to do activities together, the groups remained distinct, the Hispanic kids clinging together and the Anglo teens staying together in their own group as well. Hispanic teens who wanted to attend the English youth group even received pressure from teens of their own culture to belong to the Spanish youth group.

At the parish where I work, facing this problem once more, we made the decision to adopt the LifeTeen model of youth ministry, and we decided to have only one youth group that combines all the teens of the parish together. Our Spanish Mass is in the early afternoon, and we have a Youth Liturgy in the evening in English. The youth group meets between these two Masses, so we encourage the Spanish youth to attend LifeTeen after the Spanish Mass and the Anglo teens attend the youth group before the Youth Mass.

This has been a blessing in many ways. At one of the youth nights, a few of the teens shared one of their biggest fears. It was not death or not being accepted, as one might



A Kino Border Initiative food bank (*comedor*) serves migrants in Nogales, Mexico. *Photo courtesy of the Jesuit Refugee Service.*

think. One of the biggest fears expressed was that their families would be separated and their parents deported back to Mexico. I really believe that this admission opened the eyes of the Anglo teens (and some of the adult leaders as well) to see these young people in a completely different perspective. Some of the teens from both cultures have even gone to the other culture's Mass, just to experience it. In my opinion, these teens will grow up with a deeper respect and appreciation for other cultures, customs, and rituals.

Another consequence of this fear expressed by the teens is that many Hispanic families will not register in the parish and are reluctant to put any information on forms for different programs in fear that the church may turn over this information to the police or government. This poses a problem when we try to contact families or communicate with them about their children preparing for and celebrating the sacraments as well as many other events and happenings at the parish. We have to find ways to do our job and assure these families that this information is only for our parish's purposes and that we do not turn over this information to the civil authorities.

As we work toward solutions to the challenges faced by multi-cultural parishes, the challenge of celebrating together remains. One issue that arises throughout the year with a community with different cultures is whether to have separate English and Spanish Masses on holy days or to offer bilingual or even multicultural Masses on those days. In my experience, Masses enriched by the gifts of many cultures can be very beautiful celebrations, but unless communities are well educated in the ecclesiology and liturgical sense behind such celebrations, many parishioners will choose to attend another church that offers a Mass solely in their own language.

Los Inmigrantes

My parish is a part of the Kino Border Initiative, which helps and supports brothers and sisters crossing the border between Mexico and the United States. This Initiative seeks to:

- Direct humanitarian assistance to and offer accompaniment with migrants;
- Offer social and pastoral education in communities on both sides of the border;
- Participate in collaborative networks that engage in research and advocacy to transform local, regional, and national immigration policies.

Many parishioners at the different parishes I have been a part of in this area seem willing to help immigrants, so long as they can continue to pray and sing in their own language. (Offer help, in other words, but I don't want those people in my own backyard!) I believe such prejudice can be overcome, but if a community wants to embrace a theology of "we're all in this together, and we're one parish with two (or more) different languages," it's going to have to enter into a profound and difficult dialogue. That may mean educational classes about respecting other cultures, town hall gatherings of the entire parish community, homilies that discuss the many issues facing immigrants and refugees, explanations of and experiences of the one Liturgy celebrated in multiple ways and in multiple languages within one celebration, as well as serious reflection on our Catholic social teaching in regards to social justice and mercy.

In this Year of Mercy, declared by our Holy Father, Pope Francis, I pray that we all look into our own hearts, and look very honestly at our own prejudices, and ask ourselves if our embrace of the Gospel allows these feelings. I hope that those who undertake such an examination will also commit themselves to find ways—slow ways, perhaps, and small at first—to move away from such prejudice. I pray that we all learn to be accepting and tolerant of each other as brother and sister, no matter what color our skin or what language we speak. May we welcome the stranger, the refugee, the homeless, and all who seek to know Christ and to follow his ways, heeding his call to "be merciful as your Father is merciful" (Luke 6:36).

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Institutes at the Convention

Participation in these Institutes requires full convention registration. These Institutes begin on Monday morning and continue through all breakout sessions; participants are expected to attend all sessions. Opportunities for liturgical prayer and formation will take place as part of the convention liturgies, plenum presentations, and events.

Piano and Organ Institute IN-01

Begins Monday, July 11, at 9:00 AM • **Clinicians: Lynn Trapp and James Kosnik**
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Trapp



Kosnik

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Begins Monday, July 11, at 9:00 AM • **Clinicians: Paul Inwood and Rory Cooney**
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Inwood



Cooney

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June 27-July 1, 2016 • Milford, Ohio

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Sessions on liturgy—for both experienced and beginning leaders of liturgical song; techniques for guitar and bass, keyboard, percussion, and voice; sampling of repertoire.

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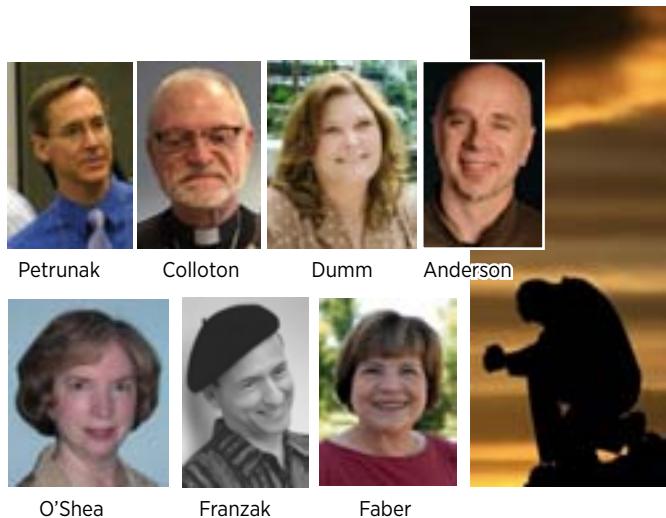
This institute is for pastoral musicians, liturgists, and cantor/psalmists who want to get away for a few days of prayer, reflection, practical skills, and new music.

The schedule offers plenty of time for you to break open the concepts presented by your teachers and to work in a relaxed, supportive atmosphere. Additionally, your spiritual life will get a boost through daily prayer, time with a spiritual director and retreat master, and a closing Eucharist.

