

THE LITURGICAL SINGER

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FEBRUARY 2010
VOLUME 11:1

A RESOURCE FROM THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PASTORAL MUSICIANS FOR CANTORS, SONGLEADERS, CHOIRS, AND CHOIR DIRECTORS

PRIEST

No TYPICAL DAY

JIM GRETZ

When I was asked to write this article, I chuckled at the cynical thought: “Gee, everyone knows that I work just an hour on Sunday, and the rest of the week I drink coffee while playing computer games!” So, in this designated “Year for Priests,” perhaps I can capture what it is that a parish priest *really* does “for a living.”

While there is no “typical day” in this life, I will say that every day has some basic, important events granted by God’s good grace. The first graced event is that I wake up, usually at 5:40 AM. The second graced event is that I go back to bed at some point that evening. But in the intervening moments, anything goes! There are days when about two hours are enough to accomplish what needs to be done, but there are other times when a forty-eight-hour day wouldn’t be long enough. So what could possibly fill the intervening moments between waking and sleeping on any day? Well, here’s a list of eight things that may happen on a “typical” day.

1. I celebrate the Eucharist. Actually, in my present parish assignment, that means that I celebrate at least one Mass every day, seven days a week. In my fifteen years of priestly ministry, I have preached at every Mass I have celebrated—even at the 6:45 AM, which really irritates those early-rising retirees thinking of breakfast! The Word of God is alive, and my job is to preach the Good News no matter what. So there is that necessary moment of scriptural and homily aid review before weekday Masses and much contemplation for the longer thoughts on Sunday.

2. I pray. All who are ordained are required to pray the

Editor’s Note. At the time this article was written, Father Gretz was serving as a parochial vicar at St. Vitus Parish, New Castle, Pennsylvania, and this article reflects that parish setting. He has since been appointed the director of the Office of Worship for the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

IN THIS ISSUE

Since September 2009 we have been looking at ways to understand each other and our respective ministries better. I think it’s difficult to do that, sometimes, because we are all so busy. So I am thankful that you are taking the time to pick up a copy of *The Liturgical Singer* and develop a better understanding of others who share liturgical ministry with you.

It seems that the words “wisdom” and “understanding” go hand in hand in the Bible. The Book of Proverbs instructs us that “the LORD gives wisdom, from his mouth comes knowledge and understanding” (2:6). But it is when that gift from God takes on flesh in our stories that we get real guidance along the path of understanding that leads to true wisdom.

In the previous issue, we looked at the ministry of the cantor and the most important ministerial group of all—the whole assembly. In this issue, we look at a day in the life of a priest and of an instrumentalist. Father Jim Gretz, a good friend of NPM, writes about the first, and our instrumentalist is known to many of you through his work as NPM Program Coordinator: Peter Maher. Jeffrey Honoré also helps us to understand the ministry of instrumentalists through his article about incorporating handbells into the liturgy, and Sister Katarina Schuth, OSF, tells us how seminarians are taught the ways of music and liturgy.

In order to enrich our understanding of various ministries, we are once more including a series of questions designed to help us pray for and better understand each other. Feel free to share this page with the other members of your music ministry team.

Thank you for taking the time to read this issue and for making an effort to understand and appreciate your colleagues! Remember that your feedback is always welcome at Plecz@aol.com. Pray with these words from Psalm 119: “Make me understand the way of your precepts; I will ponder your wondrous deeds” (Psalm 119:27).

Mary Lynn Pleczkowski
Editor

liturgy of the hours for themselves and for the Church. Now, I have to be honest and say that I'm only good for the twenty minutes that the morning hours require (the Office of Readings and Morning Prayer). I then take another twenty minutes for some conversation with God. Mostly it's whining about the need for wisdom for this situation or that problem; I need to be better at listening to God. The intercessions at Morning Prayer always include my personal petition for "those who have asked for my prayers, those who are in need of my prayers, and those for whom I have promised to pray, especially . . ." and the list begins.

3. I eat. While this may be one of those necessities to sustain life, it can also be incredibly ministerial. In some assignments lunch takes place with other members of the parish staff, which is both good and bad. In larger parishes, graced with more than one priest, at least the evening meal should be a time for us to share our priestly life and ministry, just as a family shares its day. There are times when I do eat out alone, but I also try to take time to eat with parishioners, friends, and sometimes family—to share their lives. Yes, eating is about feeding the body, but I always ask folks when we're out: "Please feed my soul as well."

