

# Insights in Liturgy

By Sister Nancy Burkin, SSJ

## Choosing Music For Lent

Choosing music for the Lenten season demands much more than a knowledge of the music that is available. One must also delve deeply into the mystery of the season to see what best expresses prayer for the people during this time of intense religious experience.

Most of us can remember this season as the time to deny ourselves, to "give up" something, to say extra prayers and generally to do penance. Certainly, these are good acts but they, like the music we choose, are meaningless unless we know why the Lenten season is significant.

Lent is a special time to immerse ourselves in a particular aspect of our life as a pilgrim people. We take time to sink ourselves into the mystery so that we are more conscious of its presence as we live out the rest of the year. Lent is a time of conversion, a time when we turn around, or better, turn inside out so we can better see ourselves and our life experiences as part of the dying and rising of Jesus. It is a time when

we shed excess baggage that we have accumulated during the year — baggage that hinders our vision of the Lord Jesus and which holds us back from making progress in our becoming one with Him. So we simplify our lives and try to do without desserts or snacks between meals.

We spend more time in prayer because we know that it is there that we especially experience the Lord and there that we see the true image to which we are called. We do these things and many others not only because they are a means to our turning toward the Lord more completely but also because they are signs of the conversion process. Fasting, praying, doing for others should speak to us of the stripping away of non-essentials to come to a deeper knowledge of who we are in the Lord Jesus. They are a literal cleaning of the Church, the Body of Christ, so that we truly express that to the world rather than hide behind masks that we have created. We die during Lent in order that Jesus might rise in us and therefore in our world.

Once we have looked into the Lenten mystery, there is another direction we must turn before the actual selection of music

— that is toward our people who are ideally represented by the parish liturgy committee. Working with this committee we somehow must determine how our particular parish will live out the mystery of Lent. We must determine what the people see as emphasis for their particular part of the Body of Christ. Musicians cannot take this responsibility upon themselves; it must come from the people.

When choosing music for Lent, we must keep all this in mind. The music we choose should be a meaningful prayer to those who participate by singing and or listening and it should be a sign of the season.

Choose music with uncomplicated accompaniments. Put choir descants and harmonies aside until Easter. The former rubrics called for no accompaniments during Lent; at times it might be worthwhile to sing unaccompanied. Not only would this speak to the participants of the essential, praying together in song, but also it would allow the Easter celebration to rise up in the richness of harmonious accompaniments. Keep the music simple during Lent and sing only the essential parts of the Liturgy: the acclamations, the entrance and communion processions, and at times, the responsorial psalm. Use the same acclamations each Sunday. This may be a good time to teach new

ones that will, with the addition of choir descants and harmonies and the rich accompaniments of instruments, be used at the Easter liturgies; thus musically tying that peak celebration of the Christian year to the Lenten season.

Lent, as we have said above, is a time of turning to the Lord, of cleansing ourselves of that which gets in the way of our coming to oneness with Him. We should try to find music that speaks then of the Lord's care for us as we attempt to find our meaning, once again, in Him. Music that speaks only of the miserable creatures that we are with no mention of the goodness of God to us has no place in our Lenten prayer. Various psalms lend themselves quite adequately to this e.g. Father, Mercy by the St. Louis Jesuits and Psalm 42 arranged by Joseph Gelineau. The essential that we want to turn to is the presence of Jesus in our life.

Choosing music for Lent does not begin in a music store or in a catalog of liturgical music, it begins in the musician in conjunction with the parish liturgy committee, in coming to a deeper awareness of the Lenten Mystery in his own life. It begins with them becoming more aware of the dying and rising of Jesus in our world today. After this has been done, the selection of music comes easily.

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# All in the Family

By Sarah Child

## The 'Ups' Outweigh The 'Downs'

When...

You open the refrigerator and somebody's half glass of milk tips and spills all over the grapefruit and puddles on top of the cottage cheese carton and...

You discover the dog has licked all the glue off the sheet of stamps you left lying upside down on the desk and...

The telephone rings and your son says the big day has finally arrived and

he'll be admitted to the sixth grade band if you can only get his trumpet there before 10:05 a.m. and...

You discover the turntable on the record player has been spinning all night and...

Somebody has used your vinyl-palmed driving gloves for a snowball fight and...

Your husband says he's planning to jog during his lunch hour and what about you?

Then you know the day is not starting off in the most propitious manner.

When...

The phone doesn't ring once while you're in the basement banging on the typewriter and...

You remember you're not out of coffee

after all, there's a can hidden away for a rainy day (or blizzard) and...

You hear from a former neighbor that her son was in an accident but he escaped without serious injury and...

You remember at last to go to the farm market and get a new supply of apples and...

Your neighbor calls and says drop everything, that it's been months since you've "coffee braked" together and...

The mail arrives and there are no bills and...

The oldest confides she's come to enjoy the classics her piano teacher assigns and...

The head of the house walks in the door and says something smells good...

Then you know the day is going to end better than it started.

# Study Raps Sex Depiction

Tupelo, Miss. (RNS) — A report on programming on the three major commercial television networks for the Fall of 1978 prepared by the National Federation for Decency (NFD) indicates that 88 per cent of all sex shown was depicted outside marriage. According to the research findings, ABC was the top programmer of sex, while CBS was the top network for profanity. The results of the

monitoring study were based on 762.5 hours of prime-time network programming viewed between Sept. 10 and Dec. 2. According to the federation, those participating represented a wide range of age and education background. CBS Movies was the highest rated network program in the amount of sexual orientation, followed by ABC Movies and NBC Movies. Other programs with high sex

ratings included Soap, Love Boat, Three's Company, Dallas, The Big Event, Charlie's Angels and Vegas. The report says that the least sexually oriented programs were Grandpa Goes to Washington, the World Series, the American League Playoffs, Lifetime, Project UFO, Different Strokes, Little House on the Prairie, The Waltons, Monday Night Football, and Donny and Marie.

## Good News From Trant's Inc. To Our Diocesan Community

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