Place: Crowne Plaza Hotel, 5700 28th Street SE, Grand Rapids. You will be assigned a single room unless you request a double (no additional charge for a double). Rooms are included from Monday night through checkout at noon on Thursday. Additional nights available at \$135/night supplement. Check the box on the registration form.

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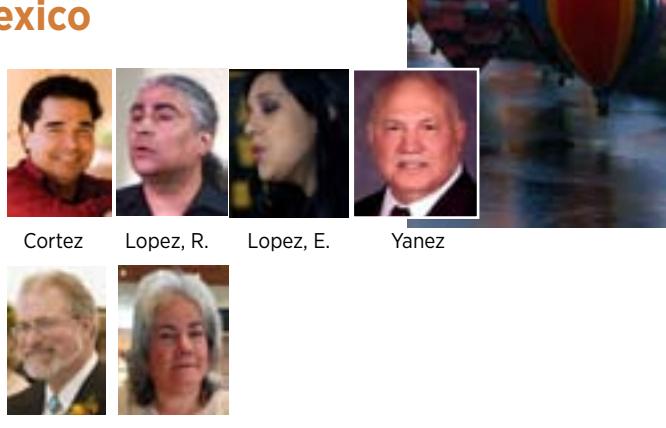
This institute is for pastoral musicians—especially guitarists—liturgists, and cantor/psalmists who want to get away for a few days of prayer, reflection, practical skills, and new music. The sessions will be presented in both English and Spanish.

The schedule offers plenty of time for you to break open the concepts presented by your teachers and to work in a relaxed, supportive atmosphere. Additionally, your spiritual life will get a boost through daily prayer and time with a noted spiritual director.

Place: Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town, 800 Rio Grande Boulevard NW, Albuquerque. You will be assigned a single room unless you request a double (no additional charge for a double). Rooms are included for Thursday and Friday nights. Additional nights available at \$135/night supplement. Check the box on the registration form.

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Resident: Housing for two nights (beginning Thursday, October



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CONFIRMATION AND CANCELLATION

You will receive a confirmation statement before your program. *Cancellation:* Requests received in writing one week prior to the institute will receive a full refund less a \$50 processing fee. (This refund will be processed after the institute.) After that one-week deadline, refunds are given only in the form of credit toward registration at a 2017 NPM convention or institute.

In the event that a program must be canceled due to low enrollment, that decision will be made at least three weeks prior to the scheduled starting date, and registered participants will receive a full refund of fees paid to NPM. Since NPM cannot offer reimbursement of travel fees, we recommend that registrants book nonrefundable flights not more than 21 days before the institute begins.

ACCOMMODATIONS

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For the Institute Plus: Housing at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 5700 28th Street SE, Grand Rapids. You will be assigned a single room unless you request a double (no additional charge for a double). Rooms are included from Monday night through checkout at noon on Thursday. Additional nights available at \$135/night supplement. Check the box on the registration form.

For the Institute Plus Bilingüe: Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town, 800 Rio Grande Boulevard NW, Albuquerque. You will be assigned a single room unless you request a double (no additional charge for a double). Rooms are included for Thursday and Friday nights. Additional nights available at \$135/night supplement. Check the box on the registration form.

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Organ and Choir

A Catholic Organist's Guide to Playing Hymns

Noel Jones. Frog Music Press, 2015. ISBN 9781516977932. 170 pages, paperback, \$24.95.

This method book, intended for beginning organists and those who struggle to play hymns in four parts, begins with a statement on the essential nature of hymn-playing skills for the organist, an informative overview of the development of hymns throughout the centuries, and Jones's rationale in developing the method. The introduction is rounded out by a very

clear explanation of hymn meter, the marriage of text and tune, and a review of elementary rhythmic principles.

Steps one and two of the method address phrasing and rhythmic vitality by employing shortened note values. The explanations benefit from clear graphic examples. Following each step is a series of exercises—eleven hymn tunes notated both with traditional rhythmic values and with adjusted note lengths according to Jones's methods.

One of the most novel aspects of this volume is the unit on registration. After a brief overview of the types of organ tone and pipe construction, Jones introduces a system in which the student can download an "organ stop spreadsheet," fill in the

stoplist for a particular instrument, and send the spreadsheet via email to Jones, who will then offer sample registrations (seven general pistons) appropriate for hymn playing, tailored to the student's instrument. The student is directed to www.organstops.org for further information on organ voices (although that website was inaccessible in January 2016).

Basic pedal technique is then discussed, along with rudimentary music theory (principles of consonance/dissonance and tonic/dominant relationships). The same hymn tunes (all in F major) are next presented with two- and three-note pedal parts. A third voice is then introduced, again using the same hymn tunes in F major and, later, new melodies in other

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keys. The volume closes with additional instruction in working out more complex pedaling.

Jones's method has many strengths. As the principles and techniques discussed are mostly applicable to general organ literature, the resource would make a good first exposure to the organ. The instructions on tempo, articulation, phrasing, and registration are sound. The provided fingerings and pedal markings are good for the most part, and the creative use of some new pedal symbols will be of help to the beginning organist. Most of all, the use of technology (registering the book for updates, the unit on registration, etc.) is fresh and forward-looking.

That being said, the method does have a few deficiencies. Jones's instructions regarding repeated notes and shortened notes at the ends of phrases would work perfectly in a generous acoustic, but he makes no mention of tailoring the practice to the dry acoustics which plague so many American churches. The introductory unit on rhythm instructs the student to use the "Stave Breakthrough™" method, and

while the student is directed to a smartphone app for the program, no further explanation of the method is given. Some of the musical examples are inconsistent with their corresponding explanations (for example, the section on phrasing breaks and repeated note breaks), and the score engravings contain a number of minor errors. When the author instructs the student to download the "organ stop spreadsheet" from "our website," no website is given. A search of the parent website (www.frogmusic.com) did not yield access to the spreadsheet. In addition to numerous typographical errors, there are some curious engraving choices, including the use of different systems of pedal markings without clarification. In general, the work would benefit from greater clarity, focus, and attention to detail, all issues that can easily be rectified in a future edition.