4. I talk on the phone and make appointments. The calls and appointments run the gambit: couples looking to get married, or to stay married, or to end their marriage; parents looking to baptize a child or to find the magic switch to "fix" their child; the funeral director making arrangements; emergency calls to anoint someone at the hospital or home (most of these calls do not come during the daylight hours!); friends calling on my cell phone; and the infamous "Father, I have a quick question for you . . ." that takes four years of theology and a doctoral dissertation to answer, usually *not* to the caller's satisfaction.

5. I read my e-mail and "snail" mail. A diocesan official once said: "My ministry, strange as it sounds, sometimes is about sending out letters. When you open the letter, you are fulfilling my ministry." How profound! So I actually open my mail. The mail includes personal notes; updates from the Vatican, the diocese, NPM, and other organizations; travel sites luring me with deals to exotic locals (my favorite!); and those things that somehow elude the "spam detector." How I wish there were one of those detectors for mail coming through the postal system! Along with time taken for online searches and other electronic resourcing, I am on Facebook, which, of course, leads to chats and notes and more questions answered. Did I mention I also "text" people?

6. I see people. There are old ones, young ones, and in-between ones; live ones and dead ones; happy ones, sad ones, and incredibly irate ones. My favorites are the ones who look at me oddly in the supermarket and ask: "Father, what are you doing here?" I really want to respond: "Gee,

"Are you resolved to celebrate the mysteries of Christ faithfully and religiously as the Church has handed them down to us for the glory of God and the sanctification of Christ's people?"

Question asked of the candidate during the ordination of a priest in the *Roman Pontifical*

we ran out of manna from heaven this morning" or "I'm here buying a new car." (Fortunately, I engage my brain before my mouth pops open!) People are everywhere, and usually want a moment of my time, no matter where that moment is. And just like my Boss, i.e., Jesus, I give them that moment.

7. I have meetings and events. One of our auxiliary bishops once said that he has no need to pass through purgatory because of all the meetings he has attended. I would have to agree. There are the parish organizations that vie for my attention—the Ladies Guild, Holy Name, St. Vincent de Paul, and the Charismatic Prayer Group. Of course, since the parish has a school, appearing at parent-teacher meetings, sporting events, or the school plays and recitals is highly encouraged. Visiting religious education classes is also necessary. I enjoy teaching the folks in the adult initiation process, and I also serve the diocese as a master catechist. I serve on two boards of directors, which means more meetings and events. My brother Knights of Columbus like my presence at their meetings. And then there are the priest convocations and workshops and support groups. I am often invited to offer prayers at community events and dinners. (Likely, by now, I've irritated some other group by not mentioning them or attending their meetings!)

8. I should make time for me. It was once said that a priest should be reading a periodical a day and a book a week. Yeah, right. I should be playing more golf or getting at least some exercise. I should do more with my love of music—practicing, listening, or discovering new things. (By the way, thanks, NPM, for that convention in Chicago!) I should be doing more continuing education. I should be writing more. I should be ready to scream and pass out by now!

REAL LIFE

As I said at the start of this article, there is no typical day, but these events are a real and regular part of my life. So when you see your priest, and he's not what you want him to be, perhaps in this "Year for Priests" you can thank him for everything he does in the name of Christ for the Body of Christ. Amen. ☪

A WEEK IN A GUITARIST'S LIFE

PETER MAHER

It came from a choir member: "It's so easy for you—just show up, strum some chords, and go home." As if! I couldn't believe it when that choir member said those words to me one night before rehearsal while I was running through a few scales to warm up my fingers. (How come it's so cold in the church when we have rehearsal?)

But her words got me thinking about what I do as an instrumentalist in the parish that is different from what I do as a singer in our diocesan choir. In both cases I have to go to rehearsal, and I have to practice the music for either group on my own at home. I have to warm up for both, but I warm up in the car on the way when I am going to sing, while it's a little difficult to warm up on guitar while I'm driving! So, other than that, what are the differences between the two ministries?

