



ARCHDIOCESE OF LOS ANGELES

Music Guidelines for Eucharistic Celebrations

The Ministry of Music: An Introduction

1. "God has bestowed upon his people the gift of song. God dwells within each human person, in the place where music takes its source. Indeed, God, the giver of song, is present whenever his people sing his praises." (*Sing to the Lord* 1)
2. "Music does what words alone cannot do. It is capable of expressing a dimension of meaning and feeling that words alone cannot convey." (STTL 124)
3. The Ministry of Music for Eucharistic celebrations provides joy and enthusiasm to community worship that cannot be gained in any other way. It imparts a sense of unity to the community and sets the tone for the celebration. Music expresses texts, meaning and feeling, and communicates ideas and intuitions which words alone cannot yield.
4. It would be difficult to exaggerate the centrality and importance of Music Ministry to the faith life of the parish. In the Sunday Eucharist, music pervades the entire celebration, from the Gathering to the Sending Forth. The central prayers of the celebration are sung.
5. "The role of music is to serve the needs of the Liturgy and not dominate it, seek to entertain, nor draw attention to itself or the musicians. The primary role of music in the Liturgy is to help the members of the gathered assembly to join themselves with the action of Christ, and to give voice to the gift of faith." (*Sing to the Lord* 125)
6. Music ministry requires a significant commitment of time, effort, and cooperation. Pastoral musicians plan music rehearsals each week, as well as "tune-up" and refresh the music before the Mass begins.
7. Preparation for parish musicians, therefore, needs to include prayerful reflection on the Sunday readings as an essential part of their Ministry. Parish musicians are a witness to the community of their living faith and of active participation since, normatively, the cantor and music ministers are visible to the community throughout the celebration.
8. It is necessary also, that musicians strive to form a community of charity and respect among themselves, recognizing that they are called to witness this to the assembled community at the Eucharistic celebration.



Requirements

9. Persons eligible for this ministry are those who sincerely try to live the Gospel message in their individual and communal lives. They should faithfully participate in the Sunday Eucharist and strive to live their faith every day.
10. Although it is the ideal that everyone exercising Music Ministry – especially the principal ministers – be a fully initiated and practicing Catholic with the requisite skills, proper formation, and ministerial attitude, Music Ministry has been known to evangelize and catechize. When hiring musicians or seeking volunteers for these roles, those responsible should pay attention to the skills and traits described in Sing to the Lord, nos. 48 through 53. They should INVEST in the ongoing formation of “all pastoral musicians – professional or volunteer, full-time or part-time, director or choir member, cantor or instrumentalist” (50). If the persons hired or volunteering are non-Catholic Christians, care should be taken to educate them in the Catholic beliefs and liturgical practices. On those rarer occasions when it is necessary to hire or volunteer non-Christians, even greater care should be taken.
11. As with all physical attire, dress communicates in a non-verbal manner. Care needs to be taken that all liturgical ministers dress appropriately, according to their parish’s guidelines. Music ministers may wear clothing in keeping with their primary ministry as members of the assembly.
12. All music ministers should be encouraged to attend Archdiocesan workshops on Liturgy sponsored by the Office for Divine Worship, as well as relevant workshops offered by other Archdiocesan Offices (e.g. Religious Education Congress).
13. The Pastoral Music, Pastoral Liturgy, and Advanced Pastoral Liturgy certification programs, offered through the Center for Religion and Spirituality at Loyola Marymount University, are recommended for all parish Music Directors.

THE INTRODUCTORY RITES

Preparation Before the Liturgy

14. Before the beginning of the Eucharistic celebration, it is useful for the cantor or cantor and choir to briefly rehearse with the community the Psalm response or other music to be sung by all, especially music which may be unfamiliar to the people.