Where will the student find him- or herself after mastering this volume? He or she will be prepared to play all of the hymn tunes in the book (most of which are in common usage in Roman Catholic parishes) as well as all of the tunes found

in Jones's companion volumes (see the following reviews), but there will still be much work to do before mastering playing hymns in four parts. Jones rightly encourages the student at this point to seek instruction from a reputable teacher.

In the end, this volume will be a welcome resource to the beginning organist, the pianist-turned-organist, and teachers. I've not come across a similar approach in hymn-playing pedagogy, and I look forward to the next edition of this method and to similar offerings from Jones.

A Catholic Organist's Book of Hymns

Noel Jones. *Frog Music Press*, 2015. *The Liturgical Year (Volume 1)*, 2014. ISBN 978-1500777708, 254 pages, paperback. *The Liturgical Year II: 3 Part Hymns & Chorale*, 2015. ISBN 978-1515068976. 212 pages, paperback, \$24.95 each.

Designed as a companion to *A Catholic Organist's Guide to Playing Hymns*, this two-volume set contains more than 200 hymn tunes set in three voices. Concise summaries of the author's advice on articulation, phrasing, and other aspects of hymn playing found in the fuller method book may be found at the beginning and end of these volumes. The hymn tunes themselves are notated with shortened notes at phrase endings. Avoiding the awkward voice leading sometimes encountered in three-voice settings of hymn melodies, Jones maintains harmonic interest without sacrificing elegance and simplicity. Some of the settings will be playable with pedal by the beginning organist (or the organist who has mastered *A Catholic Organist's Guide to Playing Hymns*), but many will need to be played *manualiter*. Although the second volume in particular contains many tunes which are not widely sung in Catholic parishes, the two sets together cover just about all of the "traditional" hymn tunes.



Plenary Speakers

Molly Marshall
John Witvliet
Mark Burrows

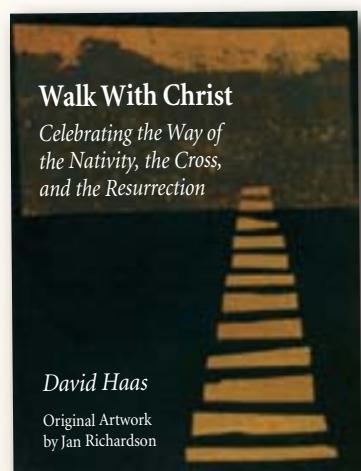
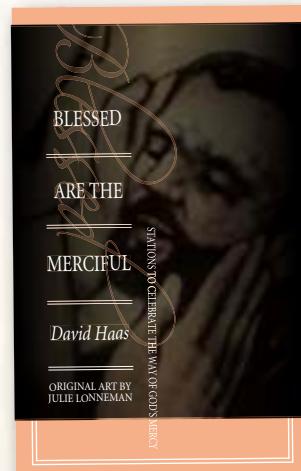
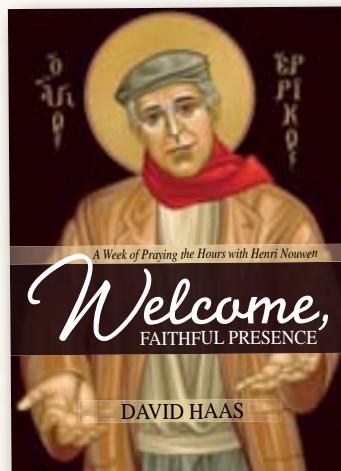


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For more information
on David Haas,
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sung in most Catholic parishes, including a few chant hymns.

Each tune is also presented as a chorale prelude for preludes, interludes, or hymn introductions. The preludes are written in various styles, and while most are technically simple, they are consistently well-written and interesting. Variety is achieved not only through form but also in harmonic language. Some tunes receive multiple treatments, including *GROSSER GOTT*, which is set in three preludes and a postlude.

As is the case with *A Catholic Organist's Guide to Playing Hymns*, Jones's embrace of technology in these volumes sets his work apart from that of his peers. Information on registration is offered in the same manner discussed in the review of that guide, and the entire contents of these two volumes are available for subscription download at www.frogmusic.com—\$20.00 per year for an individual organist or \$35.00 per year for a parish subscription.

These two books have far fewer typographical errors and formatting inconsistencies than does *A Catholic Organist's Guide to Playing Hymns*. Both are attractively bound with large print for easy reading and are recommended for the beginning organist and for the experienced organist looking for a little variety in hymn playing.

The Catholic Choirbook Anthology I

Noel Jones, edited by Ellen Doll Jones. Frog Music Press, 2011. ISBN 1461103630. 402 pages, paperback, \$34.95. (Website sale price \$19.95 or free downloads.)

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set high for a choral anthology comprising primarily public domain music to be worth the investment. Noel Jones's *The Catholic Choirbook Anthology I* is just that.

The book contains fifty-seven motets and anthems (forty-seven with Latin text, ten with English), a full setting of the Extraordinary Form Ordinary (William Byrd's *Mass for Three Voices*), fifty-three hymns designed primarily to be sung as motets, and six Gregorian hymns, the engraving of which was borrowed from the Church Music Association of America's *Parish Book of Chant*. The President of the CMAA, Dr. William Mahrt, also offers an introduction to the work in the form of a brief history of the development of the motet and its place in Catholic Liturgy.

The anthology includes works from the fifteenth through the twenty-first centuries, the majority of which are drawn from the sixteenth and early seventeenth

centuries. The familiar names of Palestrina, Victoria, Lassus, and company are well represented, but Jones has taken care to include many works by lesser-known composers as well (Grancini, Friderici, Fogliano, and D'Evry, to name a few). Perhaps what is most attractive about the anthology is its variety. I found many old "chestnuts" alongside works and composers with whom I was completely unfamiliar. Your choir is guaranteed to find a significant amount of new works to complement their beloved favorites.