"DAY JOB" PLUS

Let me walk you through an "average" week for me. Monday, after I work at my "regular" job as program coordinator for NPM, I hurry home to meet my wife, Trudy, and our friend to go to diocesan choir rehearsal. We are rehearsing for one of the five to six Masses each year at which the diocesan choir sings. We almost never repeat repertoire, and the music that our director chooses is beautiful but not easy. In the car we snack on crackers and cheese (between warming up) while reviewing some of the music. I usually just hum the notes which I have memorized, since I can't drive and read the music, but it does help to have Trudy play the notes on her portable roll-up keyboard.

After our two-hour rehearsal we usually reward ourselves with "dinner at the diner" and go home exhausted. On this particular night, we learned another new piece, which I will have to work on before the Mass this weekend.

Tuesday night is my prep night as an instrumentalist. After dinner I check my music, making sure I have all the music in my binder, and then I practice everything for the weekend Mass. Additionally, on this particular night, I need to change the strings on my guitar, something I have to do about once a month and even more often during the

really busy seasons like Christmas and Easter. It takes a bit of time, but it's worth it: I love the sound of my guitar with new strings! After I run through all the music for Mass on the coming Sunday, I work on my instrumental interludes. (Our director has asked me to play an instrumental while the rest of the choir goes to Communion. I am honored to do it, but it means extra rehearsal. I usually write my own instrumental songs and I am continually tweaking them.) After practicing, I run a dust cloth over my guitar, and I am done for the day.

Wednesday is choir rehearsal at St. Dominic Parish in downtown Washington, so before I leave in the morning, in addition to my briefcase and laptop for work at NPM, I must remember my music bag and guitar. I need to remember to include extra strings, batteries, picks, and my tuner in the bag, along with my binder of music. I also have to think about my day ahead and decide whether I can store my guitar in the back of my car or if I have to bring it into the office with me. (Fortunately we have a garage in the basement of the building where NPM's offices are, and it has some temperature control. So as long as I don't have a meeting outside the office I should be good.) Carrying around my instrument is obviously something I have to do as an instrumentalist. I also have to plan my day so that I arrive at church a few minutes earlier than the singers because I have to get my music stand, guitar stand, and chair out of the storage room, set them up, tune my guitar, and run a few scales and exercises before everyone else arrives and we start rehearsal at 7:00 PM. Rehearsal is good; we have fun and get a lot of work done. On the way home I listen to the tape of diocesan choir music that Trudy made for me.

There are no formal rehearsals on Thursday and Friday, so I just try to get a little practice time in—but I also have to catch up on *Law & Order*! On this Saturday morning, however, the diocesan choir is singing for the diocesan pilgrimage to the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. (I am sure glad that Trudy made that tape for me; I think I know my part well.) Afterwards, at the diner, we all enjoy a meal and a well deserved laugh or two.

On Sunday morning, I get to St. Dominic about fifteen minutes before our report-in time. While our equipment is already set up, I still need to tune my guitar and warm up. Mass goes well, and the assembly sings with gusto: It's all worth it!

SUMMER RECHARGE

Every summer I have the opportunity to recharge and refresh my spiritual and instrumental soul at the NPM Guitar and Ensemble Institute. Consistently the most

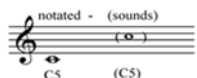
Continued on page seven

HANDBELLS: EASY AS 1, 2, 3, 4, 5

JEFFREY HONORÉ

A single bell, struck and falling into silence, sustained in hearing but unadorned, can evoke a variety of responses. One response is to stop what we are doing (physically and mentally) and be still. A handbell or two can create a “call” to gathering or to communal prayer. Let us look at a few possible uses for handbells in the liturgy, keeping in mind that a bit of time is needed for all to hear the bell tone before words are attached.

1. Giving Pitch. A most natural use for a handbell is to give the starting tone for a presider, lector, or cantor or to their invitation to the assembly to respond. Keep in mind that a handbell is a transposing instrument sounding one octave higher than the printed score.



This use requires *practice* the first few times, to allow the singer to “hear” the pitch correctly. The “English” style bell stresses the fundamental pitch (the name on the bell), while the “Flemish” bell’s fundamental pitch is adorned with strong overtones which can be difficult for some ears to discern.

