

Singing the Rites of Initiation Today

BY J. MICHAEL McMAHON

In his 1989 article providing music suggestions for the various rituals of the *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults*, David Haas referred to the role of music as “liturgical glue.”¹ As an integral part of the liturgical action and joined to the liturgical texts, music is unmatched in its ability to support the rite and to enable the participation of the assembly.

Rites of the Catechuminate

The material presented here is intended as a practical resource for pastoral musicians who prepare music for the rites of initiation celebrated at the Sunday liturgy:

- Rite of Acceptance into the Order of Catechumens (several times during the year);
- Rite of Sending Catechumens for the Rite of Election (on or around the First Sunday of Lent);
- Scrutinies (Third, Fourth, and Fifth Sundays of Lent);
- Celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation (Easter Vigil).

There are many other ritual celebrations within the process of initiation where music plays an equally important role: celebrations of the Word of God during the catechuminate period; presentations of the Creed and Lord’s Prayer; and the preparation rites of Holy Saturday. Pastoral musicians should also be involved in the preparation for these celebrations as well, so that music may perform its role as an integral element—as “liturgical glue.”

Rites for Baptized Candidates

There are also a number of adapted rites that can be used with baptized Catholic candidates preparing to complete their initiation through the sacraments of initiation or with baptized candidates from other ecclesial communities who are preparing to be received into the full communion of the Catholic Church. Combined rites are also provided in the ritual book that may be used when both catechumens (unbaptized) and candidates (bap-

tized) are present at the same liturgical celebration.

While they are based on the rites provided for use with catechumens, these celebrations have been adapted in such a way that they affirm and respect the baptismal dignity of the candidates. Pastoral musicians must likewise take into account that baptized candidates are already one with us, even if not fully. At least some of the acclamations, responses, and songs used in these rites should express this unity, for example, the numerous settings of “There Is One Lord.”

Collections of Musical Resources

Several collections of music resources for the rituals of adult initiation have been published in recent years, including:

- *Who Calls You by Name: Music for Christian Initiation*, by David Haas et al. (GIA, 1988, 1991). Most of the music in these quite extensive collections is by Haas himself, with acclamations, litanies, responses, and songs for most of the ritual moments of the initiation process.
- *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults: Musical Settings*, by Lynn Trapp (MorningStar Music, 1991). Trapp has written twelve extremely useful responses that provide music for most of the major moments of the initiation rites.
- *Christ We Proclaim: A Music and Liturgy Resource for the Rites of Christian Initiation*, by Christopher Walker (OCP, 2001). In this impressively comprehensive resource, Walker presents not only his own compositions, but also a detailed outline of each rite, along with musical suggestions from a variety of sources.

Suggestions for the Rites

All the suggestions below are drawn from hymnals and service books currently in use in the United States and Canada. One or more of the collections cited above may provide a helpful supplement to the material suggested here, but many of the books listed here already provide good musical resources for the celebration of the initiation rites:

- BB *Breaking Bread 2002* (OCP)
- CBW *Catholic Book of Worship III* (CCCB, 1994)

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Processing with the Book of the Elect

- GC *Gather Comprehensive* (GIA, 1994)
- GP *Glory and Praise*, second edition (OCP, 1997)
- MI *Music Issue 2002* (OCP)
- RS *RitualSong* (GIA, 1996)
- WC *We Celebrate* (WLP, 2001)
- WOR *Worship*, third edition (GIA, 1986)
- WS *Word and Song 2002* (WLP)

In choosing acclamations and responses, it may be helpful for pastoral musicians to consider other rites that are celebrated in the midst of the Sunday assembly. The song chosen for the entry of catechumens into the church, for example, might also be the song used for the entry of children into the assembly during the Rite of Baptism for Children. Developing a stable repertoire of familiar acclamations and responses can help to foster robust participation by the assembly.

RITE OF ACCEPTANCE INTO THE ORDER OF CATECHUMENS

Gathering

When the community gathers at some place outside the church, it may be most suitable to choose a song with a simple refrain or one that can be sung easily without instrumental accompaniment. When it is not possible for the community to gather outside, any song expressing longing for God or joy in gathering in the name of Christ would be appropriate.

