

MUSIC: (Music, Musician's & Cantors)

The primary minister of music is the assembly itself. Ministers of music lead the assembly in song and foster the joy that characterizes the Eucharistic feast. Thus, the music ministry should never perform for the Assembly. Rather, they should encourage active and full participation (singing) during the Mass as it helps to unite us as the Church and to develop a sense of unity and solidarity.

Music should encourage us to open our hearts to receive the Word and to share the Word through hymn. It can quiet the soul and dispose the hearts and the minds of the assembly to be attentive before the Mass.

Singing is a form of prayer that gives glory to God. As St. Augustine said, "To sing is to pray twice." Singing should come from the heart, "*Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord.*" (Ephesians 5:19) The beauty of sacred music invites us to prayer and opens us to receive the grace offered by the Eucharistic Sacrifice. This leads us to give thanksgiving to God through our music, our voices, and the music leadership offered by the music ministry.

DO'S:

- Use the most up to date translation of the Mass and one complete Mass setting.
- When selecting hymns, they should be ones that everyone can sing, and from a source they can follow.
- The music should be Christ centered, relevant to the liturgical readings of the day and clearly expresses the faith of the Church. (*Logos of the Liturgy*)
- On special days such as Mother's or Father's Day, Remembrance Day and other feast days, an appropriate hymn specific to that feast day can be added to the liturgy. For example, a Marian hymn in the months of May and October. The hymn can be used as prelude music, or used for the Offertory or the Recessional hymn.
- The music should enhance the celebration.
- Processional and Recessional hymns should be uplifting and joyful.
- Consideration of the liturgical season should be made, i.e., Advent, Christmas, Lenten and Easter seasons when choosing music for the liturgy.
- The cantor, like a reader, is a proclaimer, leading the assembly in prayer through the Responsorial Psalm. They should be audible, clear and have good diction.
- The microphone is only an amplifier of what you input.
- When inviting a response from the assembly to the Psalm, your hand(s) may be raised slightly.
- At the Offertory (the bringing up of the gifts), the music should end once the priest has washed his hands in preparation for the dialogue that will follow ("*Pray brothers and sisters....*").
- During Holy Communion, a hymn with a repetitive refrain like a chant or Taizé song is recommended. This should start once the celebrant has received Holy Communion.
- A period of silence, in thanksgiving, should start once everyone has received Holy Communion and the celebrant has returned to the altar.
- For other celebrations like funerals or weddings, a solo, such as Ave Maria, can be sung during Holy Communion or as a post Communion hymn.

DON'TS:

- Don't select hymns using the Tetragrammaton (YHWH or Yaweh). Citing the instruction *Liturgiam Authenticam* (cf: no 41c), it explains that translators must use the "greatest faithfulness and respect" regarding the name of God and our Jewish brothers and sisters.
- The accompaniment and musicians shouldn't drown out or overpower the voices of the assembly.
- Don't use only one style or genre of music. Strive for musical diversity.
- Don't have too many new hymns at each Mass as it impedes the participation of the assembly.
- Don't mix and match Mass parts. Sing all from the same composer / style or composition for the Mass.

Extract taken from:

Roman Catholic Diocese of Nelson



Nelson Diocese Liturgy Committee