There are so many possibilities for using handbells this way that you can easily overdo the number of times they are used: for presider greetings or dismissals, in the penitential act, to begin the *Gloria*, to sound the response to the readings, during the prayer of the faithful, in the scrutinies, to begin the Eucharistic Prayer or its acclamatory responses, and in all the hymn/song/psalm/antiphon options. Save this use, then, for special

occasions or seasons and parts of the liturgy that you want to highlight.

2. Intoning. Give the pitch with variations! Consider the *Gloria* from the *Mass of Creation* (Marty Haugen, © 1984, GIA) with the bells playing in rhythm on the tonic and dominant (first and fifth degrees of the scale):



After singing the first four bars, you may stop *or* continue through the entire refrain unaccompanied the first time, with just the bells.

Intoning/Accompanying. Try playing the D5 and G5 at the same time, playing only on the first beat of each measure. The idea of using fourths (as in the musical example above) and fifths is an excellent way to add bells to the widest variety of styles.

Or . . . The first, second, fifth, and sixth degrees of the scale will work in a rocking manner as well:



3. Toll Accompanying. I have used this simple sounding of a single bell to start “Be Not Afraid” (Dufford, © 1975, Robert J. Dufford, SJ, and New Dawn Music) when it is used at Communion, before the rest of the instrumentalists enter, and also at funeral processions. Ring the dominant D5 in the tempo of the 4/4 song once a measure through the entire



Jeffrey Honoré at the National Catholic Handbell Festival during the 2009 NPM Annual Convention.

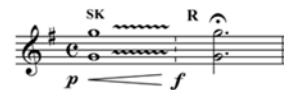
refrain. The image of one bell, joined by many as the song progresses, is especially powerful when used in ministry at the funeral of a loved one.

4. Accompanying. As well as starting and giving pitches, bells alone can be enough to accompany entire verses and songs. Using a little variety in the number of bells and style can create chant/plainsong: Adding the second and/or the sixth degree of a scale with the tonic (first) or dominant (fifth) creates a wonderful accompaniment for most plainsong. In this example, at “a” ring each cluster directly before the sung phrase; at “b” ring the four pitches randomly throughout the singing of the entire verse. (LV = let the bells ring without damping.)



For a more complete explanation and printed examples of plainsong and chant tones see Richard Proulx’s *Tintinnabulum* (GIA, G-4569), a short book of bell history and use in Catholic liturgy.

5. Octaves and Ostinato Patterns. As well as using the patterns given above, consider using octave handbells on the refrains of songs, creating a pedal tone of the tonic (first) or dominant (fifth). For example, in the refrain of “O Come All Ye, Faithful” or “As with Gladness Men of Old,” keep playing using a “shake” (SK) technique until the last chord, then do a normal ring (R).



Create an ostinato using combinations of the same first and fifth degrees of the scale as an introduction, accompaniment, or coda when playing, for example, “Amazing Grace” or “Immaculate Mary.”



Continued on page seven

JOURNAL QUESTIONS FOR PASTORAL MUSICIANS FOR THOUGHT AND PRAYER ABOUT INSTRUMENTALISTS AND PRIESTS

INSTRUMENTALISTS

The next time you are fortunate enough to have an instrumentalist ministering near you, watch that person's fingers. See the gift that God has given this musician. How does this gift enhance your community's liturgy?

Really listen and pray with the music the next time you have an instrumentalist at Mass. What is your response to this instrumental prayer? Take a minute and thank this minister for the gift of time and talent.

Do you know someone—perhaps a high school or college student—whom you could encourage to play at Mass? Take a minute and introduce this person to your music director.

“The primary role of the organist, other instrumentalists, or instrumental ensemble is to lead and sustain the singing of the assembly and of the choir, cantor, and psalmist, without dominating or overpowering them” (*Sing to the Lord*, 41).



PRIESTS

Priests lead a very “public” life. Do you do your best to respect their privacy during “off” times?

We are experiencing a shortage of priests in our country. Have you asked your priest how you can help in these difficult times?

Next time you talk to your parish priest, tell him: “Thank you!” List some reasons for thanking this ordained minister. Ask him what he did today; you may be surprised!