The variety continues when it comes to voicing. Most of the works are SATB, but a significant number of three-voice motets (in various combinations) as well as five-, six-, and eight-voice works are included. The unison motets, chant hymns, and SATB hymns can be sung by a soloist or any combination of voices at your disposal. No matter what the size and ability of your choir, there will be plenty in this collection that you can throw together in fifteen minutes' rehearsal time as well as plenty to challenge you for years to come. In the editor's own words: "The series is more than just a collection of choir music. Rather, it is based upon the need for music—of varying difficulties, for varied sizes of groups, and of value as teaching material to improve the abilities of the singers."

Most of the Latin texts are represented by multiple settings to enable familiarization with the text. Each unaccompanied piece has a keyboard reduction for the ease of the accompanist, and the engraving and decorative art are elegant and tasteful. The quality of the editing is quite fine—an admittedly brief examination of the volume didn't uncover any wrong notes. In short, this is an anthology on a par with those of the finest of publishing houses.

As we've now come to expect with publications from Frog Music Press, the use of modern technology is impressive. In the opening material, Jones instructs the singer to visit www.choraltracks.com,

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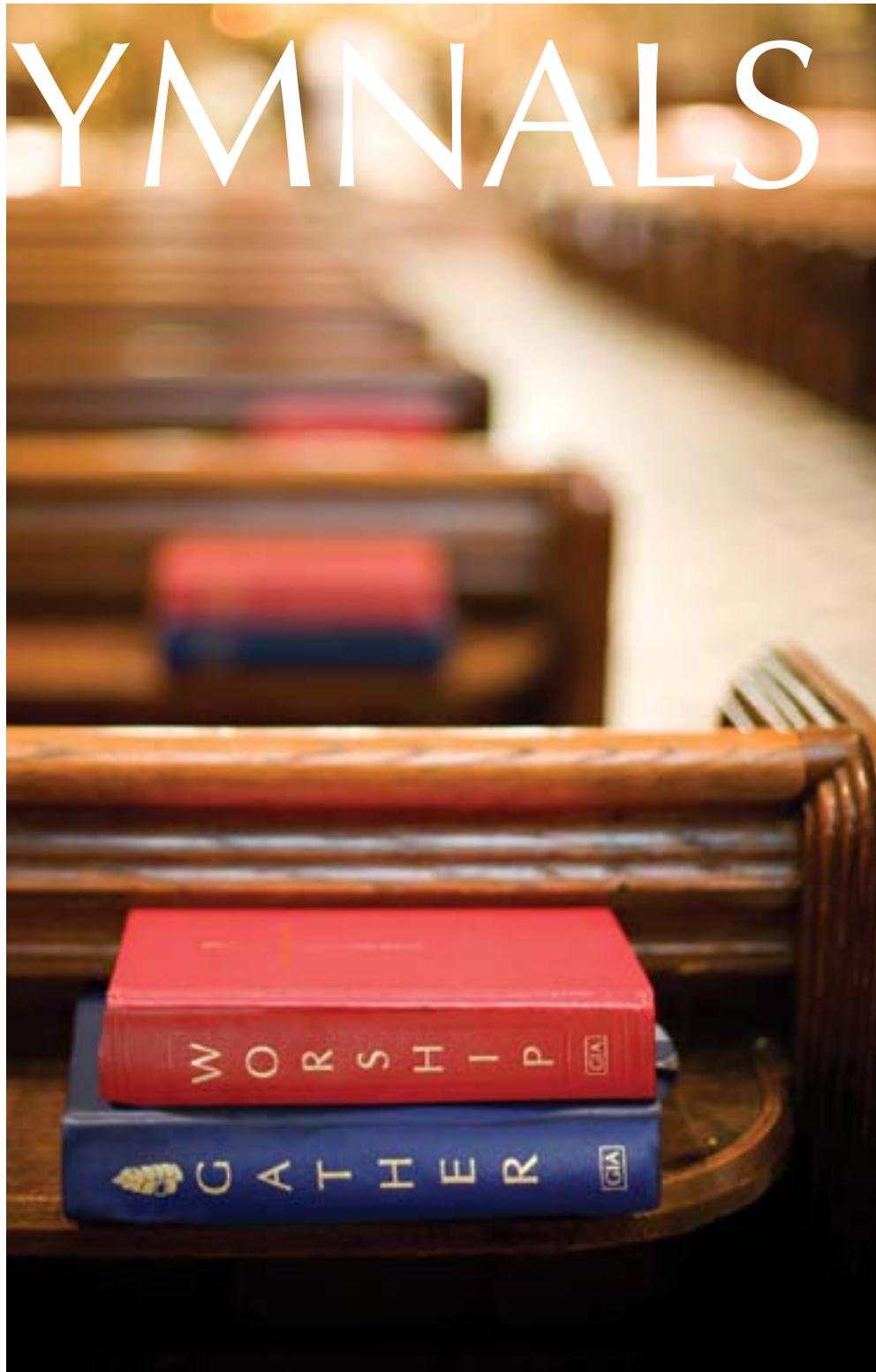
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For more information and for registration information, consult our website, www.liturgicalmusicinstitute.org. Early registration ends June 19, 2016.

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of J.S. Paluch, for their support of the Liturgical Music Institute*



where many of the works in the collection may be heard (parts together or separate) as performed by Matthew Curtis. Tutorials for the choir director are offered on the publisher's website, and Jones hopes soon to have bulletin articles on the music available for download.

Perhaps best of all, this anthology is but one in a series of five! I look forward to seeing the rest of the anthologies, and so should you. Perhaps now is the time to retire those tattered, dog-eared photocopies of the Mozart "Ave Verum Corpus." Take some time to get to know Frog Music Press, where commendable work is being done in the name of sacred music renewal.

Nicholas Will

Chant

The Proper of the Mass, for Sundays and Solemnities

Rev. Samuel Weber, OSB. San Francisco, California: Ignatius Press. 2015. ISBN: 978-1621640110. 995 pages, hardcover. \$34.95.

A prodigious amount of love and labor is manifested in this voluminous setting of the Entrance, Offertory, and Communion Antiphons for Sundays and Solemnities. Although this is not the first recent attempt to set English texts to a plethora of chants, what makes it unusual and distinctive is the sheer amount of coverage for the liturgical year.

It has an extra advantage: Each of the antiphons has not one but four options for each text: through composed (elaborate); through composed (of moderate difficulty); Latin psalm tone patterns; and English psalm tones. In other words, directors and singers have a choice of musical settings in various stages of difficulty.