- All Are Welcome GC 753/RS 846/WC 861/WS 565
 All People That on Earth Do Dwell CBW 578/GC 747/GP 535/MI-BB 301/RS 849/WC 879/WOR 669, 670/WS 593
 All the Earth (Deiss) MI-BB 483/WC 881/WS 590
 God Is My Great Desire WOR 581
 I Have Loved You GC 504/GP 710/MI-BB 566/RS 641

I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say GC 646/MI-BB 511/RS 768/WC 835/WOR 607/WS 553

I Will Choose Christ GP 459/MI-BB 390
 Journeysong GP 581

Psalm 63: My Soul Is Thirsting

Psalm 100: We Are His People

Wherever He Leads, I'll Go RS 810

Acclamations for the Introductory Rites

Blessed Be God, Who Chose You CBW 4A, 4B/WC 210/WS 31

We Stand with You RS 216

We Praise You RS 217

Acclamation for Signing with the Cross

By This Sign BB 38/GP 448/WC 211/WS 32

Christ Will Be Your Strength CBW 2A/GC 811/RS 220

Glory and Praise to You RS 221/WC 722/WS 33

In the Cross of Christ RS 221

Entry

See also suggestions for gathering, above.

Psalm 34: Come, My Children

Psalm 122: I Rejoiced

Those Who Seek Your Face BB 39/GP 447

Responsorial Psalm

If the readings of the day are used, the psalm of the day or an appropriate seasonal psalm should be sung. When the texts of the ritual Mass are used, the appointed psalm is Psalm 33, using the refrain, "Happy the people the Lord has chosen to be his own."

Intercessions for the Catechumens

After the homily and after the optional presentation of a Bible, the intercessions for the catechumens are sung or said. When sung, it may be most appropriate to use a familiar response.

Dismissal

Go Now in Peace RS 225, 226

May the Word of God GP 13/MI-BB 648

We Send You Forth WC 213/WS 35

PARISH RITE OF SENDING CATECHUMENS FOR THE RITE OF ELECTION

Signing of the Book of the Elect

In some dioceses the Book of the Elect is signed at the parish prior to the celebration of the Rite of Election. In this case, one of the following would be appropriate during the signing.

Those Who Seek Your Face BB 39/GP 447
Who Calls You by Name CBW 618/RS 231/WC 609/WS
394
You Chosen Ones WC 216/WS 36
You Have Called Us MI-BB 642

Intercessions for the Catechumens and Dismissal

See suggestions for the Rite of Acceptance into the Catechumenate, above.

SCRUTINIES

Intercessions for the Elect

Intercessions for the Elect WC 218/WS 38
Three Litanies for the Scrutinies WC 219/WS 39

Song after the Exorcism Rite

First Scrutiny

Come to the Water GC 502/GP 706/MI-BB 567
Come to the Waters CBW 359
Drink Living Water/Tomen Agua Viva GP 93
Flow River Flow GP 455/MI-BB 647
Healing River GC 584/RS 715
River of Glory GP 454/MI-BB 654
There Is a Well/Un Pozo Hay GP 452
Wade in the Water GC 812/GP 456/MI-BB 646

Second Scrutiny

Amazing Grace, v 1 CBW 480/GC 612/GP 615/MI-BB
455/RS 737/WC 657/WOR 583/WS 438
Awake, O Sleeper RS 650, 729/WC 780
I Am the Light of the World GC 510/GP 658/MI-BB 557
I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light GC 507/RS 651/WC
776/WS 512
Jesus Christ, Inner Light GP 661/MI-BB 561
Psalm 27: The Lord Is My Light
The Lord Is My Light GC 605/GP 486, 659/MI-BB 667/RS
649, 732

Third Scrutiny

For You Are My God, vss 3-4 CBW 483/GC 616/GP 612/
MI-BB 454
I Am the Bread of Life, vss 4-5 GC 828/MI-BB 321/RS
931/WC 624/WOR 738
We Shall Rise Again GC 772/RS 872

General

Amazing Grace CBW 480/GC 612/GP 615/MI-BB 455/
RS 737/WC 657/WOR 583
From Ashes to the Living Font WC 220/WS 40
God of All Power RS 232
Lead Me, Guide Me GC 574/RS 712/WC 770/WS 498
Precious Lord, Take My Hand MI-BB 676/RS 754/WC
831/WS 558d
Psalm 6: Return, O Lord
Psalm 32: I Turn to You

Publishers

Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB)

Publications Service
90 Parent Avenue
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 7B1
Canada
(613) 241-9461

GIA Publications, Inc.