“No other single factor affects the Liturgy as much as the attitude, style, and bearing of the priest celebrant, who ‘prays in the name of the Church and of the assembled community.’ ‘When he celebrates the Eucharist, . . . [the priest] must serve God and the people with dignity and humility, and by his bearing and by the way he says the divine words he must convey to the faithful the living presence of Christ’” (*Sing to the Lord*, 18; internal quotes from GIRM, 33, 93).

FORMING CATHOLIC LEADERS WHO CAN SING!

KATARINA SCHUTH, OSF

Impressions make a difference! Since the publication of Thomas Day's *Why Catholics Can't Sing* (Crossroad, 1990), the notion that Catholic liturgies lack uplifting sacred music has been accepted as fact by too many parishioners. Are seminaries training future priests and lay ministers in a way that triumphs over that negative perception? Do they bring to life the hopes of the Second Vatican Council, expressed in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, that "the musical tradition of the universal Church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art. The main reason for this pre-eminence is that, as sacred song united to the words, it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy" (SC, 112)? This article examines how seminaries are preparing leaders for music ministry and for other aspects of liturgical worship.

SOARING WITH JOY IN SONG

Before reading on, pause for a moment to reflect on a time when a Mass you attended caused your spirit to soar with the joy of the singing, uniting the community in worship of God. My memory returns to a celebration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of The Liturgical Press at St. John's Abbey Church, that magnificent structure rising from the Minnesota prairie. Gathered in that sacred space were some 500 parishio-



Photo by Daniel Good

ners, 300 conference participants, and a hundred Benedictine monks, joined by the National Catholic Youth Choir that summered there. Imagine the sound that filled the church—singing that truly raised the roof. After the final slow rendition of "Holy God, We Praise Thy Name," there was a full minute of silent awe before sustained applause.

Although we cannot expect every Mass to be as memorable, musicians and liturgists have long been making efforts to prepare priests and lay ecclesial ministers for the ministry of liturgical worship. What exactly is that preparation? For lay ecclesial ministers, it varies according to their specializations, while seminarians experience a more uniform program aimed at preparing them for their multifaceted role as liturgical presiders, but all share the same basic courses.

For four years before ordination to the priesthood, seminarians participate in human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation, giving them essential background to live and minister as priests in a manner that will benefit the people of God. The requirements of the program are outlined in the 2006 United States

Conference of Catholic Bishops document *The Program of Priestly Formation* (PPF). Among its admonitions, the document communicates the importance of liturgy in the life of the Church and indicates that seminarians should be able to understand and prepare liturgical celebrations that will touch the hearts of worshippers and reflect the dignity that worship deserves.

How do seminaries structure programs to fulfill these admirable goals? Seminarians study "the theological, historical, spiritual, pastoral, and juridical aspects of liturgy and learn to celebrate all of the Church's sacred rites according to the mind of the Church, without addition or subtraction" (PPF, 213). To accomplish this goal they take an introductory course in liturgy, several courses covering the sacraments, and one or more courses in liturgical practica. Other courses in homiletics, canon law, and pastoral theology and practice complete the requirements (see chart on page eight).

Is the preparation sufficient? According to a recent survey of seminary liturgy and music faculty (Schuth, September 2009, for the National Meeting of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions), most believe it is, but they also would welcome more time to dedicate to liturgical topics, especially as they apply to the diverse Catholic population (see graphs on page eight).

AND WHAT ABOUT MUSIC?

What about music? In the survey, almost all respondents mentioned music, many expressing great praise for and satisfaction with the quality of the seminary's music education program and the performance/use of music in the liturgy (25) and a slightly lower number (20) indicating disappointment in that quality.

Continued on page eight

LENTEN SCHOLARSHIP APPEAL

As part of your Lenten almsgiving, consider helping musicians and parishes with limited financial resources to take advantage of NPM conventions and institutes. Please make a donation of \$50 or more to help fund NPM program scholarships.

Last year our members made it possible to provide twenty-two scholarships for NPM institutes and the annual convention. The recipients returned to their communities with stronger knowledge and skills along with a deeper love for and appreciation of the liturgy.

In past years these scholarships have enabled us to assist dedicated pastoral musicians from underserved communities and from parishes with few resources. Some past recipients have been young people eager to learn, while others have been single mothers who serve the Church at prayer even as they support their families.

We hope to offer the same opportunities to others this year, but we anticipate a higher than usual number of requests for assistance because of the economic downturn.