All the texts are in English.

The foreword reminds us that "*actuosa participatio*" means "actively engaged" and

not just any old kind of external "participation." We sing, and we also listen. In our effort to engage people in sung worship, we often struggle to find the best hymns for the different parts of the service, and we do our best. But, while hymnody has become a familiar way of singing at the processional moments of the Liturgy, and many people would be uncomfortable to

lose hymnody and song at these points in the Mass, the liturgical books remind us that there is really no substitute for singing the *proper* texts for each day, which encapsulate the inner meaning of that day.

Father Weber certainly took on a formidable task to compose or arrange an incredible amount of music for this volume. The "elaborate" settings do remind

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us, in various degrees, of the original Latin chants. The Gregorian psalm tones included here are correct.

There is a short introduction to chant techniques. Of course, singing chant is not learned in one easy lesson. Neums have names. The ancient masters knew why: The names tell us how to interpret the symbol. It would be helpful to include

this fact along with a description of the various neums. For example, it would be good to know, for purposes of leading or singing chant, that the *porrectus* (the Latin name for a neum), means “to stretch.”

Sometimes a better explanation than that provided would be helpful. Father Weber calls the *ictus* a “stress,” but many chant interpreters would disagree with that

description. The word is too strong; the *ictus* is simply an inner pulse for rhythmic comprehension. A horizontal *episema*, on the other hand, is a different animal.

The book includes Gregorian psalm tones for the “Glory Be to the Father,” an alphabetical index of chants, and a general index. An original Latin text index would have been helpful. Father Weber includes “original” psalm tones in his introduction (page xvii), but I do not find how those tones relate to any of his settings.

All that this book undertakes is a very difficult task. The musical, textual, and stylistic challenges are formidable. This is a major contribution to singing the propers in English, and it is deeply appreciated.

William Tortolano

About Reviewers

Dr. William Tortolano is professor emeritus of fine arts/music at Saint Michael's College in Colchester, Vermont.

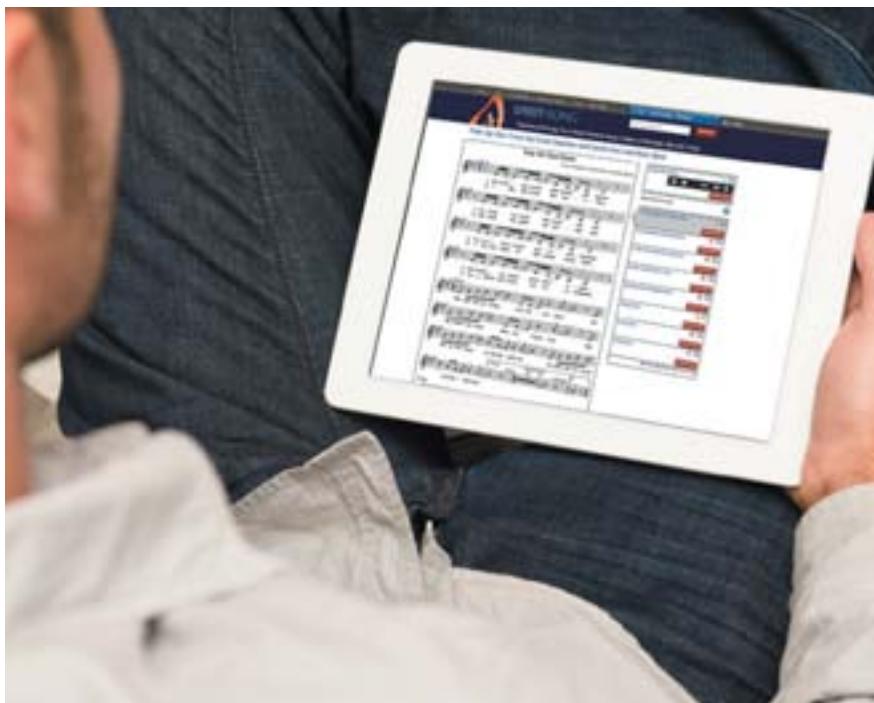
Mr. Nicholas Will is a visiting assistant professor of Sacred Music and director of the Schola Cantorum Franciscana and Franciscan University Chorale at Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio. He is also director of music at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Carnegie, Pennsylvania, where he conducts the volunteer Parish Choir and professional Schola Cantorum.

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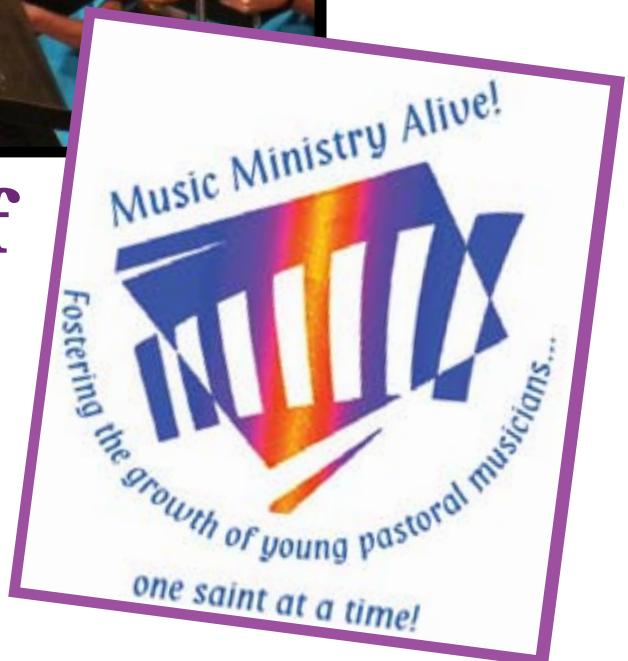


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Chapter Happenings

In the pages of this magazine and online in Pastoral Music Notebook, we regularly share “happenings” in chapters around the country so all may see the good work taking place when pastoral musicians gather locally and may benefit from their experiences.

