



**NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF
PASTORAL
MUSICIANS
ARCHDIOCESE
OF KANSAS CITY
IN KANSAS AND
KANSAS CITY/
ST JOSEPH**

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**MARK YOUR
CALENDARS**

Feb 16, 8:30-2:30
Rescheduled Cantor
Workshop,
St. Elizabeth, KCMO

Feb 21, 12:30 pm
Board Meeting

March 1, 5-7 pm
Chapter Social 5-7 pm
O'Neills at 9417 Mission
Leawood, KS

May 3, 2019
David Haas Concert
Nativity of Mary
Independence, MO

Sept 28, 2019
Day of Spirituality and
Skills Workshop
Nativity of Mary,
Independence, MO

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NPM News

Volume I, Issue 3

February 1, 2019

FORMING YOURSELF AND NPM

NPM was created in the 1970's to foster liturgy in the Roman Catholic Church. Founders saw that the Church in the USA did not have a mechanism in place to train lay pastoral musicians as their roles grew, due both to a shortage of ordained clergy and professed religious, but also in the blossoming of lay members of the Church after Vatican II.

Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord: A Resource for Guiding the Development of Lay Ecclesial Ministry (USCCB, 2005) states in the Introduction for "Part B: Formation for Lay Ecclesia Ministry:" "The Church has always required proper preparation of those who exercise a ministry. In the same way... 'lay persons who devote themselves permanently or temporarily to some special service of the Church are obliged to acquire the appropriate formation which is required to fulfill their function properly.'"

Ideally, the Church would provide conservatory musical training and high-quality faith and ministerial training for everyone called to music ministry. NPM began to try to fill some of the need and, over time, the focus became primarily on music.

Co-Workers in the Vineyard lists four areas of formation: human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral. Human encompasses "qualities critical to form wholesome relationships and necessary to be apt instruments of God's love and compassion." Spirituality includes "practice of prayer...[rooted] in God's Trinitarian life, grounding and animating all they do in ministry." Intellectual is gaining "adequate knowledge in theological and pastoral

studies, along with the intellectual skill to use among the people and cultures of our country." Pastoral includes the practical skills or abilities needed for a particular ministry.

Again ideally, no one would begin serving without this formation. NPM national and our local chapters exist to help provide some of this needed training—at least the musical/liturgical portion of it. The Diocese and Archdiocese provide some of the rest, such as the School of Faith program in Kansas, but the gap between ideal formation and a mechanism to provide it is still wide. Many pastoral musicians have been pressed into service simply because they took piano lessons. Greater joy in your ministry, and more abundant fruit in others, will result if everyone prepares themselves as best they can. Continuing to work on the four areas also prevents burn-out in what all of us know is a demanding ministry.

Those musicians who live in the metropolitan area have the advantage of proximity to many events, teachers and colleges. Both Missouri and Kansas have NPM members reaching out to those of you living outside the "big city," in hopes of providing more training opportunities for you.

Sr. Claudette Schiratti and Dr. Mario Pearson have met with some deaneries in Missouri. See page four to read Sr. Claudette's summary of their discussions. Vicky Neely and Maureen Henderson have met with some musicians in Topeka and Lawrence to find out what their needs are. Please take advantage of opportunities as you are able. Reach out—come out.

Upcoming NPM Events

Our Jan 19 workshop, hosted by St. Elizabeth's in KCMO, had to be rescheduled due to snow. The same event is now on **Feb 16, 8:30-2:30**. This day focuses on Cantor ministry. Come to enjoy individual help in a small master class format, general sessions, and time to network during lunch. Cantors or choral singers of any level of skill are encouraged to come. Go to our chapter website at www.npminkc.com for infor-

mation and to register.

Friday, March 1, NPM is having a social from 5-7 pm at O'Neills, 9417 Mission Rd, Leawood, KS 66206. NPM is providing appetizers in a reserved room—you buy your own beverage and may donate for the food if you wish. Please RSVP on our website by Feb 27.

Nativity of Mary Parish in Independence, MO, is hosting David Haas on tour in the concert: I Will Bring You Home:

Songs of Prayer, Stories of Faith, on **Friday, May 3**, 7 pm. The concert and reception are in the church at 10017 East 36th Terrace South, Independence, MO 64052.

WEBSITE CREATED!!

Our local chapters' website at www.npminkc.com continues to grow and be a valuable resource. Please visit it to register for events, see past newsletters and other items of interest.