The Entrance Chant or Gathering Hymn

15. The Liturgy begins with a hymn, which has a four-fold purpose:
 - a. to open the celebration
 - b. to foster the unity of those who have gathered
 - c. to introduce their thoughts to the Mystery of the Liturgical Season or festivity
 - d. to accompany the procession of the priests and ministers (GIRM 47)
16. The presider and ministers sing during the procession. The hymn need not end when the ministers reach their places. Preferably, the presider continues to sing with the assembly at the presider's chair. (GIRM 50)
17. In the dioceses of the United States, there are four options for the Gathering Hymn. These are:
 - a) the antiphon from the Roman Missal or the Psalm from the Roman Gradual as set to music
 - b) the seasonal antiphon and Psalm of the Simple Gradual
 - c) a song from another collection of psalms and antiphons, approved by the Conference of Bishops or the Diocesan Bishop
 - d) a suitable liturgical hymn, approved by the Conference of Bishops or the Diocesan Bishop (GIRM 48)
18. If the fourth option above is used, the song should express the coming together of the community. It may be selected based on the text of the Gospel and other readings of the day. During the major seasons of the year - Advent, Christmas, etc., the entrance song should reflect the message of the season. Whatever the selection, the entrance song should invite and encourage participation by the assembly.
19. The entrance song or chant may be sung alternating between choir and assembly, cantor and assembly, by everyone together, or even by the choir alone. (GIRM 48) In the Archdiocese of Los Angeles it is customary for the entrance song to be sung by all.

The Kyrie Eleison or Lord, Have Mercy

20. The *Kyrie Eleison* or *Lord, Have Mercy* is begun after the Penitential Act ("I confess..." *Roman Missal*, option A or B) or, it may form part of the Penitential Act, if invocations are used (*Roman Missal*, option C). Please note: Option A ("I confess...") and Option C (invocations) are not to be used together. Please see the *Roman Missal* for details on all three options. For weddings and funerals, the Penitential Act is omitted. The Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling with Water may take the place of the *Lord, Have Mercy*.
21. Since the *Lord, Have Mercy* is a litany by which the faithful acclaim the Lord and implore his mercy, it is ordinarily done by all -- that is, by the people and with the choir or cantor having a part in it. It may be either recited or sung. (GIRM 52)



22. On Sundays if the Rite of Blessing and Sprinkling of Water recalling Baptism is used, it replaces the Penitential Act and the *Lord, Have Mercy*. During the sprinkling, an appropriate hymn may be sung. This could either be sung by all or alternating between cantor or choir and assembly. The Sprinkling Rite is especially appropriate on Sundays during the Easter Season. It may be used during other seasons except Lent. (GIRM 51)

The Gloria

23. The *Gloria* is included every Sunday and on Solemnities, except in Advent and Lent. It may also be included at “special celebrations of a more solemn character.” (GIRM 53) In a wedding when marriage is celebrated within Mass, the Gloria is always included.
24. The *Gloria* may not be replaced by any other text. It may be sung or said by everyone together, by the assembly alternating with the cantor or choir, or by the choir alone.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

The Responsorial Psalm

25. A period of silence follows the First and Second Readings. (GIRM 56)
26. The Responsorial Psalm should be taken from the Lectionary. (GIRM 61) Ideally, the proper Psalm of the day is used, but for pastoral reasons the seasonal Psalms and/or responses found in the Lectionary (*Lectionary for Mass: Common Texts for Sung Responsorial Psalms*) may be used, especially in order to encourage participation. (STTL 157-158, GIRM 61)
27. It is preferable that the Responsorial Psalm be sung. The cantor or Psalmist sings the verses from the ambo or another suitable place, since the Psalm is part of the proclamation of the Word. The whole assembly, while remaining seated, participates by singing the response. (STTL 36; GIRM 55, 61)
28. Songs or hymns may never be used in place of the Responsorial Psalm. The text of the Psalm is taken from the current *Lectionary for Mass* or another approved translation. (STTL 159, GIRM 61)

The Sequence

29. The Sequence is a liturgical hymn that is sung before the Gospel Acclamation on certain days: On Easter Sunday (*Victimae Paschali Laudes*) and Pentecost (*Veni Sancte Spiritus*), the Sequence is required. (STTL 165-166, GIRM 64)



30. It is helpful to give a brief introduction to the Sequence before Mass so that the assembly is aware that they should remain seated while it is sung -- either by everyone, or by the cantor and/or choir.