Lansing, Michigan

Dr. Robert Wolf, Chapter Director

Our Chapter held a Colloquium Day with guest presenter Sister Kathleen Harmon, SND de N, PhD. The theme of the day was modeled on the 2015 Winter Colloquium in Silver Spring, Maryland: “The Body of Christ at Prayer: What Is All the Singing About? A Paschal Mystery Approach.” The Diocese of Lansing Worship Department, under director Michael Andrews, decided to make this event the annual Diocese of Lansing Liturgy and Music Conference. So we co-sponsored this event with the Diocese. More than 100 people attended, including worship committee members, musicians, cantors, liturgical ministers, faith formation directors, catechists, and teachers.

Our Colloquium was held at Saint Patrick Church in Brighton, Michigan, on October 3. Sr. Kathleen, the noteworthy author and clinician, presented questions for contemplation in our roundtable small groups that included these: How does the Liturgy make present the Paschal Mystery in us? How does communal singing at Liturgy attach us to the Paschal Mystery? How do we ourselves need to surrender to the Paschal Mystery in order to help our assemblies do the same? These discussions allowed for a deeper look at each of the topics in light of our own unique experiences, helping us to a better integration of the insights of the day. The day was an outstanding success, receiving highest evaluations from all the participants.

Boston, Massachusetts

Jane O’Keefe, Chapter Director

NPM Boston gathered in November to remember those members who had died in the past year. The memorial Taizé Prayer was also a fitting way to recognize the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Taizé community.

singled by the choirs and music ministry of St. Joseph directed by Dr. Trapp, director of music and Liturgy, and Holly Foster, assistant director of music (photo below). Monsignor Richard Hilgartner, pastor of St. Joseph and NPM president, presided over the service which included a commissioning and blessing of music ministers. Music ministers from all parishes in the Archdiocese were invited to join in the celebration, which was sponsored by the Baltimore NPM Chapter.



Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Kevin Maurer, Chapter Director

The Pittsburgh Chapter of NPM has a new Chapter Director: Kevin M. Maurer. (Previous director Herb Dillahunt has taken a position in North Olmsted, Ohio.) Kevin has been a member of NPM for the past thirty years and more and is currently the director of music ministries at St. John Capistran Church in Upper St. Clair, Pennsylvania. We are currently restructuring our board to include district liaisons to represent each of the four vicariates in the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

Ss. Simon and Jude will host our third meeting of the year on March 7. The topic of the discussion will be how to rejuvenate your music ministry program through increased membership and deepened spirituality. A panel of local music ministers will lead a discussion on the techniques and ideas that they have incorporated into their programs to make the church alive.

On December 17 the chapter held their annual Holiday Luncheon at the home of Chapter Director Thomas Bozek. John Romanowsky, director of the Department of Evangelization for the Archdiocese of Baltimore, was a guest of the Chapter at this information gathering to update members on the Office of Worship.

Louisville, Kentucky

Karen Shadle, Chapter Director

The Louisville Chapter of NPM joined with eight regional parishes to sponsor a wonderful concert and evening of storytelling with ValLimar Jansen on November 7. On January 21, we hosted the annual chapter anniversary dinner, which included a discussion about ways that NPM can add

Baltimore, Maryland

Mr. Thomas Bozek, Chapter Director

On November 23 the Chapter held a St. Cecilia Event at St. Joseph Parish, Cockeysville, hosted by Dr. Lynn Trapp. A members’ pot luck dinner was a prelude to an evening service which featured a hymn

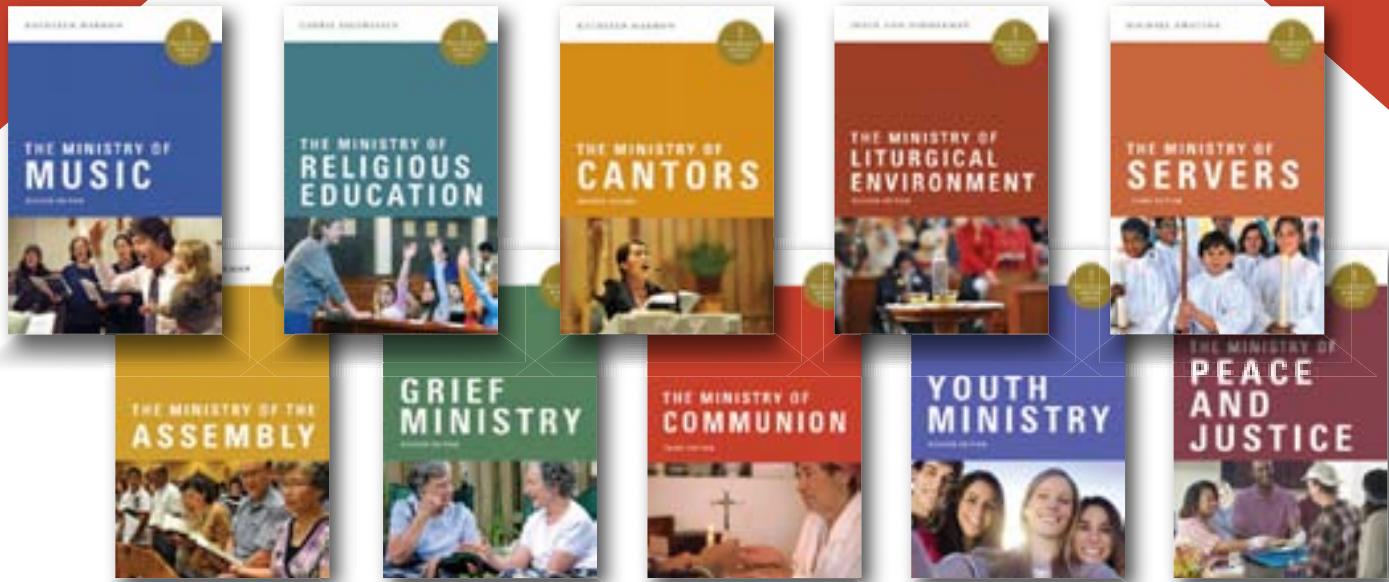


ValLimar Jansen at St. Albert the Great Church in Louisville, Kentucky



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Hartford, Connecticut

Rick Swenton, Chapter Director

St. Thomas the Apostle Church, West Hartford, was the site for a reading session on February 6. Free music of anthems and Mass settings was available from music publishers as well as an educational component regarding what we sing during Mass and why.

