



## **DIOCESE OF ORANGE**

### **Music Guidelines for Eucharistic Celebrations**

#### **THE INTRODUCTORY RITES**

##### The Entrance Chant or Opening Song

- The liturgy begins with a song, which has a four-fold purpose:
  - 1) to open the celebration
  - 2) foster the unity of those who have gathered
  - 3) introduce their thoughts to the mystery of the liturgical season or festivity
  - 4) accompany the procession of the priests and ministers (GIRM 47)
  
- The entrance chant opens the celebration, and since it serves to “foster the unity of those who have been gathered,” it is important in its own right. There is no suggestion in GIRM that the song must end when the ministers reach their places. (GIRM 50, MCW 44)
  
- In the dioceses of the United States there are four options for the entrance song. These are:
  - 1) the antiphon from the Roman Missal or the Psalm from the Roman Gradual as set to music there or in another musical setting;
  - 2) the seasonal antiphon and Psalm of the Simple Gradual;
  - 3) a song from another collection of psalms and antiphons, approved by the Conference of Bishops or the Diocesan Bishop
  - 4) a suitable liturgical song, approved by the Conference of Bishops or the Diocesan Bishop (GIRM 48)
  
- If the fourth option above is used, the song can be selected based on the text of the Gospel and other readings of the day. During the major seasons of the year – Advent, Christmas, etc., the entrance song should reflect the nature of the season. Whatever the selection, it should invite and encourage participation by the assembly. (MCW 11, 61)
  
- The entrance chant may be sung alternating between choir and assembly, cantor and assembly, by everyone together, or even by the choir alone. (GIRM 48)

##### ***Pastoral Consideration***

- ❖ ***If the nature of the text of the Entrance Song is such that all stanzas should be sung, there is no reason to cut it short.***
- ❖ ***One of the purposes of the Entrance Song is to foster the unity of the assembly, therefore having the choir sing alone should be done sparingly, if at all.***

## Act of Penitence

- The *Kyrie Eleison* is begun after the Act of Penitence (formerly Penitential Rite), unless it has already been included in the Act of Penitence. Since it is a chant by which the faithful acclaim the Lord and implore his mercy, it is ordinarily done by all, that is, by the people and with the choir or cantor having a part in it. It may be either recited or sung. (GIRM 52)
- In the current edition of the Roman Missal (Sacramentary) the priest or other suitable minister (e.g. deacon or cantor) makes the invocations for option C, sometimes referred to as the Act of Penitence tropes. (*National Directory for the Formation, Ministry and Life of Permanent Deacons in the United States 35*)
- On Sundays if the blessing and sprinkling of water recalling Baptism is used, it replaces the Act of Penitence and the *Kyrie Eleison*. During the sprinkling, an appropriate song may be sung. This could either be sung by all, or alternating between cantor or choir and assembly. (GIRM 51)
- Singing the *Gloria* during the Rite of Sprinkling is not appropriate and should be avoided. The current Roman Missal (1970) clearly states that the *Gloria* is to be sung after the concluding prayer after the sprinkling rite.

### ***Pastoral Consideration***

- ❖ ***The Sprinkling Rite is especially appropriate on Sundays during the Easter Season. It may be used for other seasons except during Lent.***
- ❖ ***During the celebration of the Eucharistic Liturgy, the deacon participates in specific penitential rites as designated in the Roman Missal.***
- ❖ ***The Kyrie is a chant and is therefore sung.***

## The Gloria

- The *Gloria* is included in every Sunday and solemnities, except in Advent and Lent. It may also be included at “special celebrations of a more solemn character.” (GIRM 53)
- The *Gloria* may not be replaced by any other text, and may be sung by everyone together, by the assembly alternating with cantor or choir, or by choir alone. If not sung, it is to be recited either by all together or by two parts of the congregation responding one to the other. (GIRM 53)

### ***Pastoral Consideration***

- ❖ ***The Gloria is a hymn of praise and normatively is sung.***

## THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

### The Responsorial Psalm

- In the dioceses of the United States there are three options for the Responsorial Psalm. These are:
  - 1) the proper or seasonal antiphon and Psalm from the Lectionary
  - 2) another setting from the Roman Gradual or Simple Gradual
  - 3) metrical Psalms whose text has been approved by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. (GIRM 61)
- The text of the Psalm is taken from the Scriptures and is an integral part of the Liturgy of the Word. As a rule, it must be taken from the current Lectionary for Mass or another approved translation. (GIRM 61, MCW 63)
- Songs or hymns may NOT be used in place of the responsorial psalm. (GIRM 61, MCW 63)
- Normatively the psalm is sung; the whole assembly, while remaining seated, participates by singing the response. (GIRM 55, 61)
- The psalmist, or the cantor of the Psalm sings the verses of the psalm from the ambo or another suitable place. (GIRM 61)

#### ***Pastoral Consideration***

- ❖ ***The Ambo is the suitable place for proclamation of the Word.***
- ❖ ***The Responsorial Psalm is part of the proclamation of the Word.***