Gospel Acclamation

31. In the Gospel Acclamation, the assembly welcomes the Lord's Word in the Gospel. The *Alleluia* is sung by all while standing and is led by a cantor or the choir, being repeated if necessary. The *Alleluia* precedes and follows a verse which is taken from the Lectionary and is sung by the choir or cantor. (STTL 161, GIRM 62) The singing of the Gospel Acclamation accompanies the Gospel procession and is extended to accompany the duration of the ritual action.
32. During Lent, in place of the *Alleluia*, the verse before the Gospel is one of the following (*Introduction to the Lectionary 9*):
- a) Glory and praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!
 - b) Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, king of endless glory!
 - c) Glory to you, word of God, Lord Jesus Christ!
33. The Gospel Acclamation may be omitted if not sung. (GIRM 63c, STTL 164)

Prayer of the Faithful

34. The priest, from the Presidential Chair, invites all to pray. (GIRM 69, 70) The people stand and give expression to their prayer either by an invocation recited or sung together after each intercession, or by praying in silence. (GIRM 71)
35. The intercessions are proclaimed from the ambo or another suitable place by the deacon, cantor, lector, or other lay faithful. (GIRM 71) These prayers may be sung by the cantor. (GIRM 38, 71) When the response of the people is sung, the prayer is enhanced. (STTL 171)

THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST

The Preparation of the Gifts

36. The function of the hymn at the Preparation of the Gifts "is to accompany and celebrate the communal aspects of the procession" of the gifts. (GIRM 74) Music, if used, should continue until the gifts are placed on the Altar and may continue during the preparation of the bread and wine. Singing is appropriate during the preparation of the gifts, even when there is no procession with the gifts. (GIRM 74; STTL 173-175)



37. In the dioceses of the United States, there are four options for the norms for this chant or hymn, which are the same as for the Gathering Hymn. These are:
- a) the antiphon from the Roman Missal or the Psalm from the Roman Gradual as set to music there, or in another musical setting;
 - b) the seasonal antiphon and Psalm of the Simple Gradual
 - c) a hymn from another collection of Psalms and antiphons approved by the Conference of Bishops or the Diocesan Bishop;
 - d) a suitable liturgical hymn approved by the Conference of Bishops or the Diocesan Bishop (GIRM 48)

The Eucharistic Prayer

38. The Eucharistic Prayer begins with the Preface dialogue. Ideally, this is chanted by the presider, alternating with the community. (STTL 179, 181) The acclamations during the Eucharistic Prayer are to be sung even at Masses in which little else is sung: Sanctus (Holy, Holy, Holy), Mystery of Faith, and Great Amen. (STTL 180)

These sung acclamations belong to the whole assembly, so choir parts may facilitate and enhance, but not replace them. (GIRM 79) Parishes should have several settings of the Eucharistic Acclamations in their repertoire, changing them according to season. They should be musical settings well known to the assembly.

39. The presider may sing the Eucharistic Prayer. If spoken or sung, there should be no singing or instrumental music accompanying it. (STTL 182, GIRM 32)

The Communion Rite

40. The Lord's Prayer may be recited or sung. Musical settings should be simple and well-known to all assembled. (GIRM 81) The musical setting should never overpower the Fractioning Rite that follows.
41. The Agnus Dei (Lamb of God) is an invocation/litany that accompanies the Fractioning Rite when the priest breaks the Eucharistic Bread. The Lamb of God is preferably sung but may be spoken.
42. The manner of the Rite of Peace should be done in accordance with the customs and culture of the assembly. (GIRM 82) This rite is less emphasized than the Fractioning Rite that follows and should not be accompanied by music. (STTL 187)



43. The Communion Hymn begins as the priest is receiving the Sacrament, not after his communion. (GIRM 86) It should foster a sense of unity, show joy of heart, highlight the “communitarian” nature of the procession, be simple, and not demand great effort. Songs, hymns, or Psalms with easily learned refrains the assembly can sing from memory are most effective. (GIRM 86, STTL 192) Communion hymns should be sung often enough to be familiar to the community. Ideally, a song that encompasses the entire Communion Rite should be chosen. Musical interludes and/or repetition of verses may be used to lengthen the hymn.
44. In the Dioceses of the United States there are five options for the Communion Hymn:
- a) a hymn in which its text is based on the Gospel of the day
 - b) the antiphon from the Roman Missal or the Psalm from the Roman Gradual as set to music there or in another musical setting
 - c) the seasonal antiphon and Psalm of the Simple Gradual
 - d) a hymn from another collection of Psalms and antiphons approved by the of Bishops or the diocesan Bishop
 - e) a suitable liturgical song approved by the Conference of Bishops or the diocesan Bishop (GIRM 87)
45. Benediction hymns that emphasize Adoration rather than Communion are not suitable.
46. After Communion, a Psalm or Hymn of Praise may be sung by the entire assembly after all ritual action has concluded. (GIRM 88, STTL 196) Or the choir alone may sing a brief hymn of praise. Musicians and clergy should allow a time of unaccompanied silence either after Communion, or after the Hymn of Praise.

