

Why Should We Sing?

The reasons for music and singing in our Catholic liturgies are many and varied. One of our Church documents says it well.

“The quality of joy and enthusiasm which music adds to community worship cannot be gained in any other way.” *Music in Catholic Worship*

“Music, in addition to expressing texts, can also unveil a dimension of meaning and feeling, a communication of ideas and intuitions which words alone cannot yield.” *Music in Catholic Worship*

Music, both sung and instrumental, touch our hearts and souls in ways that words alone cannot. The words alone to “Amazing Grace” communicate one thing, but the sung expression of those words communicate something far greater. That is why we sing. The words to Handel’s “Messiah” say one thing, the musical accompaniment with those words communicate something much deeper. That is why we sing. God gave us the gift of music to touch us and move us. That is why we sing.



Some Thoughts for Reflection

“... the goal of liturgical celebration... is not liturgies that engage the assembly so that they ‘feel good’ for the moment, but liturgies that challenge them in the long term to live the dying and rising mystery into which they have been baptized.” Kathleen Harmon



“The music (at liturgy) is not frosting on the cake but a substantive component of the liturgy.”



“Music, chosen with care, can serve as a bridge to faith as well as an expression of it.” *Music in Catholic Worship*



“Among the many signs and symbols used by the Church to celebrate its faith, music is of preeminent importance.” *Music in Catholic Worship*



Liturgical
Renewal
Series

**Music
In Our
Catholic
Worship**



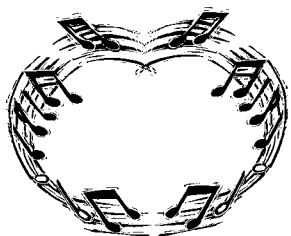
Worship Office
Diocese of Green Bay
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Background Information

*Shout joyfully to God,
all you on earth,
sing praise to the glory of
God's name;
Proclaim his glorious praise!
Psalm 66:1-2*

Music is one of the most profound and sacred gifts we have been given by God, and it is only fitting and proper that we use that gift as we praise and glorify God in our liturgical celebrations. But music only fulfills its ministry when it enables us as worshipping assemblies to surrender more deeply into the mystery of what it means to be the body of Christ dying and rising for the world.

There are very few legislative changes in the revised General Instruction regarding music. The revised General Instruction does, however, give more weight to the importance of singing during the liturgy. For example, Sunday mass is always to include singing since it is the liturgical high point of every week. The full, conscious and active participation of the assembly is vital in song, speech and silence.



When should we sing?

Since we know music is essential to our parish Sunday and Holy Day masses, what are the times when singing is appropriate?

Introductory Rites

Opening Song	May be sung, but not essential
Penitential Rite	May be sung, but not essential
Gloria	Preferable sung
Opening Prayer (by the priest)	Preferable spoken

Liturgy of the Word

Responsorial Psalm	Should be sung (at least refrain)
Gospel Acclamation	Priority—must be sung
Profession of Faith	May be sung, but not essential
Response to Intercessions	May be sung, but not essential

Liturgy of the Eucharist

Song during preparation of the gifts	May be sung, but not essential
Prayer over the gifts (by the priest)	Preferable spoken

Eucharistic Prayer

Preface Dialogue	May be sung or spoken
Preface	May be sung or spoken
Holy, Holy	Priority—must be sung
Eucharistic Prayer (by the priest)	May be sung or spoken
Memorial Acclamation	Priority—must be sung
Doxology (by the priest)	May be sung or spoken
Great Amen	Priority—must be sung

Communion Rite

Our Father	Most appropriately spoken
Sign of Peace	Music not noted in the rite
Litany during the breaking of bread	Preferable sung
Communion Procession	Preferable sung
Song of Thanksgiving	May be sung, but not essential
Prayer after Communion (by the priest)	Preferable spoken

Concluding Rites

Blessing (by the priest)	Preferable spoken
Dismissal (by the priest or deacon)	Preferable spoken
Final Song	May be sung, but not essential

***music is also very appropriate for daily celebrations of the mass