



Let Us Go to the Altar of God

An Instruction on Sacred Music within Divine Worship in the Diocese of Marquette

The psalms from the Old Testament give witness to the human expression of faith through Sacred Music that manifests the beauty of God. It is our joy to give God the best, most beautiful musical expression that we can offer him as we *sing the Mass*.

In my previous instruction on Sacred Music, *Sing to the Lord All the Earth*, I set forth steps to be taken to implement the teaching and directives of my esteemed predecessor, the Most Reverend Alexander K. Sample, in his pastoral letter entitled, *Rejoice in the Lord Always*. In light of recommendations made by priests and parish musicians, and in light of the publication of the Hymnal of the Diocese of Marquette, it has been deemed opportune to revise *Sing to the Lord All the Earth*. This new instruction, *Let Us Go to the Altar of God*, is to be seen in continuity with *Sing to the Lord All the Earth*, though it revises and replaces it.

The following easy steps that were indicated in *Sing to the Lord All the Earth* can be taken by even the smallest parishes in the diocese. Thus, all parishes and schools are to continue working on and are to have implemented the following directives by December 31, 2020.

- All parishes and schools will learn to chant the Ordinary parts of the Mass in English that are found in the *Roman Missal*, and they will be sung by the congregation some of the time throughout the year.
- All parishes and schools will learn to chant the *Kyrie, Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei* from the *Missa Iubilare Deo*, and they will be sung by the congregation some of the time throughout the year.
- All parishes and schools will learn to chant the Communion Antiphon in English to a very simple tone that everyone can sing, and the Communion Antiphon will be sung at every Sunday Mass. A hymn may be sung after the Communion Antiphon while the congregation is receiving the Blessed Sacrament.

The following directives are also provided to enhance Sacred Music in the Diocese of Marquette.

- The newly published Hymnal of the Diocese of Marquette must be used beginning the Second Sunday in Ordinary Time, the weekend of January 19 and 20, 2019. As of this date, no other hymnal may be used.

- Permission from the Diocesan Bishop is required to utilize Sacred Music for congregational singing that is not included in the Hymnal of the Diocese of Marquette.

All requests must be submitted through the Sacred Music Request Jotform. Please allow at least one month for a response.

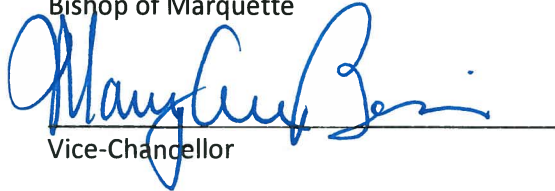
- Permission of the Diocesan Bishop is not required for the use of Mass settings and musical settings for the psalms that are not found in the hymnal. All musical settings for the psalms and the Mass are to use the officially approved liturgical texts.
- Permission of the Diocesan Bishop is not required for choral music, preludes, postludes and instrumental music. Pastors are enjoined to take great care to ensure the doctrinal integrity of the choral music, preludes and postludes used in their parishes. A doctrinal resource to assist the pastors will be provided. Moreover, they are to take great care that instrumental music befits the dignity of the worship of God.
- The Diocesan Director of Sacred Music will provide annual, regional workshops for parish musicians to assist them in the implementation of these directives. He will also assist music teachers in Catholic schools to implement Sacred Music in the school curriculum and at school Masses. Finally, he stands at the service of parishes upon request to help implement Sacred Music in other ways.

Through the implementation of these directives, may we all offer to the Lord ever more beautiful and abundant praise. Let us go to the altar of God!

Given at the Chancery, Marquette, Michigan, January 18, 2019.



Most Reverend John F. Doerfler, STD, JCL
Bishop of Marquette



Vice-Chancellor