

UNIT NINE: The Power and Beauty of Music



LEADERSHIP & MISSION IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

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Introduction

- “The Church evangelises and is herself evangelised through the beauty of the liturgy.” (EG 24)
- To what extent is this true in our local situation? Where it is not true, what can we change to make it more true?

Nature of the mass

- “The Mass is at the same time, and inseparably, the sacrificial memorial in which the sacrifice of the Cross is perpetuated and the sacred banquet of communion with the Lord's body and blood” (Catechism 1382)

A window in time.

- “With the Eucharist, we enter into another dimension of time not subject to our measurement, in which the future, illuminated by the past, is offered to us as the unchanging present.” (The Eucharist: Source and Summit of the life and mission of the Church 11)

- Making present the Paschal Mystery.

- “When the Church celebrates the Eucharist, the memorial of her Lord's death and resurrection, this central event of salvation becomes really present” (Ecclesia de Eucharistia 11)

- We are present at the Cross and Resurrection; a profound moment.

- Question:

- o How does the fact that in the mass we are present at the cross change how I approach the mass?

Purpose and power of music in the mass

- Why do we have music in the mass?

- o “to add greater efficacy to the text, in order that through it the faithful may be...better disposed for the reception of the fruits of grace belonging to the celebration of the most holy mysteries” (John Paul II/Pius X)

- Power

- o Music is God's little ninja; able to sneak past our defences and preconceptions and impact on our souls with echoes of the beauty and

mystery of God.

- o It is a very powerful medium through which to present the truths of heaven in the sounds of earth.
- o Because of its power, it can be incredibly helpful, or just as harmful, in trying to draw people into the mysteries being celebrated.

What sort of music? (Church welcomes all forms of true art in all cultures that have the right qualities, but music must always serve and never dominate the liturgy)

- The Church has a great openness to different styles of music in the liturgy:
 - The Church ‘approves of all forms of true art which have the requisite qualities, and admits them into divine worship’ (Sacrosanctum Concilium, 1963)
 - Celebration of Eucharist is “all the more expressive and fruitful when expressed in the cultural richness of the People of God who celebrate” (Catechism 1158)
- As long as the music
 - o “respects both the liturgical spirit and the true values of this art form” (Paul VI)
 - o possesses “sense of prayer, dignity and beauty” (Paul VI).
 - o Fundamentally, “Music must always serve and never dominate the liturgy.” (Music in Catholic Worship)
 - o Question: Does the music we use in our local setting serve effectively to draw our people into the liturgy, or does it dominate the liturgy, or stop people from entering reply into the mysteries?

How to we determine which music to choose? (Music must be considered against three main criteria: Aesthetic, Liturgical, Pastoral)

- Music must satisfy three criteria: Aesthetic, Liturgical, Pastoral.

- Aesthetic/Musical:

- o asks whether this composition has the necessary aesthetic qualities that can bear the weight of the

mysteries celebrated in the Liturgy.

- Liturgical Principle:
 - Liturgical music must meet the specific requirements of the Liturgy: Full adherence to the text it presents; Synchronisation with the time and moment in the Liturgy for which it is intended; Appropriately reflecting the gestures proposed by the rite.

Pastoral Principle:

- Does [the music] enable these people to express their faith, in this place, in this age, in this culture?
- Question: Does the music we use in our local setting adequately meet these criteria?
- What style of celebration? (Our liturgies must clearly reflect the One we encounter therein. Incarnational liturgy: present and transcendent, ancient and new)
- Liturgy in Australia is often a tale of two liturgies, at opposite ends of a spectrum
 - “Low church” liturgy.
 - Focus on presence- our journey- fellowship, communion- bread/wine/feast- our humanity/frailty/needs
 - “High church” liturgy.
 - Focus on transcendence- the sacrifice of the mass- reverence and awe- sacredness- transcendence of God
- Liturgy is an encounter with the triune God, and particularly with Christ, Emmanuel, God with us.
 - In the liturgy we encounter Jesus/Emmanuel, who was both “God” - infinite, almighty God; and “with us” - one with us, in our culture and language, where we are.

- The eternal Word, speaking in the language of today.

What resources do we need? (Music, people, tools)

- We have lost a generation or two of liturgists, composers, worship leaders, musicians, and now need to raise a new generation.
- Music:
 - We must draw out treasures old and new.
 - Music that is effective in drawing people in this day and age into the mystery being celebrated.
 - Music that is easy to sing, beautiful enough to bear the weight of the mysteries, vibrant enough and with enough movement to engage all, drawing deeply from the liturgical and spiritual

riches of the Church.

- Musicians:
 - Trained in music.
 - Trained in liturgy.
 - Remunerated to enable them to give the best of their skills, experience, and time.
- Resources:
 - Need the right level of resourcing, with the right focus.
 - Training.
 - Mentoring.
 - Song/music resources.
- Question:
 - How much effort/time/money do we put into our music ministry?
 - Does the level of priority we give it reflect its importance and power to impact our community?