A Youth Choir Festival is scheduled for Saturday, April 16. This will be a “sharing concert” at First Congregational Church in Waterbury. Chris Shay will be the director, and the event is co-sponsored with the Waterbury Chapter of AGO.

Twin Cities, Minnesota

Anne Susag and Kathy Borgen, Chapter Co-Directors

The Twin Cities NPM Chapter (St. Paul and Minneapolis) celebrated the St. Cecilia Sing on October 19, 2015. (November dates in the previous two years encountered weather issues—snow.) So, on a beautiful seventy-five-degree evening, four parish choirs of the Archdiocese joined with other attendees at Lumen Christi Parish in St. Paul to raise voices in song for St. Cecilia and all the saints. Composer John Becker began the evening by leading all in his



Dr. Jennifer Pascual in Metuchen

“Litany of the Saints.” Marty Haugen was present to lead his new piece, “A Great Cloud of Witnesses.” Each of the choirs performed pieces on their own and joined with all on hymns and songs of praise. John and Marty also served as readers for the event.

A reception capped off the evening with the marvelous hospitality of the Lumen Christi music ministers.

Metuchen, New Jersey

Dan Mahoney, Chapter Director

On October 9, 2015, the NPM Chapter held a choral reading session featuring the music of GIA Publications. The clinician was Dr. Jennifer Pascual, from St. Patrick’s Cathedral in New York City. More than seventy-five people attended the event, and prayer, education, and delicious fellowship were enjoyed by all.

Austin, Texas

Dan Girardot, Chapter Director

Cantors of the Diocese of Austin responded in outstanding numbers to an opportunity to grow in their ministry. One hundred and nineteen cantors and psalmists (and some lectors and deacon candidates) participated in a formation day of cantor workshops, individual voice lessons, and basic cantor certification on September 12 at St. Elizabeth of Hungary Church in Austin. In the morning, forty-nine took a basic cantor workshop in English by Susan Lovelette (NPM Cantor Colleague and Chapter Secretary), forty-four took a basic cantor workshop in Spanish by Andrea Ramos (Director of Music for the Diocese of Austin and Chapter Assistant Director for Recruiting), and twenty-six cantors



Benjamin Balleza, director of music ministries at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church and coordinator of planning for the NPM Austin Chapter, celebrated his Basic Cantor Certificate recipients by posting a news item and this photo on the home page of the parish website.

took the advanced cantor workshop offered in English by Dan Girardot (Director of Music and Liturgy at St. Theresa Catholic Church and NPM Chapter President). In the afternoon, five professional teachers taught eighteen lessons, and seven cantors received their Basic Cantor certification. This event was successful in part because of collaboration with our new director of the Office of Worship, David Wood, and his wonderful assistant director, Andrea Ramos, the director of music for the Diocese. They both enthusiastically attended this event and continue to support us and attend our meetings whenever possible. We celebrated a Choral Festival with Lee Gwozdz in early February, and future cantor workshops and BCCs (including Spanish) are in the works, since the response by participants was tremendous. All want more, praise the Lord!

Washington, DC

Charlene Dorrian, Chapter Director

We just celebrated the Annual Gathering of Musicians of Southern Maryland, on January 30, and a Saturday workshop titled “With Hands Lifted Up: A Journey through African American Sacred Music,” with Lynnè Gray on February 13. On April 15–16 we will join the Arlington, Virginia, Chapter in welcoming Christopher Walker for a Friday evening Easter celebration and a Saturday event titled “Spirituality for the Pastoral Musician.”

Una Iglesia de apariencia similar a la misericordia

¿Cómo sería nuestra Iglesia si verdaderamente fuéramos misericordiosos? Sería como si tratáramos de convertirnos en la representación viva del Dios descrito en los salmos como “firme”, “fielmente devoto”, “misericordioso” y lleno de la clase de amor compasivo que muestra una madre por el hijo que lleva en las entrañas. Cuando comencemos a ver que ser misericordiosos y compasivos significa ser hechos a imagen y semejanza de Dios y reconozcamos nuestra dignidad—y la dignidad de todas las personas conocidas—como hijos e hijas de Dios, encontraremos la forma de expresar y compartir esa dignidad.

Si fuéramos misericordiosos, buscaríamos formas de vivir como Dios, no solo en alguna ocasión especial ni únicamente en una celebración particular como el Año de la Misericordia, sino todos los días, en circunstancias comunes, con la gente con quien nos encontramos y que necesita una clase de misericordia “diaria”, sin importar qué tan sorprendente o inesperado sea eso para algunos. La misericordia diaria no es algo fácil de encontrar en nuestro mundo; con mucha frecuencia, nos inclinamos hacia la venganza y el castigo. Ser misericordiosos día tras día es un trabajo arduo que exige práctica y sinceridad. Debemos vernos tal como somos antes de poder experimentar al verdadero Dios y a nuestros hermanos y hermanas como son. Fallamos y somos pecadores, pero somos pecadores amados y capaces de amar.

Tristemente, a veces el lugar más difícil para ser misericordiosos es donde está la gente que nos rodea—nuestros familiares, compañeros de trabajo y conocidos que consideramos fastidiosos, excéntricos o, sencillamente, molestos.

El culto no solo nos llama a ser misericordiosos de esa



forma sino que nos enseña a hacerlo y nos ayuda a practicarlo. Piensen en esto: la liturgia comienza con un clamor de misericordia en el *Kyrie*; nuestra respuesta a la proclamación de la Palabra de Dios es una oración que pide misericordia para la Iglesia y todos los necesitados del mundo. Antes de acercarnos al altar a compartir la Comunión sacramental, clamamos misericordia al Cordero de Dios. La misericordia a menudo se expresa en servicio, de modo que somos llamados a compartir nuestros dones mediante servicio a la comunidad de culto, como ministros de nuestra oración común. A menudo, la misericordia significa dejar que otros vayan adelante y hacernos a un lado para que otros puedan reconocer y utilizar esos dones.