THE CONCLUDING RITE

47. Since the Sending Forth Hymn or Recessional follows the conclusion of the Mass, it is considered optional. Therefore, musicians are free to select music that provides an appropriate closing based on the liturgical season, Solemnity, or the popular devotion of the people. If the people have sung a hymn after Communion, it may be advisable to use only an instrumental or choral recessional.



GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR PASTORAL MUSICIANS

Fostering Active Participation

48. The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy directs that “in the reform and promotion of the liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else.” (CSL 14) The GIRM repeats this principle by stating that the entire celebration be planned “in such a way that it leads to conscious, active, and full participation of the faithful both in body and in mind, a participation burning with faith, hope, and charity.” (GIRM 18)
49. Since music is integral to good worship, clergy and all ministers serving at the celebration should actively participate by singing. This can be encouraged by having worship aids or clearly marked hymnals available for all.
50. Practices that discourage participation include:
- a) tempos that are too fast or too slow, thus making it difficult for the assembly to sing
 - b) singing in a range which is too high or too low for most of the assembly
 - c) using too many new hymns, thus making it difficult for the assembly to participate
 - d) increasing the volume of the microphones of the song leaders so that the assembly is overpowered or discouraged from singing
 - e) using Communion Hymns that require the assembly to carry a book in order to participate.
51. Music should be carefully chosen to allow an assembly of largely untrained voices to sing without struggling to keep up, without straining to reach the notes, without feeling unfamiliar with the music, or that their participation is not expected or important. Those using microphones (cantors, ensembles, choirs, and clergy) should take great care to avoid overpowering the assembly. The question, “Can the musicians hear the singing of the assembly?” is often a good method by which to test the overall volume of the sound system.
52. Repetition of hymns from week to week, season to season, and year to year should be fostered. In this way, a repertoire of liturgical song becomes well known, thus enabling a parish tradition of full participation by the assembly.

Preparing Music for the Liturgy

53. In choosing music for Eucharistic celebrations, a threefold judgment must be made, as described in *Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship* (127-136): the Musical, Liturgical, and Pastoral Judgments.



54. First, Pastoral Musicians must choose music for worship which is technically, aesthetically, and expressively good, avoiding whatever is cheap or cliché. (STTL 134-136)
55. Music is an art that demands certain skills. Ensembles of vocalists and instrumentalists must practice together so that they may collectively sing and play well. In most cases, this implies regular rehearsals along with ongoing education and training. Music Directors should work to provide education for parish musicians who desire to serve in this Ministry but have had little opportunity to enhance and strengthen their musical skills.
56. Music chosen must truly serve and respect the Liturgy by expressing the nature of each part of the Mass and its relative importance. (STTL 137) When preparing music for the Liturgy, the Readings of the day and the liturgical Feast and Season provide all guidance. Musical texts ideally will flow from Sacred Scripture and its associated imagery, and from the liturgical action.
57. The theological foundation of hymn texts needs to be carefully considered. While an “I/me” orientation is helpful for personal devotion, it becomes problematic within the Eucharistic celebration which is communal. Texts which express our communality through the words “we/our” are generally preferred.
58. Music should be chosen in such a way that enables the people of this assembly, in this time and place, to express their faith through singing. Due consideration should be given to the culture of the people. (GIRM 40; STTL 131- 133)
59. While Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship encourages a diversity of styles of music at the Eucharistic celebration, parishes can benefit from developing a core repertoire of songs and acclamations, including the music and languages of the various assemblies which are known by all, thus facilitating complete participation in multi-cultural celebrations such as within the Triduum.

REQUIREMENTS

The Role of the Choir

60. A well-trained choir adds beauty and solemnity to the Liturgy and assists and encourages the assembly’s song. It is appropriate for the choir to contribute music of artistic beauty and excellence without the participation of the assembly, when community singing is optional in the Rite. The choir should not replace the singing of the assembly but instead, encourage it.



