



**Intermediate Cantor Certificate
Essay questions**

Important: Please give careful attention to the instructions regarding citation of resources. This is an integral part of your response.

Your essays are due either prior to the vocal adjudication and exams, or within two months after your adjudication and exams.

Essay # 1 The Role of the Responsorial Psalm in the Liturgy of the Word

1. Select a specific Sunday or Solemnity (for example, the 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year B, or the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God). Prayerfully reflect on the texts of the first reading, the gospel reading, and the psalm, exploring the connections between and among these texts.

a) How is the responsorial psalm related to the first reading?

b) How is it related to the gospel reading?

c) What is the responsorial psalm doing?

--How is the psalm our response to the word God is speaking to us in the first reading? To the word Christ is speaking to us in the gospel proclamation?

– **Who is the responsorial psalm calling us, the Church, to be on this particular day of the liturgical year?**

2. Write a 1 1/2 -2 1/2 page essay summarizing and sharing the above reflections. What new insights have you gained? What do these insights confirm for you? What challenges do they raise for you?

3. ***Important:*** At the beginning or end of your essay, list at least 4 resources you used from the list given below. (Other comparable resources may be substituted as long as STL and the GIRM are included.) Additionally, please cite the reference within the text of the essay where applicable. ***Here are two examples of a citation within the text:***

This psalm is an example of a psalm of confidence, with emphasis that God can and will protect the faithful (Nowell, 1997).

According to St. Augustine, singing is for the one who loves (STL, 2). (Note: STL stands for *Sing to the Lord.*)

Essay #2 The Ministry and the Spirituality of the Psalmist

1. Applying the insights you gained from reflecting on the role of the responsorial psalm
 - a) reflect on the role of the psalmist in singing the responsorial psalm. Beyond singing words, what is the psalmist really doing? How can you as psalmist best prepare yourself to fulfill this ministry?

 - b) reflect on the spirituality of the psalmist. **Who is the psalm calling you, the psalmist, to be on this particular day of the liturgical year? Who is the psalm calling you to be in your daily living this week?**

2. Write a 1 1/2 -2 1/2 page essay sharing your reflections. What new insights have you gained? What do these insights confirm for you? What challenges do they raise for you?

3. As noted above, at the beginning or end of each essay, list at least 4 supplementary resources you used from the list given below. (Other comparable resources may be substituted as long as STL and the GIRM are included.) Additionally, please cite the references within the text of the essay where applicable. (See previous examples.)

Note: Although the Lectionary and the Bible contain the actual text of the readings and the Psalms and serve as the core of the work of the cantor, they are not considered “supplementary” resources. The supplementary resources are readings which describe and interpret the Scriptures and/or their role in the liturgy, and/or which describe the role of the cantor in proclaiming the Word.

Required reading:

The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM) (relevant sections can be found in the resources list under the Cantor Section of the NPM website [www.npm.org])

Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship (STL) (relevant sections can be found in the resources list under the Cantor Section of the NPM website [www.npm.org])

Examples of Additional Resources:

Guide for Cantors (Third Edition), by Jennifer Kerr Budziak, Christopher Ferraro, Corinna Laughlin, and Paul Turner (Chicago; Liturgy Training Publications, 2020)

Handbook for Cantors, rev. ed, by Diana Kodner Gocke (Chicago: GIA, 2018)

Living Liturgy for Music Ministers, by Stephanie DePrez, M. Roger Holland II, Verna Holyhead SGS, Orin E. Johnson & 2 Others (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, annual)

Sing a New Song: The Psalms in the Sunday Lectionary, by Irene Nowell (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1993)

The Ministry of Cantors, by Kathleen Harmon (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2016)

The Work of the Cantor: Proclaimer of the Word, Leader of Prayer, by Joe Simmons (Franklin Park, IL: World Library Publications, 2008)