Necesitamos ir a los oficios y a las reuniones con otra gente con la expectativa de que encontraremos a Cristo Resucitado en las personas conocidas y a quienes servimos. Es difícil hacerlo. Es difícil creer que Cristo está presente en cada niño que llora o da puntapiés en la banca de atrás de la Iglesia, en la persona con quien debemos comunicarnos pero que habla un idioma extranjero, y en la mujer indigente y sin bañarse en varias semanas, que se sienta casi a la salida de la Iglesia.

Sin embargo, en fin de cuentas, esta es la única forma de encontrarnos con Cristo: en otras personas y a través de ellas. Nuestras reuniones con otra gente nos revelan quiénes somos y nos ayudan a reconocer que necesitamos a Cristo. Por medio del amor que nos demuestran los demás, ellos también revelan la presencia de Cristo en nuestro propio ser. Esa presencia nos da la fuerza de encontrar a Cristo en otros y de compartir con ellos la misericordia que se nos demuestra. A veces, al ser llamados por la divina misericordia, debemos salir de nuestro terreno conocido, pero esa salida será un paso clave en nuestro peregrinaje de fe.

A Church That Looks and Sounds Like Mercy

What would our church look like if we were truly merciful? It would look like we are trying to be the living representation of the God described in the psalms as “steadfast,” “faithfully devoted,” “merciful,” filled with the kind of compassionate love that a mother shows for a child in her womb. When we begin to see that being merciful and compassionate is what it means to be made in the image and likeness of God, when we recognize our dignity—and the dignity of all we meet—as sons and daughters of God, then we can begin to find ways to express and share this dignity.

We would look for ways to live like God, not just for some special occasion or only for a special Year of Mercy, but every day, in ordinary circumstances, with the people we meet who are in need of a kind of “daily” mercy, no matter how surprising or unexpected that may be for some people. Daily mercy is not something widely available in our world; all too often, we lean toward vengeance and punishment. Being merciful day after day is hard work. It takes practice, and it requires honesty. We have to be able to see ourselves as we are before we can experience the true God and our brothers and sisters as they are. We fail, and we are sinners, but we are sinners who are loved and who are capable of love.

Sadly, sometimes the hardest place to be merciful is with the people around us—our families, the people with whom we work, the people we know whom we consider pests, cranks, or just annoying.

Our worship not only calls us to be merciful this way; it

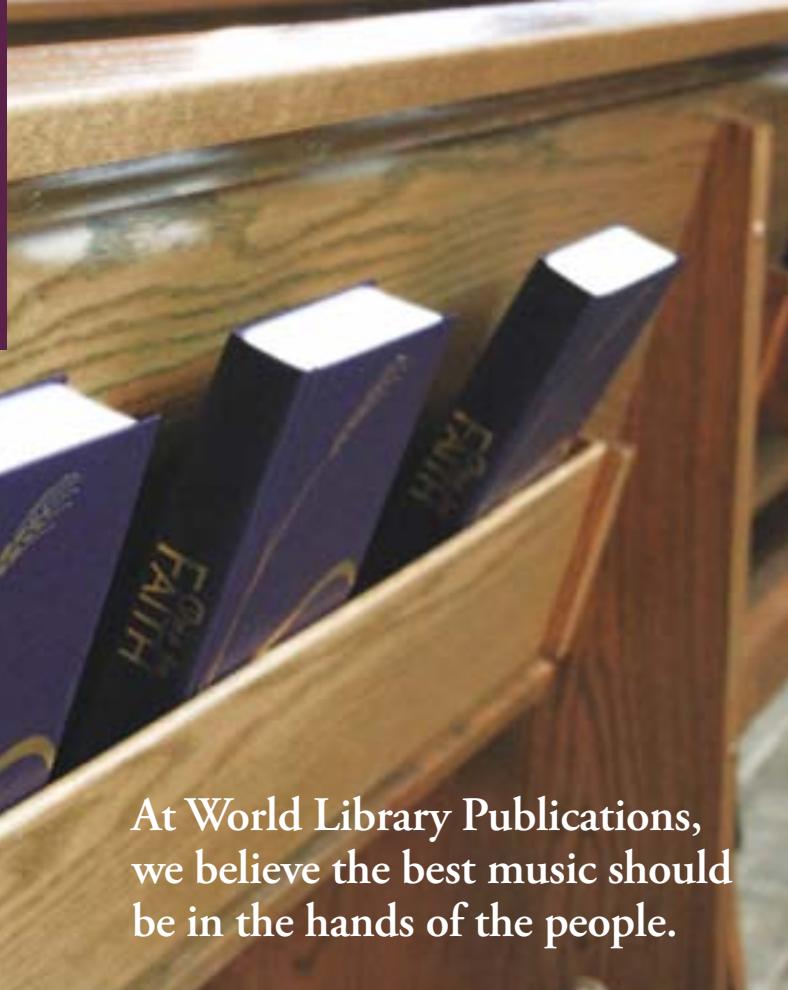


teaches us how to do it and helps us to practice such mercy. Consider this: Our Liturgy begins with a cry for mercy in the “*Kyrie*”; our response to the proclamation of God’s Word is a prayer for mercy for the Church and for all the world’s needy. Before we approach the altar to share sacramental Communion, we call to the Lamb of God for mercy. Mercy frequently takes the shape of service, so we are called to share our gifts in service to the worshipping assembly as ministers of our common prayer. Mercy often means letting others go before us, stepping aside so others may recognize and exercise their gifts.

We need to come to worship and to meetings with other people with an expectation that we will encounter the Risen Christ in those we meet and in those we serve. It’s hard to do. It’s hard to believe that Christ is present in the child crying in the pew behind us or kicking the back of the pew, in the person we have to talk to who speaks a language other than our own, in the homeless woman in the back pew who is several weeks away from her last bath.

In the end, though, this is the only way we will meet Christ: in and through other people. Our meetings with other people reveal us to ourselves and help us recognize our need for Christ. They also reveal, through the love that other people show us, the presence of Christ in ourselves. It is that presence that gives us the strength to find Christ in others and to share with them the mercy shown to us. Sometimes we have to step out of our comfort zone, called by divine mercy, but that move will be a key step in our journey of faith.

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