St. Rose Philippine Duchesne, St. Cecilia and St. Gregory, pray for us!



Developing the Next Generation of Pastoral Musicians

Throughout the Old Testament we read of the Israelites' ebb and flow of faithfulness to God. A recurring theme is how things went awry when they did not teach their children about the faith. Our Church and our Music Ministry in the present day continue to wrestle with this problem: how do we attract, train and retain young pastoral musicians? A youth choir program through school or parish, or both, is one avenue. If you don't have one in your parish and would like to get one going, here are some ideas taken from successful local choirs.

Of the sample parishes surveyed, the range of age is from kindergarten through high school—not all in the same group. Most did not start until 3rd- or 4th-grade, when children's reading ability is up to hymn texts. The amount of rehearsal varies from the typical once-a-week or, as in some high school groups, only rehearsing just before the Mass, to a high of four 50-minute rehearsals before school plus one hour before Mass for Lucas Tappan's Senior Chorister group at Most Pure Heart of Mary in Topeka, KS. His groups sing every week for Mass; the St. Joseph, Shawnee, youth choirs each sing just once a month and the rest fall somewhere in between. Kevin Vogt at St. Michael the Archangel and Vicky Neely at Nativity, both in Leawood, KS, and Karen Engebretson at St. Therese in North Kansas City, MO work closely with their schools and the choirs lead at school Masses as well as weekends. Lori Tajchman from St. James, Liberty, MO, rehearses on Saturdays for an hour. Many of our Catholic schools have some sort of liturgical choir to lead at school Masses on weekdays and this choir will sometimes sing for weekend Mass in addition.

When starting a choir, assess your parish and look at school and sport calendars to find the best rehearsal time to attract and retain singers. High school students are the hardest to get to a rehearsal. St. Joseph tried other times, but ended up more-or-less successfully rehearsing two Sundays for 60 minutes right before the high school youth group meeting, plus a 45-minute rehearsal right before Mass. Rehearsing right before or after elementary school works well.

Those choirs with substantial rehearsal time and older elementary or middle school-age children are able to sing high-quality choral works in harmony. Younger groups sing unison and perhaps canons or the occasional final chord to develop vocal independence. Some teen groups have members able to play instruments at sufficient levels to enhance hymns or choral pieces. All the surveyed groups sing largely the hymns the parish is singing in a variety of musical styles—they do not lead a "Children's Mass" with completely different music.

The main goals for all the programs include faith formation, building interest, involvement and training resulting in lifetime music ministry as service. Those with more rehearsal time provide music theory; all teach healthy singing, sacred repertoire in a variety of styles, and how music fits in the liturgy. The main ministry for all the groups is leading the sung prayer in Mass. Some of the groups also do community outreach by singing at civic events and retirement homes.

Opportunities exist for training beyond school general music class, school and parish choral experiences and encouraging parents to pay for private lessons. The Kansas Archdiocese provides some organ scholarship money. The NPM convention has lots of activities for youth and young adult every summer. St. John's University in Collegeville, MN hosts a week-long

(see page 3, *Youth Choirs*)

Have you posted or commented on either of our Facebook pages yet?

FB is a good tool to find substitutes, advertise your events, and ask questions—but it is only useful—if you USE IT! The Kansas NPM is "National Assoc of Pastoral Musicians Archdiocese of KC in KS."

Missouri is "NPM Kansas City/St. Joseph MO Chapter."

Cantor Corner—Space and Our Giant Tongue Muscle



Relax and open your mouth tall in the back of your mouth.

Your vocal tone, pitch and volume can be all improved by working on two things—relaxing the tongue and increasing the height opening of the back of your mouth. Our tongue is quite a massive muscle responsible for making various vowels and consonants as well as eating and drinking. Singing tone, pitch and volume are affected by a stiff tongue. The stiffness also prevents consonants being voiced quickly and loudly, or inadvertently changes the vowel when trying to voice the consonant. T, D, L and R are created with a quick tongue movement at just the right time—without the need to close your whole mouth as many singers do. The tension of the tongue spreads throughout the vocal apparatus, neck and even the shoulders—and vice versa. General anxiety and performance nervousness exacerbate it.

A tall opening between the soft palate (the fleshy, non-bone area at the back of the roof of your mouth) and a relaxed tongue are needed for a full, rich tone and volume created without strain. It takes practice to open tall without causing tension in your tongue—a real "Catch 22" of vocal skill.

