



## JUBILEE OF MUSICAL ENSEMBLES

The purpose of celebrating Musical Ensembles in this Year of Jubilee is to become aware of, and give thanks for, the contribution of those who use their musical skills to support and enhance the liturgy, and to serve the community in other ways.

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### PRAYER

O God, creator of all sound,  
you have generously shared with humankind  
the rich gift of music,  
and, throughout history, have inspired many instrumentalists  
to play for the glory of your name.

Give us a spirit of gratitude for those  
who generously and skilfully uplift us with their instruments.  
Through their music may they unite us and energize us  
to participate more fully in the liturgy.

This we ask through your Son, Jesus Christ,  
who heard the music of both synagogue and Temple while on earth,  
and who now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever.

Amen.

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### TEACHING

From earliest biblical times, and in different periods, a variety of musical instruments has been used to offer worship to God and sing God's praise (cf. 1 Chr.15:20-21). For example, in Psalm 150 we hear of an 'orchestra of praise':

'Praise God with trumpet blasts,  
with lute and harp,  
with timbrel and dance,  
with strings and pipes.  
Praise God with clashing cymbals.'



And today, firstly, we celebrate the gifts of instrumentalists who help to lead and sustain the singing of the liturgical assembly, whose song is of the utmost importance in praising God. At appropriate times in the liturgy instrumentalists may play by themselves, offering beautiful sounds in praise of God. Music has great power to touch the human heart when words alone do not suffice. In the liturgy, there are times when instrumental music by itself, skilfully and sensitively played, can open up a beautiful space for the Spirit to work within us.

Used in such a way, music in the liturgy has a *ministerial* role - humbly serving the liturgy and the prayer of the assembly, drawing us into active participation through listening and uniting the faithful at a deep level.

But our instrumentalists serve the community in other ways as well. With their skill they can readily engage with youth, bring great joy to the elderly in nursing homes, promote participation in pre-Christmas or Anzac Day events etc. In so doing they spread the joy of the gospel with people of all faiths and none, engendering a spirit of hope in those gathered.

And so we give thanks today for the gift of our instrumental musicians, for the time and energy they put into preparation – often unknown and unseen – and for giving of their best to enable us all to take our part in the liturgy, and to spread the ‘good news’ of our faith through music.



Image: Courtesy of the Royal School of Church Music.

## TESTIMONY

“I have had a love of liturgy since I started as ‘baby’ altar server at 6 years of age, and a love for music since I began playing piano at 7, and then guitar in high school. In fact, I learnt the guitar by playing at Mass in my little Queensland country parish. For me, liturgy and music were inseparable. As I grew, and studied, and began composing music, I discovered how right I was when the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* stated that music is “a necessary or integral part of the sacred liturgy” (SC 112).

“Sunday by Sunday... we express and experience being unified as the Body of Christ through our active participation. And there is no better way to participate than by singing together. I am truly blessed that I am able to help facilitate this participation, this sense of unity, in my parish every Sunday, and, amazingly in many other parishes and schools through the songs I have composed. Liturgy and music have given me so much joy as a composer and liturgist and they have so much to offer every single member of every liturgical assembly. All you have to do is sing!”

- Michael Mangan, Composer, Liturgist, Educator, Archdiocese of Brisbane.



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## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

For composers, musicians and singers, that their gifts will help all Christians to sing the song of the Spirit that is in their hearts.

We pray to the Lord.

That the community may encourage those with musical gifts to come forward to use them for the liturgy, and for the community.

We pray to the Lord.

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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Vatican Council II, Sacrosanctum Concilium, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy \(1965\)](#)

[Vatican Council II, \*Musicae Sacram\*, Instruction on Music in the Liturgy \(1967\)](#)

[\*Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship\* \(United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2007\)](#)

[Guidelines for Liturgical Music \(Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops Ottawa, Canada, 2015\)](#)

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