### The Sequence

- The Sequence must be sung before the Alleluia on Easter and Pentecost Sunday. (GIRM 64)
- The Sequence is optional on the feasts of The Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ and Our Lady of Sorrows (September 15). (GIRM 64)

#### ***Pastoral Consideration***

- ❖ ***Customarily the faithful will remain seated for the singing of the Sequence.***
- ❖ ***The sequence can be sung by everyone, by the cantor, or by the choir. There are no restrictions on the arrangement of who sings the sequence.***

### Gospel Acclamation

- The *Alleluia* is an independent rite or act. (GIRM 37a)
- The *Alleluia* or another chant is sung as required by the liturgical season. (GIRM 62)

- The actual text for the verses are taken from the Lectionary or the Gradual and are sung by the choir or cantor. (GIRM 62)
- The *Alleluia* is sung in every season other than Lent. (GIRM 62)
- During Lent, in place of the *Alleluia*, the verse before the Gospel is sung with an appropriate acclamation, as indicated in the weekday Lectionary. (GIRM 62, Lectionary 223.1-8)
- The *Alleluia* or verse before the Gospel is to be omitted if not sung. (GIRM 63c, MCW 55)
- The assembly stands for the Gospel Acclamation. (GIRM 62, MCW 55)

***Pastoral Consideration***

- ❖ ***The Alleluia accompanies the Gospel procession.***

Prayer of the Faithful

- The priest, from the Presidential Chair invites all to pray. (GIRM 69, 70, LMT 30)
- The people stand and give expression to their prayer either by an invocation recited or sung together after each intention or by praying in silence. (GIRM 71)
- The intercessions are announced from the ambo or another suitable place, by the deacon, cantor, lector or other lay faithful. (GIRM 71, LMT 31)
- These prayers may be sung by the cantor. (GIRM 38, 71)

***Pastoral Consideration***

- ❖ ***The Ambo is the suitable place for proclamation of the Word.***
- The Prayer of the Faithful is a part of the proclamation of the Word.***

**THE LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST**

The Preparation of the Gifts

- The function of the music “is to accompany and celebrate the communal aspects of the procession” of the gifts. (MCW 71)
- Any music should accommodate the length of the procession of the gifts and the preparation of the bread and wine. (GIRM 74, MCW 71)
- In the dioceses of the United States there are four options for the norms for the Offertory chant which are the same as for the entrance song.  
These are:

- 1) the antiphon from the Roman Missal or the Psalm from the Roman Gradual as set to music there or in another musical setting;
  - 2) the seasonal antiphon and Psalm of the Simple Gradual ;
  - 3) a song from another collection of psalms and antiphons approved by the Conference of Bishops or the Diocesan Bishop;
  - 4) a suitable liturgical song approved by the Conference of Bishops or the Diocesan Bishop (GIRM 48)
- The text may be of praise in keeping with the season, or from the antiphon of the Roman Gradual with psalm verses. (GIRM 74, MCW 71)
  - It need not speak of bread and wine or of offering. (MCW 71)
  - Instrumental music, assembly song or choral anthem may be used. (GIRM 74, MCW 71)
  - Singing may always accompany the procession and preparation, even when there is no procession with the gifts. (GIRM 74)

### The Eucharistic Prayer

- The acclamations which are “to be sung even at Masses in which little else is sung” are *Alleluia*; *Sanctus* (Holy, Holy, Holy Lord); Memorial Acclamation; Great Amen. (MCW 54)
- The acclamations, *Sanctus*, Memorial Acclamation, Great Amen, and the Gospel Acclamation, belong to the priest and people, so choir parts may facilitate and enhance but not replace them. (GIRM 79, MCW 56)
- While the priest is speaking any presidential prayer, there should be no singing or instrumental music. (GIRM 32)
- During Masses with Children, “...much depends on the manner in which the priest proclaims this prayer (the Eucharistic Prayer) and on the way the children take part by listening and making their acclamations.” (DMC 52) “...the musical accompaniment does not overpower the singing or become a distraction rather than a help to the children. Music should correspond to the purpose intended for the different periods at which it is played during the Mass.” (DMC 32)

#### ***Pastoral Consideration***

- ❖ ***Parishes should have several settings of the Eucharistic Acclamations in their repertoire, changing them periodically according to season.***

### The Communion Rite

- The Lord’s Prayer may be recited or sung. Musical settings should be simple and well-known to all assembled. (GIRM 81)
- The *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God) is an invocation/litany that begins with the priest breaking the Eucharistic Bread. It accompanies the Fraction Rite and should be repeated as long as

the action demands, the last time ending in the words, *dona nobis pacem* (grant us peace). *Agnus Dei*, as a rule, is sung by the choir or cantor with the congregation responding; or it is, at least, recited aloud. (GIRM 83, MCW 68)

