



CLERGY UPDATE

A PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PASTORAL MUSICIANS

Volume 18 Number 4

August 2009

MISSIONARY SPIRIT IN THE YEAR FOR PRIESTS

I wonder how many of us can find ourselves in the story that Mar Muñoz-Visoso tells in this issue. God's call invites us to places we couldn't imagine and that we don't think will fit our gifts. God's call invites us to places we couldn't imagine but that become the means for transformation and deepening identity. We are the instruments God uses to introduce another person or group to the people whom they are being asked to serve. We are the instruments God uses to help another person discern whether or not to stay.

Whatever our current role in the mission of the Church, the missionary

life of the presbyter is rooted in God's call that will, at times, stretch us, even as, at other times, God's voice soothes us. At times that voice affirms us and at others it challenges us. At times what God asks of us is an easy fit, and at other times it seems uncomfortable but, somehow, becomes a surprising fit.

The song "Pescador de Hombres/Lord, When you Came," written by Father Cesáreo Gabaraín (1936–1991) of the Archdiocese of Madrid, Spain, could help us reflect on our missionary identity as priests in the context of the mission of the Church to hear the Gospel, experience conversion, and profess faith in Christ, like all the baptized (see *Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship*, 49). Here is Father Willard Jabusch's English translation of the Spanish text:

1. Lord, when you came to the seashore,
You weren't seeking the wise or the wealthy,
But only asking that I might follow.

Refrain

O Lord, in my eyes you were gazing,
Kindly smiling, my name you were saying;
All I treasured, I have left on the sand there;
Close to you, I will find other seas.

2. Lord, you knew what my boat carried:
Neither money nor weapons for fighting,
But nets for fishing, my daily labor.

3. Lord, have you need of my labor,
Hands for service, a heart made for loving,
My arms for lifting the poor and broken?

4. Lord, send me where you would have me,
To a village, or heart of the city;
I will remember that you are with me.

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Text: *Pescador de Hombres*, Cesáreo Gabaraín, © 1979, published by OCP; trans. Willard Francis Jabusch, © 1982, administered by OCP Publications. Tune: Cesáreo Gabaraín, © 1979, published by OCP.

Paul Colloton, *op*

THE PRIEST WHO DID NOT HAVE A MISSIONARY SPIRIT

BY MAR MUÑOZ-VISOSO

Early in my former life as a director of Hispanic ministry, I was entrusted with the task of taking a newly arrived immigrant priest to his assignment at a mountain town two hours from Denver.

The man, about fifty, had seemingly heard the call by our newly installed archbishop asking that Latin American bishops consider the archdiocese as mission land. The rapid growth of the Spanish-speaking population was overwhelming for what were then only a few Hispanic priests in the diocese, and it was taking a toll on the goodwill of those who spoke some Spanish.

The priest had been informed before arrival about his new assignment. Upon his arrival, however, it was evident that the idea he had of pastoral needs and how best to go about his ministry had little to do with U.S. reality.

His affable and smiling greeting at the airport turned into a worried face as we started to get away from the

GOING ELECTRONIC

In future issues of *Clergy Update*, we will announce plans to provide this newsletter to our clergy members electronically, as we do now with *Praxis* for most DMMD members and, beginning in September, as we will do for most of our members who receive *Notebook*.

This shift makes access to this newsletter more immediate for our clergy members and it is a better use of NPM's limited resources. It is also better for the environment, as we save the resources associated with printing and distributing our newsletters.

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city, and I began to explain the characteristics of his new flock: a developing community with a large Hispanic population in the area; a high number of males, who worked mostly in construction and the service industry. Many were undocumented immigrants who lived dispersed throughout the valley. The local pastor had done his best to learn Spanish, but . . .

There was a big need to reach out to the people and invite them in. Given the distances involved and the fact that many people had more than one job, the pastoral work would require a good dose of determination and creativity.

As we got out of the car, the priest decided to let his discomfort out. He said he was used to daytime office hours—he was a pastor in his city—and, moreover, he did not consider going around knocking on doors worthy of a Catholic priest.

I picked up my jaw from the floor and babbled back: “But Father, Jesus himself walked through the villages and towns preaching the Gospel and calling people to follow him.” But the priest insisted he wanted an assignment in Denver.