Won't you please help others to take advantage of NPM's educational programs? Your contribution, payable to *NPM Program Scholarships*, will make a real difference in the formation of music ministers and in the worship life of the communities they serve.

Please send your offering to: NPM Program Scholarships, 962 Wayne Avenue, Suite 210, Silver Spring, MD 20910-4461. Or donate securely online using a credit card: <https://www.npm.org/donation.php>.

Blessings to you and your community during the time of Lenten renewal.

GUITARIST

Continued from page three

popular institute offered by NPM, it is a wonderful mixture of practical skill building sessions on one's chosen instrument (guitar, piano, percussion, obbligato, or voice) as well as ensemble building techniques. Additionally—and most importantly—the institute provides wonderful prayer opportunities with daily morning and evening prayer and the Eucharist, which are led by the participants themselves.

So while my singer friend may have thought that I just show up and play some chords, I think I work as hard at my craft as anyone else, and I thank God for the opportunity to praise God with cymbal and especially with lyre! ☺



HANDBELLS

Continued from page four

Many more examples may be found in Hal Hopson's two books, *The Creative Use of Handbells in Worship* (Book One and Two, Hope Publishing, 1956 and 8282). Specific Catholic examples are found in my book *Handbells in the Catholic Liturgy* (Hope, 2120; the Hope books allow ten copies of each example to be printed for your parish use).

HEARING THE BELL

I remember hearing the cast bell of my childhood church ringing three sets of three (think Father, Son, Holy Spirit), calling believers into worship or sending them into service in the world. May handbells help you call your assembly to prayer and service.

ABOUT THE WRITERS

Rev. James R. Gretz, M. Div., M.T.S., an NPM member and former parochial vicar (pro tem) at St. Vitus Parish, New Castle, Pennsylvania, is currently the director of worship for the Diocese of Pittsburgh.

Jeffrey Honoré, active as an arranger/composer of liturgical music for choirs, organ, and handbells, is a full-time pastoral musician at St. Benedict Parish, Fontana, Wisconsin, and the director of the Milwaukee Archdiocesan Choir.

Peter S. Maher serves as the program coordinator for the National Association of Pastoral Musicians (NPM) and as an instrumentalist and choir member at St. Dominic Parish in Washington, DC, and a member of the Arlington Diocesan Choir.

Mary Lynn Pleczkowski edits *The Liturgical Singer*, serves on the faculty of NPM's Cantor Express, and chairs the NPM Standing Committee for Cantors.

Sister Katarina Schuth, OSF, a member of the Sisters of St. Francis, Rochester, Minnesota, holds the Endowed Chair for the Social Scientific Study of Religion at the University of St. Thomas in the St. Paul Seminary School of Divinity, St. Paul, Minnesota. Her latest book, *Priestly Ministry in Multiple Parishes*, is available from The Liturgical Press.

THE LITURGICAL SINGER

is published quarterly by the National Association of Pastoral Musicians
962 Wayne Avenue, Suite 210
Silver Spring, MD 20910-4461
Phone: (240) 247-3000 • Fax: (240) 247-3001
E-mail: NPMSing@npm.org
Web: www.npm.org
Publisher: Dr. J. Michael McMahon
Editor: Ms. Mary Lynn Pleczkowski

Volume 11 Number 1 • February 2010

Annual Subscription Information

Single copy, \$22
2–9 copies, \$17 per subscription (may be mailed to one or more addresses)

Mailed to one address only:
10–24 copies, \$11 per subscription
25–49 copies, \$9 per subscription
50 or more copies, \$7 per subscription

Canadian postage, please add \$4 per subscription. Postage to all other countries, please add \$7 per subscription.