- The Communion Song begins as the priest is receiving the Sacrament. (GIRM 86)
- It should foster a sense of unity, show joy of heart, highlight the “communitarian” nature of the procession, be simple and not demand great effort. Songs, hymns or psalms with easily memorized assembly refrains are most effective. (GIRM 86, MCW 62)
- In the dioceses of the United States there are four options for the communion chant:
  - 1) the antiphon from the Roman Missal or the Psalm from the Roman Gradual as set to music there or in another musical setting
  - 2) the seasonal antiphon and Psalm of the Simple Gradual
  - 3) a song from another collection of psalms and antiphons approved by the Conference of Bishops or the diocesan Bishop
  - 4) a suitable liturgical song approved by the Conference of Bishops or the diocesan Bishop (GIRM 87)
- Benediction hymns that emphasize adoration rather than communion are not suitable. (MCW 62)
- After Communion, the entire congregation may sing a psalm or hymn of praise after all action has been concluded. (GIRM 88)

***Pastoral Consideration***

- ❖ *The Rite of Peace does not require any music.*
- ❖ *Ideally, a song that encompasses the entire Communion Rite should be chosen. Consider adding musical interludes and/or repeating verses to lengthen the song.*

**THE CONCLUDING RITE**

- The concluding rite consists of brief announcements, priests greeting and blessing, the dismissal of the people by the deacon or priest, and the kissing of the altar. The GIRM makes no provision for singing at the end of the liturgy. (GIRM 90)
- Since the concluding song or recessional is optional, musicians are free to plan music which provides an appropriate closing based on the liturgical season, solemnity, etc. If the people have sung a song after communion it may be advisable to use only an instrumental or choir recessional. (MCW 73)

***Pastoral Consideration***

- ❖ *One suggestion to help differentiate among the various seasons of the year would be to use instrumental music instead of a hymn during a specific season, e. g. Advent, and silence during another season, e.g. Lent.*
- ❖ *Any brief announcements are made AFTER the Prayer after Communion.*
- ❖ *Announcements should be done from the cantor stand or presider’s chair and not at the ambo.*

## GENERAL PASTORAL CONSIDERATIONS

- ❖ *The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy directs that “in the reform and promotion of the liturgy, this full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else.” (CSL 14) The GIRM repeats this principle by stating that the entire celebration be planned “in such a way that it leads to a conscious, active, and full participation of the faithful both in body and in mind, a participation burning with faith, hope, and charity...” (GIRM 18)*
- ❖ *The dialogues between priest and the assembly together and the acclamations are of great significance as they foster and bring about communion between priest and the people. The acclamations and responses constitute active participation that we are called to contribute at every Eucharistic Celebration and are an action of the entire community. (GIRM 34, 35)*
- ❖ *In choosing parts to be sung in Eucharistic Celebrations, preference should be given to those parts of greater importance and especially to those to be sung by the priest or deacon with the people responding, or by the priest and people together. (GIRM 40)*
- ❖ *Music is an art placed at the service of communal prayer and “should assist the assembled believers to express and share the gift of faith that is within them.” (MCW 23) It is not entertainment.*
- ❖ *Theological foundation of text needs to be carefully considered. While an I/me orientation is helpful for personal devotion, it becomes problematic when the nature of the rite within the Eucharistic celebration is meant to be communal. Use of the word we/our generally is to be preferred.*
- ❖ *Repetition in assembly repertoire from week to week or season to season should be used so that songs and hymnody are well known and the assembly can take part. This supports the liturgical principle of full, active and conscious participation. (CSL 30)*
- ❖ *Start with the Lectionary when preparing for liturgy. Musical text ideally will flow from the biblical words and imagery, and doctrine. (MCW 11)*
- ❖ *If entrance antiphons and communion antiphons are not sung, consider using the text as a starting point for selecting other liturgical songs. The words and images can enhance the entire liturgical celebration, furthering the integrity and cohesiveness of the individual rites into one celebration.*
- ❖ *Silence is essential and moments of prayerful silence or pauses should be taken. (GIRM 45, CSL 30)*
- ❖ *During Lent, the organ and musical instruments are permissible only to support the singing. (GIRM 313)*
- ❖ *Since music is integral to good worship, clergy serving at the celebration (bishops, priests and deacons) should actively participate by singing along with the choir and*

*congregation. This can be encouraged by having worship aids or clearly-marked hymnals available for all.*

- ❖ *The voice of the assembly is a primary sign of the communitarian nature of liturgy. Therefore those using microphones (cantors, ensembles, choirs and clergy) should take great care to avoid overpowering the assembly.*
- ❖ *Cantors in their role as liturgical ministers should be appropriately attired with consideration given to modesty, culture of the assembly and the importance of their liturgical leadership. As a liturgical minister the public role of the cantor (and possibly other musicians) takes precedence over personal preferences.*

### Abbreviations used

CSL	Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy
GIRM	General Instruction of the Roman Missal
MCW	Music in Catholic Worship
LMT	Liturgical Music Today
DMC	Directory of Masses with Children

Excerpts from the English translation of the “Directory for Masses with Children” from *Documents on the Liturgy, 1963-1979: Conciliar, Papal, and Curial texts* ©1982, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. (ICEL); excerpts from the English translation of the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal* © 2002, ICEL, All rights reserved

### Bibliography

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