I encouraged him to give the situation about fifteen days or so, to get to know the congregation and have a feel for the work ahead. If he still was unhappy, he could ask the archbishop for a different assignment. I offered to help him as much as I could.

That was the last time I saw him. Exactly two weeks later I received an urgent call from the pastor letting us know that the priest was on his way to the airport to return to Mexico. He did not say goodbye.

We learned much from this episode in the Archdiocese of Denver. The protocols to admit and assign foreign priests in the archdiocese certainly changed, and this priest’s attitude

remained in my memory as the opposite of a missionary spirit, especially because it contrasted with those of the majority of priests I know—and I’ve worked with a few.

So many more priests, “local” or “imported,” work day in and day out, no matter the hours or where they need to go to find their sheep—so that the people won’t lack access to the sacraments, good advice, a word of consolation, or a voice claiming justice.

However, I have also seen too many priests burn out due to the lack of rest, time for prayer, priestly fraternal bonds, and solitude.

We admire our priests, but we often take them for granted too. In this Year for Priests that has just begun under the theme “The Missionary Identity of the Priest in the Church,” let us pray for our priests and let us find ways to accompany them in their journey of faith and ministry. Benedict XVI reminds us that this missionary identity of the priest is an “intrinsic dimension” for the exercise of their call. A Catholic priest without a missionary spirit is thus a contradiction in terms.

This text is the June 11, 2009, Entre Amigos opinion column published by the USCCB and used with permission. Mar Muñoz-Visoso is assistant director of Media Relations at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

PEOPLE WHO MAKE MUSIC: BISHOP, PRIEST, AND DEACON

NPM has just published Seven Sessions: The NPM Study Guide to Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship. This excerpt is taken from Session Three, “People Who Make Music.” It is a reflection on Sing to the Lord, 16–23.

The Diocesan Bishop

Because he is “chief steward of the mysteries of God in the particular Church entrusted to his care,” the bishop has an important role in overseeing and promoting the liturgical life of the diocesan church, including “the beauty of the sacred place, of music, and of art” (*Sing to the Lord* [STL], 16; GIRM, 22).

The bishop leads first of all by example, through his own singing and by his encouragement of sung participation in the cathedral church and parishes of the diocese. He is called on to foster the continuing musical formation of priests, deacons, and musicians who serve the diocese. STL also mentions diocesan worship and music commissions or offices as important co-workers that assist the bishop in promoting liturgical music.

The Priest

In STL the bishops repeat the often-quoted principle articulated in *Music*

NPM CLERGY UPDATE

Volume 18, Number 4 August 2009

ISSN #1061-527X

Published quarterly by the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, 962 Wayne Avenue, Suite 210, Silver Spring, MD 20910-4461

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A Membership Service

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in Catholic Worship: “No other single factor affects the liturgy as much as the attitude, style, and bearing of the priest celebrant” (STL 18; see MCW, 21). Then they underscore this point: “The importance of the priest’s participation in the Liturgy, especially by singing, cannot be overemphasized” (STL, 19).

There are four sets of texts that involve singing by the priest. In order of importance, they are: the dialogues, the Eucharistic Prayer, the “presidential texts” (especially the three collect-type prayers), and those parts which the priest sings with the rest of the liturgical assembly.

Following other official liturgical documents, including the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*, STL places particular importance on the dialogues that are sung between the priest and the people. There are two reasons for this focus. The first is the dialogic nature of the liturgy as an exchange between God (who has inaugurated the dialogue) and the Church (which responds to God’s invitation through the power of the Holy Spirit). The second is the need to unify in this one liturgical act the two forms of sharing in Christ’s priesthood—the ministerial (ordained) priesthood and the royal (baptismal) priesthood of all believers. At the liturgy, especially at the Eucharist, the bishop or priest acts “*in persona Christi capitis*” (in the person of Christ, the Head of the Body) and in service to the whole Body, which shares Christ’s royal priesthood (see the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1548–1551). The lay faithful, sharing the royal priesthood, offer the sacrifice “not only through the hands of the priest but also together with him” (GIRM, 95). The dialogues between priest and people, then, are to “foster and bring about communion between priest and people” (GIRM, 34).