The Role of the Cantor

61. In the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, it is normative that a cantor or song leader facilitate the song of the assembly at Sunday Eucharist.
62. Before all else, the cantor should be competent to lead the singing of the assembly. The cantor should lead both vocally and through personal presence, utilize effective gestures, and possess a pleasing vocal quality to encourage and support the communal singing. The cantor should also be able to sing the verses of the Responsorial Psalm and the Gospel Acclamation.
63. The cantor should maintain an awareness that he or she is part of the assembly, which looks to him or her for support. Cantors should participate in training sessions that are offered by the Archdiocesan Office for Divine Worship.
64. Cantors, in their role as liturgical ministers, should be appropriately attired with considerations given to modesty, the cultural expectations of the assembly, and the importance of their liturgical leadership.

Prioritizing the Musical Moments

65. Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship, and its predecessor, Music in Catholic Worship, convey the priorities of musical moments in the Liturgy. The priority list can be understood as follows:
 - a) Acclamations
 - b) Processional Chants
 - c) Responsorial Psalm
 - d) Litanies
 - e) Responses
 - f) Hymns and Songs
66. A parish Music Director can build their Ministry based on these priorities.
67. It is also important to note that for those songs or hymns used in the Liturgy that do not contain actual ritual texts, those texts should either be scripturally based or be deemed appropriate for worship. Texts that focus on our personal relationship with Jesus are not appropriate for liturgical use. They are better suited for times of private devotional prayer.



Assembly Song

68. Primary energy and focus should be given to the assembly's song. The assembly is the main liturgical minister at any liturgical gathering. Song is the foremost human action that can bring people to unity and communion with one another in God. Song is a human and liturgical prayer need, not merely an enhancement of liturgical action. A Music Director should never stop pursuing, first and foremost, the goal of full sung participation of all members of the assembly at the appropriate times within the Liturgy.

Ritual and Repetition

69. For an assembly to be engaged in song, repetitive use of a select, small body of well-composed acclamations, chants, Psalms, responses, hymns, and songs are important. A Music Director needs to keep track of the repertoire that is built within a community and make choices based on the Scripture and liturgical Season of each celebration.

Remember: repetition is a key element in ritual prayer. Music that is new and fresh might be satisfying to the musicians, but it does not necessarily engage or call the full assembly into participation. Care needs to be taken as to **when, how often, and in what manner** new music is introduced and used within the liturgy.

Prioritized Musical Moments

70. The whole body of gathered worshippers should, first and foremost, be fully participating in the following Acclamations:

- a) the Gospel Acclamation
- b) the Acclamations of the Eucharistic Prayer (Holy, Mystery of Faith, Great Amen)

71. The two main **processional chants** that belong to the assembly's song are:

- a) the Gathering Hymn
- b) the Communion Processional Hymn

It is important that these musical moments be shaped in whatever way is necessary to engage all assembly members in full musical participation. Use of well-known hymns of praise at the Gathering, and Eucharistic or Scripture-based hymns that alternate between assembly refrains and choir or cantor verses during the Communion procession, require that the music director be ready and willing to establish a small but standard repertoire of music for these moments.



72. The **Responsorial Psalm** should be sung. These are the ancient sung prayers of the Hebrew people, of Jesus, and of the Church. This moment can take many musical forms. Chants and Psalm tones can be adapted for use here. Through-composed settings of the Psalm's texts are plentiful. Even if the community does not have a cantor or song leader who is comfortable with chanting the verses, the response needs to be sung by all, and can alternate with spoken verses. The eventual goal of a parish Music Ministry would be for the entire Psalm to be sung.
73. Litany is an ancient prayer practice whose quality is motivated by repetition, like that of a mantra in Eastern meditation practices. The litanies within the Mass include:
- a) the *Lord, Have Mercy*, which is one form of the Penitential Act
 - b) the *Universal Prayer*, which can be set to music and take the form of a litany
 - c) the *Lamb of God* that accompanies the fraction rite
 - d) the Church, on occasion, sings the *Litany of the Saints* using various musical settings whether traditional or contemporary
 - e) hymns at the Communion procession that can take the form of a litany
74. There are many sung responses in the Liturgy that can be thought of as dialogic moments between the Priest Celebrant or cantor and the community:
- a) the presidential prayers (Opening Collect, Prayer Over the Gifts, Prayer After Communion), if intoned by the Presider, call for the community's sung "Amen" in response
 - b) the dialogue that opens the Preface of the Liturgy of the Eucharist can be chanted by the Presider and community
 - c) sung dismissals for the Children's Liturgy of the Word and Initiation (OCIA) groups
 - d) various other rituals of the OCIA that call for the sung response of the community
75. Other hymns or songs can be included at the following moments in the Liturgy:
- a. The Glory to God can be a responsorial or through-composed hymn.
 - b. The transitional time when we move from the Table of the Word to the Table of the Eucharist might be a time when the choir can offer some musical enhancement. It is an optional moment for the sung participation of the assembly at large.
 - c. The Sending Forth is also an optional assembly participation moment. If the assembly is not invited to join in song, the choir can again enhance the experience by offering a scriptural or seasonal song, or a song of praise.
 - d. The choir can also enhance the liturgical experience of the assembly by offering a prelude before Mass begins that is based on the Scripture of the day, or on the Season being celebrated.



