

Music in the Spirit of the Liturgy

Part I

By FATHER FRANK LIOI

In the past few months, several articles have appeared in this column pertaining to music in the Church today: the ministry of music, the role of the choir, musical selection appropriate for different liturgical seasons. These Insights have been so well received by readers of the Courier-Journal that the Office of Liturgy has asked the Diocesan Music Commission to put together a fascicle for the liturgy resource book, Liturgy Resources. This fascicle will be mailed out to subscribers of Liturgy Resources in the near future.

Everyone has different preferences when it comes to music: "I like this" or "I don't care for that" are all parts of a person's vocabulary when commenting upon musical taste. The same, of course, is true with church music. "I like this" or "I don't like that" are heard every Sunday after Mass.

WORD FOR SUNDAY



Fr. Albert Shamon

Sunday Readings: (R3) Jn. 15:9-17 (R1) Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48 (R2) 1 Jn. 4:7-10

It is fitting on the Sunday before Ascension that the gospel selection be taken from our Lord's farewell address to His apostles. Farewell injunctions bear the stamp of supreme importance. Last words are best remembered, so when someone wants something to be remembered, he speaks it last. The last command of Christ was, "Love one another."

A young couple in my parish returned from a Marriage Encounter. In talking about it, the husband remarked, "Isn't it funny, Father, we have to work so hard at just trying to love one another?"

This realization emerged, I assure, because on the Marriage Encounter he discovered perhaps for the first time, that love is more than a feeling; that it is essentially sacrificial, a giving, forgiving, outliving. Christian love is a will act. It involves keeping commandments. And all commandments are reduced to keeping this one: Love one another. "You are my friends," said Jesus, "if you do what I command you." The Latins summarized all this succinctly: *idem velle, idem nolle, ea firma amicitia* — to will the same things, to nill the same things, that is real friendship.

Peter's test came when he visited a Gentile, a non-commissioned Roman officer, Cornelius. Jews were notoriously exclusive at that time. The first Jewish Christians tended to carry this exclusivism along into Christianity. But God's love shows no partiality. It is as wide as the sky and embraces the man of any nation who fears God.

God compelled Peter to go to Cornelius. Tactfully, Peter eschewed references to the Old Testament, which would have meant little to a Gentile. Rather he talked about Jesus. As Peter spoke, the Holy Spirit came upon the Gentiles. They became ecstatic and in their ecstasy spoke in tongues (1 Cor. 14).

This is the only case in the New Testament where the Holy Spirit is received before baptism. Direct divine intervention was necessary

INSIGHTS On Pastoral Liturgy

Realizing the wide range of musical interest and appreciation on the part of people who make up the average Sunday congregation, the music commission has sought to enunciate certain basic qualities and characteristics that good church music should possess. These fundamentals would be true whether we are talking about organ music, choir music, guitar selections, or folk groups.

The resource book fascicle on church music will contain five sections. The Ministry of Sacred Music makes up the first section. What does it mean to refer to the Church musician as a "minister of

to break down the narrow concept of love the apostles had, to make them realize that God loves all men — even Gentiles. So the Holy Spirit comes upon them to teach Peter that the Gentiles are to be received into the Church without conditions. The one thing Peter and the Gentiles had in common was, not Jewish observances, but faith in Christ. This alone was necessary. As a sign of this faith, Cornelius and his friends were baptized. The apostles generally left baptizing to others (1 Cor. 1:14).

As it is the nature of fire to burn, it is the nature of our Lord to love. The greatness of His love is evident in the comparison, "As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you."

Everybody loves something, but the question is what to love. Scripture does not tell us not to love, but to choose the object of our love. We cannot choose unless we are first chosen. We cannot love unless we are first loved. "Love is of God" — that is, God is the source of love. It is not something generated of itself. St. Paul says, "The love of God has been poured out into our hearts." And it comes to us "through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us."

And the object of our love is the same as its source — God Himself. God's love manifested itself in an incarnation: "God's love was revealed in our midst in this way, he sent his only Son." Our love, too, must incarnate itself: "Love one another."

A rich English woman demanded of a lover proposing marriage, "Love me, love my dog." God also demands, "Love me, love my friends" (His friends include our enemies).

Choral Group To Mark 50th

The Treble Clefs, one of Rochester's oldest choral societies, will present its 50th anniversary concert at Summerville Presbyterian Church at 7 p.m. Sunday, May 23.

The club began as the Catholic Choral Society in January 1925 under the auspices of the Catholic Women's Club. It became an independent, self-supporting organization in 1941.

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music? What are his/her qualifications, areas of competence, functions? What relation does music have to prayer? Can music be prayer in itself? Can you have a celebration without music? How does a worship committee judge music as community prayer?

Many times we confuse values of music with styles of music. What is a musical judgment, a liturgical judgment, a pastoral judgment in evaluating the qualities of music in the church?

Section Two will take us into the styles of sacred music. From Latin hymns for Benediction, the ubiquitous "Holy God" and "Come, Holy Ghost," two or three Marian hymns, and some seasonal hymns, hymnody in the Catholic Church has moved to new levels. Are there any good hymnals on the market? How does a committee go about selecting appropriate hymns? How is a new hymn introduced to the congregation?

Where has sacred polyphony gone? What is it? Are the great masters like Palestrina, Victoria, DeLasso, Byrd, forever lost to the past? Can we speak today of "Modern Polyphony"? Is Gregorian Chant relevant? How may it be used today in the Church? There are some exciting prospects with the new polyphony and new instrumental and chant ensembles.

We owe it to our congregations not to stagnate listlessly in the past but to get out into the mainstream of contemporary music for choirs to help today's worshipers come alive.

[to be continued]

PENNY BAZAAR AT ST. CHARLES

The children of St. Charles School and their friends will hold their annual Penny Bazaar Friday, May 21, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. in the school hall, 64 Maiden Lane. There will be an evening session for adults, 7-9.

In addition to games, there will be fortune tellers, clowns, a haunted house, an arts and crafts booth stocked with children's handiwork, and a snack bar.

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