



# Catholic Courier

DIocese OF ROCHESTER, NEW YORK ■ VOL. 107 NO. 48 ■ THURSDAY, August 29, 1996 ■ 75¢ ■ 12 PAGES



Parishioners sing out at the 10:30 a.m. Mass Aug. 25 at St. Bridget's Church, Rochester.

## Sung ritual yet to become tradition

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**E**ver notice how fans stand for the national anthem at baseball games but don't sing?

And how the same fans stand for the seventh inning stretch and belt out, "Take Me Out to the Ballgame"?

Tom McGary has, and says a similar incongruity occurs in churches.

"There are times the congregation sings beautifully and I wish I could take a picture of it and repeat it," said McGary, music director at Fairport's Church of the Assumption and a professor of music at Nazareth College. "The next Sunday, they don't."

"Catholics can sing," he affirmed. "I'm not sure they want to."

The question, "Can Catholics sing?" can set some music

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ministrators to squirming.

"Yes, they sing," cautiously noted Father Dan McMullin, who has a doctorate in vocal performance and is chairman of the diocesan music committee.

But, he added, "Not as well as I would wish."

"You have to realize where we've come from," noted Ginny Miller, diocesan associate director of liturgy. "The tradition is different. It is not like Protestantism, where hymnody has been a part of the mainstay of worship services for several hundred years. It is going to take a while."

The discussion of how Catholics sing has new impetus since last November when 17 Catholic liturgists and musicians from this country, Canada, England and Ireland released a statement on the subject.

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