- e. The Lord's Prayer can be chanted by the assembly on occasion for specific reasons, but one must be careful that the musical arrangement does not weigh so heavily that it upsets the balance of the Liturgy. The Acclamations of the Eucharistic Prayer, and the litany that accompanies the Fraction Rite are far more important musical moments for the assembly. If sung on occasion, the Lord's Prayer might be sung during the Advent season when the scriptures reflect kingdom language, or during Lent when we are called to deeper contemplation.
- f. Two times in the Liturgical Year, Church Tradition asks us to sing a Sequence (a poem) that is inserted after the Second Reading, before the Gospel Acclamation. These happen on Easter Sunday and Pentecost Sunday, and are not optional.

The Use of Screens, Projected Music and Worship Aids in the Worship Space

- 76. In recent years, we have seen the introduction of projection screens into our worship spaces. Installing a projection screen in a church is a decision that must be made individually by each parish. If you choose to install a screen or have already, the following guidelines relate to how these screens function in regard to music within the Liturgy.
- 77. The decision to project music for assembly song at worship should be weighed carefully. In many cases, parishes may already have a permanent music resource in the pew. If this is the case, rather than duplicating that material on a projection, it would be beneficial to project the hymn number so that people in the assembly can easily find it in the permanent resource. This would alleviate the cantor from having to interrupt the liturgy to announce the number in the book.
- 78. In cases where the parish does not have a permanent resource but rather an annual resource, the parish may decide to use projector screens to display the music during worship and discontinue using an annual resource. If this is the case, it is important to weigh what should be projected on the screens. It is preferable that it be a replica of what one would see in a hymnal, with both the text and musical notation intact. This allows for the assembly a greater opportunity to engage in song. While not all may be trained musicians, many people have rudimentary knowledge of music notation and can determine when the melodic line moves up or down. However, it is also acceptable to display the texts only, without the musical notation. Much of this decision will be determined by what the needs are of the assembly.
- 79. Regardless of what is used, whether text with music notation or texts only, two things must be considered:
 - a) Visibility of the slide - before use, there should be adequate testing of the slides to ensure that they are clearly visible from all viewing points in the worship space.



- b) Proper licensing - unless it is in the public domain, all music, texts, and notation are copyrighted. Therefore, proper permissions and license fees are **required** before being able to project them or print in worship aids for the purposes of public worship (*including funerals and/or weddings*).
80. The aim is that all those participating "form one body...Care should be taken to avoid distracting the faithful from the celebration taking place by showing unsuitable images of the people present or things extraneous to the celebration." ([U.S. Bishop's Committee on Divine Worship Newsletter, March-April 2016](#))

Conclusion

81. *Sing to the Lord* states it best: "Liturgical musicians are first disciples, and only then are they ministers. Joined to Christ through the Sacraments of Initiation, musicians belong to the assembly of the baptized faithful; they are worshipers above all else. Like other baptized members of the assembly, pastoral musicians need to hear the Gospel, experience conversion, profess faith in Christ, and so proclaim the praise of God. Thus, musicians who serve the Church at prayer are not merely employees or volunteers. They are ministers who share the faith, serve the community and express the love of God and neighbor through music." (STTL 49)



Abbreviations Used:

- **CSL** - Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy
- **GIRM** - General Instruction of the Roman Missal
- **STTL** - Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship
- **DMC** - Directory of Masses with Children
- **HHCC** - The Hispanic Presence: Challenge and Commitment.