In addition to singing the dialogues, the priest is encouraged to sing those parts of the Eucharistic Prayer for which musical notation is provided in the *Roman Missal*—at least the preface with its dialogue, the invitation to the memorial

acclamation, and the concluding doxology. Because the *Roman Missal* includes complete settings of the Eucharistic Prayers, it would also be fitting for the priest to sing the entire prayer, especially on Sundays and other festival days (STL, 181–182; GIRM, 147).

The Eucharistic Prayer is the most important presidential prayer during the Mass, but there are three other, shorter prayers that may also be sung. These are the collect (after the *Gloria* or *Kyrie*), the prayer over the offerings, and the prayer after Communion.

Many priests find it difficult to sing, or are afraid to sing, or perhaps feel that singing by the priest is unimportant. STL recognizes that some priests face serious limitations, and it repeats the counsel found in the 1967 instruction *Musicae sacram*: “If, however . . . the priest or minister does not possess a voice suitable for the proper execution of the singing, he can render without singing one or more of the more difficult parts which concern him, reciting them in a loud and distinct voice. However, this must not be done for the convenience of the priest or minister” (STL, 19; MS, 8).

In addition to singing their own parts, priests can help to foster the active participation of the faithful by joining in the songs of the assembly—but with microphone turned off so that the priest’s voice does not overpower the voice of the congregation. It is especially helpful for the priest to join in singing during the entrance procession and to remain in place for all but the last stanza of the closing hymn, if there is one (see STL, 21, 143, 199).

The Deacon

Like bishops and priests, deacons are first of all called to lead by example as they participate actively in the song of the assembly. Deacons should be trained to sing their own parts, including the dialogues before and after the Gospel and at the dismissal.

One of the deacon’s major singing roles in the Roman liturgy is the proc-

lamation of the *Exsultet* at the Easter Vigil. It is far more important, however, that the *Exsultet* be sung well than that it be sung by a deacon or a priest. For this reason the liturgical norms allow for it to be sung by another minister. The singing of this hallowed text is a privilege and a service to the liturgical assembly, not the right of any minister.

Although the Gospel text itself may be sung by the deacon or priest (STL, 20, 23), on most occasions it is probably preferable not to sing it, so that it might be proclaimed in a way to make it easily understood. On major feast days, however, the singing of the Gospel can help to add a sense of solemn proclamation.

It is the deacon who normally proclaims the intentions for the prayer of the faithful—a litany form which easily lends itself to singing. These texts normally require careful preparation, but that is even more the case when they are sung. The intentions are often proclaimed most effectively when they are chanted without accompaniment, using a simple and familiar response.

Seven Sessions: The NPM Study Guide may be ordered online at <https://www.npm.org/publications/>. Or phone (240) 247-3000. \$10 per copy; bulk discounts are available.

MISSAL TRANSLATION BY 2010

During discussion of the English translation of the *Missale Romanum* at the June recent meeting of U.S. Catholic Bishops in San Antonio, Texas, Bishop Arthur Seratelli of Paterson, New Jersey, reminded the bishops that the Vatican wants to have the new English-language *Roman Missal* completed by 2010. Once the final text has been approved by the English-language bishops’ conferences, it must receive the Vatican’s *recognitio*, at which time an implementation date for the new text will be set. Bishop Seratelli chairs the Bishops’ Committee on Divine Worship.

NPM is working with several groups

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to prepare materials to introduce the revised *Roman Missal* and to use this opportunity for rich liturgical catechesis.

In the June-July issue of the *Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions Newsletter* (36:3), Joan Workmaster reported on progress on the Federation's preparation of formation materials. The foundation for their work is four major papers on the liturgical participation of God's people, divining the vernacular of ritual texts, liturgical implementation of the *Roman Missal*, and leadership

in a time of change. In the fall, these papers will be available on the FDLC and BCDW websites.

The Federation is also developing workshops and other materials (bulletin inserts, homily aids) for clergy, parish leadership and liturgical ministers, the assembly, children, and musicians—the programs for musicians are being developed with NPM.

NPM is planning to have on its website recordings of the musical settings that will be part of the new

missal, so priests and deacons can hear how their part might sound and what the congregation's response will sound like in the dialogical parts of Mass. And FDLC hopes to prepare CDs of the texts, which will enable a quicker study of the vocabulary and the cadence of the new prayers. Once the new translation receives its *recognitio*, it is important that as little time as possible is lost in assimilating the new spoken and sung vocabulary, which dictates new cadences to our praying.

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Silver Spring, MD 20910-4461