

Does Your Church Have A Cantor?

By Sister Josepha Kennedy, SSJ

Does your parish have lectors? Do you have one or two song leaders? If the answers are yes — and they probably are — the next question may come as a surprise: What about cantors? It appears that very few parishes in this diocese are fortunate enough to have cantors; even more significant, it appears that few efforts are being made to recruit them.

Part of the problem is surely a failure to grasp the role of the cantor and the dimension of artistry which the cantor can bring to the worship. Another part of the problem may well be a long anti-soloist tradition in the Roman Catholic Church in this country. Whatever the causes, the problem is one which the Music Commission is concerned about; we have had considerable discussion of possible remedies, including recruitment, training sessions, in-service workshops and the like.

In any parish, there are singers. Some may be music teachers, some choir members, some only in-the-shower or at-a-party performers. In all the group, there

INSIGHTS On Pastoral Liturgy

must be three or four uninhibited souls — or at least courageous souls — who also would be glad to make this special contribution to the parish's worship. Actually, the performance element is relatively limited, although a "creative" cantor can add several moments of acclamation throughout the liturgical celebration. Using a fine voice to praise God is a centuries-old tradition; it is not — or should not be — a pseudo-concert for self-glorification.

Specifically, the moments in which the cantor is called upon are the responsorial psalm and the gospel acclamation. To these may be added the Great Amen, a Communion psalm and an occasional Communion meditation song. The congregation and the cantor usually sing responsorially, i.e. the simpler repeated refrain is sung first by the cantor (as an aid

to their learning and/or as a memory-jogger), then repeated by the congregation. The cantor then sings alone the verses of the psalm, either on a "formula" melody, with the rise and fall of the pitch corresponding to the verbal accents, or on the more elaborate melodies of Gelineau, Somerville, Deiss or any other composer who has done psalm settings. The congregation "interrupts" with their short refrain; the cantor continues with a few verses; the congregation responds — and so it goes to the end of the psalm. This represents a true involvement of all the worshippers in the response to the readings.

A Communion psalm would be done in the same fashion as the response to the readings. It is not uncommon to find congregations which are unwilling to sing during communion time; apparently they don't want to be bothered with books while walking. The technique of simple refrain used repeatedly solves this problem, provided the cantor chooses a psalm whose refrain really is short and simple.

Occasionally, when it will not lengthen the service unduly, a short Communion meditation song is uplifting. The literature most often used here seems to be the quiet folk idiom, often accompanied by guitar. Texts expressing community, compassion, sorrow or peace are all appropriate to a Communion meditation, in addition to those specifically pertaining to the Eucharist.

In all of these efforts, a singer may see the need to consult with someone versed in liturgy, whether the pastor or assistant, the music director, the organist or any member of the Diocesan Music Commission. What we are urging is some initiative on the part of individual parishioners in making known their talent and training — and some effort on the part of the "musical establishment" to recruit and encourage cantors at both the parish and the diocesan level.

Fr. Bartlett Lecture Set

Father Albert Bartlett, former rector of McQuaid Jesuit High School, will speak at St. Augustine's Church at 8 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 23. His talk, entitled "Right to Live and Right to Die," will be the second in the Moral Issues '75 series sponsored by the church.

Father Bartlett teaches English at Canisius College and, he says, writes "occasional articles on current issues."

A lecture on marriage and annulment by Father Robert O'Neil opened the series Nov. 16. On Nov. 30, Father Charles Curran, Catholic University theologian, will discuss "The Catholic Family and Birth Control." The final speaker, Dec. 7, will be Father James Young, CSP, of Boston, whose field is the pastoral care of divorced Catholics.

The Sunday evening meetings all begin at 8, at St. Augustine's, 410 Chili. There is an admission fee of \$2. Tickets may be reserved through 436-7909.

PILGRIMS

Dryden — The 6th grade CCD class will participate in a pilgrimage to Auriesville, the North American Shrine of Jesuit Martyrs. The students raised the necessary funds through housewares sale.

WORD FOR SUNDAY



Fr. Albert Shamon

Sunday's Readings: (R3) Mt. 25:31-46. (R1) Ex. 34:11-12. (R2) 1 Cor. 15:20-26, 28.

Sunday is the feast of Christ the King. With it the Church Year closes.

Does not the title "king" sometimes grate on democratic sensitivities? More than once people have asked, why a feast of Christ the King in a century that has toppled practically every monarch from his throne?

I would say the institution of the Feast in 1925 was providential. At that time men like Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini, were in power or rising to power — men who abused the power of authority, who arrogated to themselves powers that belonged to God alone.

The feast of Christ the King teaches men how to use power.