One way to relax your tongue: stick it straight out, hold, then relax. Look in a mirror and make yourself yawn while watching the uvula, the piece of flesh attached to the soft palate. Consciously raise the soft palate and pay attention to what your tongue does—it should stay relaxed. Sing through your range on "ah" and watch the uvula—the soft palate often drops down in weak or problem areas of your range. You can sing in a low range with a low soft palate, but you must have this space to sing higher pitches.

Tips to Make Your Hymn Playing Both Supportive and Creative by Dr. Chloë Stodt



Hymn Playing = Conducting the Assembly from the Keyboard

1. Instrumental musicians are to lead and support singing without dominating or overpowering it. (From Sing to the Lord # 41). Assembly members need to be able to hear themselves and their neighbor singing—if they cannot, the music leadership is too loud.
2. Keyboardists set and sustain congregational tempos and breathe life into the words. The tempo of the introduction must be the SAME as the tempo of the song that follows.
3. Maintain a steady beat (have you practiced with a metronome lately? You might be unpleasantly surprised)
4. Put in metered and predictable pauses at the ends of verses that do not end with a rest so all can breathe together. Sometimes they are notated with fermatas; other times, not. Examples are “All Praise and Glad Thanksgiving “(GOTT VATER SEI GEPRIESEN) and “All Hail, Adored Trinity “(OLD HUNDREDTH). Extending the final quarter note to a half followed by a beat of rest for the breath usually works well.
5. Know the text phrasing so you can breathe/lift/detach with the assembly. Not all verses are articulated the same. Know the text of each verse as often syllables fall on different notes or beats (e.g. “I am the Bread of Life”) and play the notes as they are to be sung.
6. Vary the sound of the accompaniment on the verses, according to the words. “Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume, breathes a life of gathering gloom,” begs a different instrumental color from “Glorious now behold Him arise?” Similarly, verses three and four of “Lord of the Dance” are a different mood from verse five.
7. A possible “recipe” for a four-verse hymn like “Holy, Holy, Holy” (NICAEA) with organ and choir might be:
 - Verse 1: Full organ sound with unison choir to support the assembly
 - Verse 2: Less full organ sound, manuals only and SATB choir
 - Verse 3: “Solo out” the melody, perhaps playing one octave lower, with softer accompaniment—alto and tenor played by left hand, bass played on pedal; or left hand playing a chordal accompaniment with no pedals and men only or women only singing unison
 - Verse 4: Full organ with a different harmonization and unison choir; or write a soprano descant to fit the alternate harmonization—high soprano being the only voice that can be heard over a full organ.

LENT

Lent is a time to emphasize silence. The instructions in the ORDO (Order of Prayer) are: “...the altar should not be decorated with flowers, and musical instruments may be played only to give necessary support to the singing.” The ORDO goes on to say, “...consider the purpose rather than the strict letter of the law as certain musical pieces may ...indeed foster the spirit of the Lenten season. A large body of beautiful organ literature has been written

based on Lenten hymns, for example. Should they be played or not?

Consider the gamut of instruments—could your assembly sing at least the final verse of a hymn without organ or piano accompaniment? Might light percussion with no other instrument keep the group together and effectively enhance the sung prayer?

We are not forbidden from being creative. Choose wisely to bring the text alive while remembering that less can be much more.

experience for youth-- One Call/*Una Vocación* June 25-30, 2019 (the former David Haas program, see www.onecallinstitute.org) as well as the National Catholic Youth Choir Camp July 6-14, 2019. *The Catholic Key Online* has an interesting article about Maria Milazzo’s and her students’ experience at One Call — “Nativity Teenagers Learn Music Ministry Skills at Camp.” The Church Music Institute’s American Federation *Pueri Cantores* also has regional festivals for youth.



Youth Choirs continued

Guitar and Children’s Choirs by Rick Worms

Young children’s choirs are the perfect place to use a guitar. For one thing, a director is free to move around the group when teaching a song, which helps keep the kids on track and encourages energetic singing. For another, many songs for younger children are very simple, using just a couple of chords, making it easy to concentrate on the voice parts since the playing the instrument can become almost automatic. This doesn’t always work as well when the children are Junior High age, but it works very well for the smaller

ones. I’ve used guitar with younger children’s groups at four Catholic grade schools and in the religious education programs of several other parishes with great success.

Even if you don’t presently play guitar, most of the songs I list aren’t very difficult to learn. YouTube has many videos for beginning players and guitar companies are now coming out with models aimed at beginners. Epiphone is one company that has very affordable models for beginners featuring low action (decreased pressure needed to push down the

string that equals less pain for neophytes) and a slightly thinner neck (to make playing chords easier).