Excerpts from the English translation of the Directory for Masses with Children from Documents on the Liturgy, 1963-1979: Conciliar, Papal, and Curial texts ©1982, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. (ICEL); excerpts from the English translation of the General Instruction of the Roman Missal © 2010, All rights reserved.

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Job Description for Parish Music Director Office for Divine Worship, Archdiocese of Los Angeles

The following is a guide for the pastor and pastoral team toward the hiring of a parish Director of Music Ministry. It is intended to assist in setting qualifications, in the creation of a job description detailing areas of responsibility, and in establishing salary guidelines.

What is presented here needs to be adapted to differing situations per parish such as when the Music Director is also the Liturgy Director. They might also be the Director of Liturgical Music in the parish school or may be assigned other responsibilities. Moreover, the needs of the parish, as well as the parish's assets, need to be considered when developing a job description and setting salary guidelines.

Introduction

"Among the many signs and symbols used by the Church to celebrate its faith, music is of preeminent importance. As sacred song untied to words it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy. Yet the function of music is ministerial; it must serve and never dominate. Music should assist the assembled believers to express and share the gift of faith that is within them and to nourish and strengthen their interior commitment of faith.

It should heighten the texts so that they speak more fully and more effectively. The quality of joy and enthusiasm which music adds to community worship cannot be gained in any other way. It imparts a sense of unity to the congregation and sets the appropriate tone for a particular celebration.

In addition to expressing texts, music can also unveil a dimension of meaning and feeling, a communication of ideas and intuitions that words alone cannot yield. This dimension is integral to the human personality and to growth in faith. It cannot be ignored if the signs of worship are to speak to the whole person. Ideally, every communal celebration of faith, including funerals and the Sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Penance, Anointing, and Matrimony should include music and singing. Where it is possible to celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours in a community, it too, should include music" (Music in Catholic Worship, Bishop's Committee on the Liturgy, 1983).

Qualifications

Musical Qualifications

The specific musical expertise of the Music Director may vary. Their principal musical skill might be as an organist, choir director, cantor, guitarist, or other related musical field. In any case, the candidate should possess a degree (BA or graduate) in Music or equivalent demonstratable skill and experience.



Liturgical Qualifications

The parish Music Director should possess fundamental expertise in the Catholic Liturgy and in Liturgy preparation. The candidate should have completed the Archdiocesan Liturgical Formation and Certification Program for the parish Music Director, or some equivalent program. They should also possess demonstrable skill and knowledge of Roman Catholic liturgical practice as well as a willingness for continuing education in liturgy.

Pastoral Qualifications

The parish Music Director should have experience in Pastoral/Parish Ministry. This includes skills in relating to and managing groups of people; organizational and leadership ability; a life of faith proportionate to a parish Minister, preferably within the Roman Catholic Church; and a willingness to engage in continuing education in various pastoral areas.

Cultural Qualifications

Ideally, the parish Music Director should possess some direct knowledge and experience of multicultural practices, especially those that are relative to the cultures and ethnic groups living within the parish, and at least the desire to learn about multicultural and related themes.

Responsibilities

In fulfilling his/her responsibilities, the parish Music Director needs to function in collaboration with the Pastor and Pastoral Team: Pastor, Associate Pastors, Deacons, Director of Religious Education, school Principal, Initiation Director/Team, and with the parish Liturgy Committee.

The parish Director of Music:

- Selects or oversees music repertoire for the Sunday and Holy Day Liturgies and other parish liturgical celebrations (e.g., weekday Eucharist, weddings, funerals, Baptisms, Penance Services, Liturgy of the Hours, and devotional services).
- Coordinates and oversees the formation and training of all persons involved in Musical Ministries: choirs, cantors, ensembles, organists, pianists and other instrumentalists.
- Oversees the scheduling of all Music Ministers.
- Maintains current records (e.g., salary, evaluation, etc.) on all Music Ministers.
- Collaborates with the Pastor and other appropriate persons (e.g., the parish Liturgy Director) in the hiring of music personnel.
- Prepares an annual music budget in consultation with the Pastor and others.
- Oversees the formulation and implementation of parish policies and guidelines concerning music in Liturgy.
- Oversees the ordering and maintenance of all music materials (library).
- Is responsible for the repair and maintenance of the organ and other parish musical instruments.