Discussing dictatorship, Alexander Solzhenitsyn in a collection of essays, From Under the Rubble, asserted that for some countries authoritarian rule might be the best form of government. "When Russia for many centuries existed under various forms of authoritarian rule," he wrote, she "did not experience episodes of self-destruction like those of the twentieth century, and for ten centuries millions of our peasant forbears died feeling that their lives had not been too unbearable" (p. 23).

On the positive side, he said, such regimes insure stability, continuity, immunity from political ague. On the negative side, there is the danger of sliding into tyranny. "But," he went on, "authoritarian regimes as such are not frightening — (and here's the point that interests me) only those which are answerable to no one and nothing (these are frightening). The autocrats of earlier religious ages, though their power was ostensibly unlimited, felt themselves responsible before God and their own consciences. The autocrats of our own time are dangerous precisely because it is difficult to find

higher values which would bind them." The present atheistic totalitarian regimes, Solzhenitsyn says, are unique in history because they demand "total surrender of our souls." Caesar exacts what must be rendered to God. One must have no king but Caesar.

In the light of present political conditions then, the feast of Christ the King is one of the most relevant feasts in the twentieth century.

How important it is for rulers to realize their power is not omnipotent, that they are accountable to a higher power. Only he who has power over death has sovereign power. And God has put this last enemy, death, under the feet of Christ (R2). Every other sovereignty, authority, and power must be subject to Christ. If power is not used for service, then an accounting will one day be made to Christ.

The prophet Ezechiel pictured the Messiah as a shepherd king. The shepherd serves the sheep: calls them by name, leads them to verdant pastures, defends them, with his life if need be. The kings of Israel were repudiated precisely because they did not serve God's people. Rather they wallowed luxuriously, like Oriental potentates, while their sheep strayed, got lost, hungered and died.

In terrible judgment, God stripped Israel of her kings and proclaimed that He Himself would be shepherd to His sheep. "The lost I will seek out, the strayed I will bring back, the injured I will bind up, the sick I will heal" (R1).

This judgment will be visited on any authority, be he sole ruler of a country or head of a home or teacher, employer, anyone endowed with power, if he use not his power to serve. Such a one shall not enter the King's eternal Kingdom (R3).

In the Sunday Liturgy, Christ our King will come again among His people in His own kind, gentle way to empower us to join Him in His ministry of recreating the world. Although we may sing Hosannas of praise to Him as King on Sunday next, the greater tribute would be to seek to use the power of our talents, the power of our marriage or parenthood or job, the power of being young or growing up or growing old; the power of our imagination and our enthusiasm, to heal and not to hurt, to build and not to destroy, to encourage and not to deflate. We must confidently confront our world with His values and vision so that ultimately His Kingdom may come on earth as it is in heaven.

A welcome addition to
Your holiday table . . .

**OYSTERS
CLAMS
LOBSTER TAILS
SHRIMP**

Ready for your oven . . .
CLAMS CASINO

PRICE'S SEAFOOD
1875 MONROE AVE.
Next to Howard Johnsons
at 12 Corners
461-2400

SOMEONE FOR THANKSGIVING

THE HOLY FATHER'S MISSION AID TO THE ORIENTAL CHURCH

You'll be happier this Thanksgiving if you give something of yourself to someone who has nobody.

Giving belongs in Thanksgiving.

Attend Mass that morning in your parish church.

SOMEONE WHO HAS NOBODY Take fifteen minutes to visit someone in the hospital.

Have someone who eats alone join your family for turkey and all the trimmings.

Better yet, feed someone who needs food.

There are millions of people in the world who have hollow eyes and swollen stomachs because they have no food.

We don't see them because they're overseas.

We know they're there, however.

Can we ignore them, let them starve?

Your \$20 by itself will feed a family of refugees for a month.

\$200 will feed ten families.

\$975 will give a two-acre model farm to a parish in southern India, so that the priest can raise his own food and teach his people better crop-production.

\$8,000 will complete the half-finished Church of St. Mary's in Edanad, Kerala, India. This tiny parish, of only 675 souls has given 15 priests and 35 Religious Sisters to the service of the Church. Help Father Antony finish his church as a Memorial to someone you love — any amount will help.

Giving belongs to Thanksgiving, it's part of life.

How much will you give back to God?

Dear Monsignor Nolan:

Please return coupon with your offering

ENCLOSED PLEASE FIND \$ _____

FOR _____

NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

CH

7

THE CATHOLIC NEAR EAST WELFARE ASSOCIATION

NEAR EAST MISSIONS

TERENCE CARDINAL COOKE, President
MSGR. JOHN G. NOLAN, National Secretary
Write: CATHOLIC NEAR EAST WELFARE ASSOC.
1011 First Avenue • New York, N.Y. 10022
Telephone: 212/826-1480