Average Seminary Requirements in Pastoral/Liturgical Courses

Sacramental/Liturgical Courses	13.0
Sacramental/Liturgical Practica	5.0
Pastoral Theology/Skills	8.2
Homiletics	5.6
Canon Law	4.8
Field Education	<u>9.8</u>
Credits	46.4

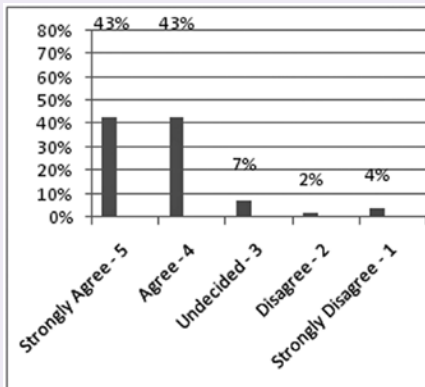
40% of Seminary Curriculum



Image courtesy of www.Oxygen-Multimedia.com

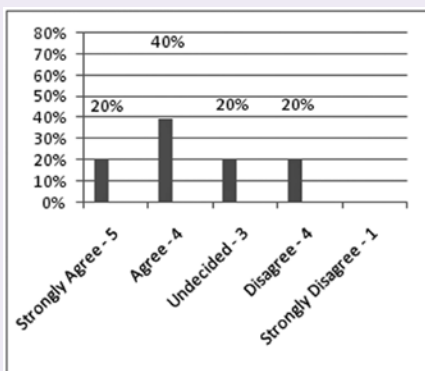
Evaluation of Seminary Liturgy Programs

“The liturgy program in our school provides excellent preparation for parish ministry in the dioceses/religious orders of our students” (4.2 average agreement).



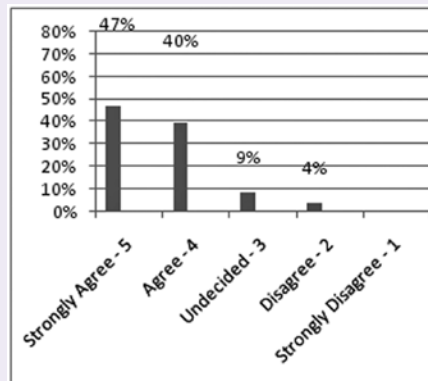
Evaluation of Seminary Liturgy Experience

“In our seminary, presiders are expected to vary the celebration of Eucharist (as permitted by GIRM), taking into account the future ministry of seminarians from different cultural backgrounds, regions of the country, and generations” (3.6 average agreement).



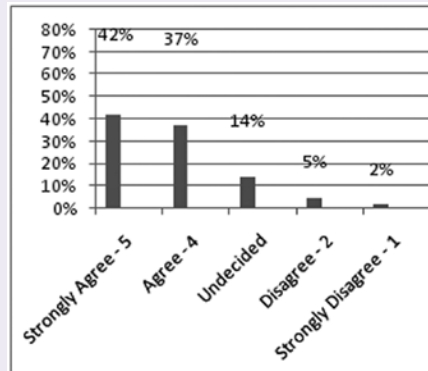
Evaluation of Appropriateness of Courses

“Our liturgical courses reflect an understanding/theology of the Church that includes the diversity of the Catholic population, especially in its multicultural composition” (4.3 average).



Evaluation of the Quality of Music in Seminaries

“The quality of music provided for our liturgical celebrations is excellent” (4.1 average).



Continued from page six

On the positive side, some seminary faculties praised the active participation of students, the ability of cantors and song leaders, and the care taken in selecting appropriate music for the level of solemnity of the occasion. Others were more negative, reporting that students withhold singing, they are poorly trained and are not given time to develop their skills, and music is not carefully selected to fit the occasion. Only fourteen of forty-five seminaries require a course in music, though most have at least some form of training available as an elective to prepare seminarians to sing and chant during liturgical celebrations. (Yet nearly eighty percent agree that music in the seminary is excellent.)

ANSWERING THE QUESTION

What is the answer to whether or not seminaries are adequately preparing future priests and lay ministers for effective liturgical and musical leadership in parishes? The answer is an unequivocal *yes and no*. Most seminary faculty are satisfied with their academic courses relating to the liturgical life of the Church, but only about half are content with the extent of preparation in music.

Life-giving celebrations require a commitment of time, money, and talent, including parish support for a well-qualified music director who can recruit and hold choir members and also encourage all parishioners to sing. Large parishes are more likely to have the resources for good music to enhance liturgical celebrations, but the commitment of the pastor is essential for good liturgy. Smaller parishes are often without tangible resources, so even with the support of the pastor it takes a special congregation to ensure a satisfying celebration. Yes, we *can* sing, but *no*, not well enough, so yes, we *can* do more to develop our liturgical tradition “of inestimable value.” ☸