A few examples of simple songs to use with younger choirs are found in *Rise Up and Sing, 3rd Ed.* (Oregon Catholic Press). Simple rounds that work well with guitar are “Christ is Light” and “As the Deer” by Jack Miffleton and “Advent Canon” by Carey Landry.

The Taizé collections have many rounds and simple 3- and 4-part harmonies which also feature guitar chords and other

Find rounds or pieces with simple chord progressions for beginning guitarists and singers.



Have you prayed
today?

Visit our website at
npminkc.com

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Diocese of KCMO/St Joseph Outreach by Sr. Claudette Schiratti

Dr. Mario Pearson and Sr. Claudette Schiratti, RSM, are visiting Deaneries in the Kansas City-St. Joseph Diocese for conversations with priests and musicians about music in the liturgy in their parishes and deaneries. **Lively conversations** have occurred in **Deanery VIII** to the east of the diocese and **Deanery VII** to the south of the diocese. Some observations are:

- **Faith-filled parishes** in the diocese have long histories; for example, Lexington predates the Civil War. Many priests and musicians have preceded us in parishes and will follow us. Our responsibility is to foster the faith of those living today through dedicated music ministry..
- **Time and financial constraints** were mentioned but musicians are doing their best.
- The **need to recruit** more music ministers was raised in both deaneries.
- The importance of **inviting people** and **being hospitable** was stressed. Music ministry can develop community and make for more active and caring parishioners.
- **Inviting youth** and **recognizing and encouraging talent** are important to developing the next generation of music ministers. The November Issue of NPM national's *Pastoral Music* is all about the next generation.
- **Offering free voice or keyboard lessons** might help a talented person to get involved..
- **Joining in ecumenical events** can be an opportunity for growing in music, faith and civic community.
- Deanery Parishes can join forces and develop a deanery sense for a musical liturgical event such as the **celebration of Confirmation throughout the deanery**.
- **Various hymnals and publishers** are used. Deanery VIII basically uses Gather Comprehensive. Deanery VII parishes use both Oregon Catholic Press and GIA Publications hymnals. Each publisher has various resources for those using their materials.
- **Diocesan workshops** were expressed as a desire. [Ed note: Day of Spirituality and Skills is scheduled for Sept 28, 2019, at Nativity of Mary in Independence, MO. Put it on your calendar now.]
- **Contact information** was gathered for musicians in each parish to enable the diocese and NPM to be in touch with musicians for various opportunities.
- The next visit will be February 9 in Deanery IX to the northeast of the diocese.

Guitar continued

Instrument parts. "Jesus Remember Me," for example, is also included in *Rise Up and Sing*. If you can find the earlier collection music books by Jack Miffleton like *Wake Up the Earth* or *Rounding the Seasons*, they almost always include accompanying gestures with the songs that the kids love. Many tunes even include tone bell parts. See www.worldcat.org for library copies.

For many people with the responsibility of teaching songs to younger children's choirs, learning a new instrument may seem a daunting goal. You don't have to become an Eric Clapton to be successful at this task, and it really does add an exciting dimension to this ministry that may give you the the spark to take your choir to a new level of fun and enjoyment.

Behind the Mic: Transparency by Bob Sandford

Our goal as music ministers is to be conduits for God's Spirit. When we sing or play our hope is that our singing and playing may point not to ourselves, but to God who sings and plays through us. Our art, though it involves performance skills, is not a performance meant to entertain, but a performance of God's Spirit through us that we may all be strengthened in faith. God's Spirit is ever a partner in our ministry, "for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words (Romans 8:26).

And why do we practice? To remove all obstacles in order that the Spirit may pray through us without hindrance. Our practice is a practice of transparency. To pray what we play and sing at Mass we have to practice this. Open hearts make for artful ensembles. Choir directors: if your choir isn't blending, try praying the words together. Then sing your prayer.

*Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful
And enkindle in them the fire of your love.
Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created
And you shall renew the face of the earth.*

*O God, who has instructed the hearts of your faithful by
the light of the same Holy Spirit, grant that by the
same Holy Spirit we may have right judgment in all
things and evermore rejoice in His consolations.*



Friday, March 1
NPM Social
Completely low-stress!
5-7 pm at O'Neills, 9417 Mission
Leawood, KS
RSVP on the website