7404 S. Mason Avenue
Chicago, IL 60638
(800) 442-1358
www.giamusic.com

MorningStar Music Publishers

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www.ocp.org

World Library Publications (WLP)

3825 N. Willow Road
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Schiller Park, IL 60176-0703
(800) 621-5197
www.wlp.jspaluch.com

Psalm 51: Create a Clean Heart

Psalm 116: I Will Walk in the Presence of the Lord

Psalm 130: With the Lord There Is Mercy

Psalm 139: Guide Me, Lord

Remember Your Love GC 881/GP 474/MI-BB 630/RS
550

There's a Wideness in God's Mercy CBW 443/GC 626/
GP 639/MI-BB 436/RS 742/WC 659/WOR 595, 596/
WS 433

Those Who Seek Your Face BB 44/GP 447

Dismissal

See suggestions for the Rite of Acceptance into the Catechumenate, above.

CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION

Litany of the Saints

BB 33, 711
CBW 86
GC 795, 796

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Singing the Rites

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GP 376, 377
RS 977
WC 947
WOR 832
WS 117

Prayer over the Water and Acclamation

BB 34
CBW 87
RS 978
WOR 833
WS 118

Acclamation for Baptism

Alleluia (*any festive setting*)
Rejoice, Rejoice, Child of God WC 610/WS 395
Rejoice, You Newly Baptized CBW 616/WC 614/WS 399
Respuesta al Bautismo GP 457
Through the Mystery of Death GP 451
You Have Put on Christ CBW 4F/GP 458/MI-BB 645,
657/RS 979/WC 611, 612, 613/WOR 835/WS 119

Song between Baptism and Confirmation

A song between baptism and confirmation may be appropriate if there is to be some delay between baptism and confirmation (e.g., reception of baptized candidates into full communion), or if there is a procession from the font to another place in the church. See also suggestions for the Rite of Sprinkling, below.

A Living Hope CBW 613
Baptized in Water CBW 614/GC 798/RS 904/WC 606/
WS 397
Blessed Be God, Who Chose You in Christ RS 905
I've Just Come from the Fountain WC 607
One Lord GP 453/MI-BB 653
Through the Mystery of Death GP 451
Water and Spirit WC 604
We Are God's Work of Art GC 808/RS 901
We Have Been Baptized in Christ GP 460
You Are God's Work of Art CBW 4E
You Have Put on Christ CBW 4F/GP 458/MI-BB 645,
657/RS 979/WC 611, 612, 613/WOR 835/WS 119

Song for Confirmation

A song during the rite of confirmation may be appropriate if there are a number of candidates to be confirmed.

Come, Holy Spirit BB 195, 197/WC 582/WS 387
Envía Tu Espíritu GC 459/GP 407/MI-BB 497
Gift of God WC 600/WS 403
Send Us Your Spirit CBW 414/GC 470/MI-BB 498/RS
612
Veni Sancte Spiritus BB 199/CBW 419/GC 463/GP 403/
MI-BB 501/RS 615/WOR 473

Song for the Sprinkling of the Assembly

Alleluia, Give Us Living Water MI-BB 87
Come to the River MI-BB 655
Flow River Flow GP 455/MI-BB 647
I Saw Water Flowing BB 36/WC 325/WS 238
If We Have Died to Ourselves GC 154/RS 315
Lord Jesus, from Your Wounded Side RS 380/WOR 271
One Lord GP 453/MI-BB 653
River of Glory GP 454/MI-BB 654
Send Us Flowing Water, Lord WC 323/WS 236
Song over the Waters GC 585/RS 855
Springs of Water GP 90/RS 377/WC 324/WS 237
This Is Our Faith WC 598/WS 405
Wade in the Water GC 812/GP 456/MI-BB 646
Water of Life/ Agua de Vida BB 1/GP 78, 91/MI-BB 909
Waters of Life WC 326/WS 120
We Shall Draw Water GP 288/MI-BB 824
With Joy You Shall Draw BB 641/CBW 237/GC 148
You Will Draw Water RS 204/WC 327

Note

1. David Haas, "Liturgical Glue," *Pastoral Music* 13:2 (December-January 1989), 34-40.