

Insights  
In Liturgy



Nuptial  
Insights

By John C. Herrmann

Prompted by the article, "Wedding Music: Getting Past the Obstacles," in the July 1980 Pastoral Music Notebook, I wish to address the issue of proper music to be offered at a wedding Mass. In the article, the author offered some valid points regarding compensation of musicians, planning the liturgy with the couple, and explaining options open to them within the confines of the Mass.

However, when it came to the "Wedding Music Checklist," it was revealed through the list of selections that the author had no concept of liturgical music at all. A list of "Top 40" and "Movie Music" dominated — never once was it suggested that the music might reflect the chosen readings or the concept of love in the Christian community. It also was suggested, quite strongly, "that congregational participation is a 'losing battle' — rather than something that should be patiently encouraged and expected.

Marriage, like the other sacraments, is associated closely with the Mass. The ceremony is enriched by the Word of God in the two readings, the Responsorial Psalm and the Gospel. The ceremony takes place between the homily and the General Intercessions and is followed, as in every Mass, by the Liturgy of the Eucharist. In selecting appropriate music, it is absolutely essential to know what readings, psalm and Gospel have been chosen for that particular wedding. The music must be borne out of these — not "inserted." The acclamations are no less to be acclaimed at a wedding than during a Sunday liturgy.

As a pastoral musician for about 14 years, I am well aware that couples planning marriage regard this celebration as their ceremony. Therein lies the problem!

A wedding is a community celebration — not intended solely for the couple. The love, which couples may want expressed through "Top 40" or "Movie Music," is a deeper, communal love which must find its root in Jesus Christ. To that end, there is no place for "Evergreen" or "You Light Up My Life" in the celebration of Matrimony. This must be patiently explained to the couple. A firm "no" as a response to a selection desired by the couple, without an explanation as to why the selection is inappropriate, will result in frustration and/or anger.

Perhaps a brief analogy would help the couple. Weddings are, and rightfully so, emotion-filled times. Songs about the love of man

and woman abound on the pop and movie melodies charts. Compare this to another emotion-filled time: Christmas. Songs about Christmas trees, snow, gift-giving and the like abound. However, no one expects to hear these sung or played at Christmas Mass. Why? Because we've been educated to know that the real meaning of Christmas is the Word Incarnate, Peace and Love. So, too, should education commence to reveal to the couple planning a wedding ceremony the nature of the love they are expressing. Again, this is reflected in the readings they select and the music should be chosen to enhance this.

In another article, I will provide a Mass outline that could be distributed to couples planning a nuptial Mass. Also, I will supply a list of liturgically proper vocal and instrumental music which I hope will prove useful to pastoral musicians.

(John C. Herrmann is the pastoral musician at St. John the Evangelist, Greece.)

Evening of  
Reflection

A Lenten evening of "reflection on baptism, conversion and Christian response" will begin at 7 p.m. on Friday, March 6 at St. Monica's Convent, 34 Monica St. Sister Sheila Briody, SSJ, will lead the program titled, "Can You Drink this Cup?" For reservations those interested may call Sister Kathleen Weider, 16 Lake View Park, Rochester, N.Y. 14613, 254-1325 or 458-3443.



Honors

Some 80 members of the board of Catholic Charities and other officers and their families attended the annual dinner meeting last Tuesday night at the Pastoral Office on Buffalo Road. Highlight of the evening were awards presented by Bishop Matthew H. Clark members of the Cuban/Haitian Refugee Committee including Timothy Sullivan, above, chairperson of the committee; Lionel Honorat, right, chairman of the Haitian Refugee Sub-Committee; and Dr. Marcelino Weiss, chairman of the Cuban Lyceum. Other awards presented included those to Patrick Gaffney, past president of Catholic Charities, and the retiring trustees: Philip Callan, Charles Crimi, Alice Foley, Marie Porter and Jean Pryor.



Lenten  
Program

A group of southwest Rochester churches are sponsoring a six-session Lenten program titled "We Find Ourselves in Holy Week," from 7:30-9:30 p.m. on consecutive Mondays beginning March 9. The program will take place in the learning center of St. Monica's School, 841 Genesee St.

The program, co-sponsored by St. Augustine's, St. Stephen's Westminster Presbyterian and St. Monica's Churches, will deal with the life of Jesus Christ.

RSMs to Elect Superior

The Sisters of Mercy will select a new Superior General with a congregational election this Sunday, March 1 at the Motherhouse, 1437 Blossom Rd. Bishop Matthew H. Clark will be present for the counting of ballots and announcement of election results.

The new superior will succeed Sister Mary Judith Heberle, who is stepping

down from her duties. Sister Judith has served as superior since 1970.

The new superior will serve a term of four years. On March 11 the election process will begin for four councilors, who, with the Superior General, form the congregation's executive council. They will be announced on April 10.

The family of  
Sister Marie-Louise Blaakman  
deeply appreciates your  
kind expressions of sympathy,  
and we thank all those  
who celebrated in prayer  
and glorious song.

All that Matters

I showed you my heart  
I sang you my song  
And you heard my guitar play  
In a minute or so I may be gone  
So there's just one more thing I should say

All that matters in this life below  
is not what you are, or how much you know  
All the world's knowledge can make the mind smart  
But the difference is made in the heart

I sing songs of joy  
I sing songs of pain  
Songs that will move the soul  
But if I should never sing again  
Here's something you've got to know

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