



**NATIONAL
ASSOCIATION OF
PASTORAL
MUSICIANS
ARCHDIOCESE
OF KANSAS CITY
IN KANSAS AND
KANSAS CITY/
ST JOSEPH**

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**MARK YOUR
CALENDARS**

St Cecilia Sing
Sun, Nov 17, 3 pm
Cathedral of Immaculate Conception,
KCMO

January 25, Wichita
Chapter Winter
Workshop
ValLimar Jansen

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NPM News

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ELECTION TIME—Thank You for Voting!

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Past and Upcoming NPM Events

The biennial Day of Spirituality and Skills took place on Saturday, Sept 28, hosted by Nativity of Mary, Independence. The joint MO/KS committee planned an enjoyable and uplifting day of prayer, camaraderie with fellow ministers of music, knowledge and reflection.

Fr. Paul Turner gave the keynote address and breakout presenters were Drs. Mario Pearson and Barbara Leyden, Michael Emmerick, Br David

Wilding, OSB, Matt Reichert and Matt Winterhalter. Topics covered issues helpful to music directors, choirs, cantors, keyboard players, and rural musicians. A session on Gregorian chant was interesting to everyone and a youth track was open to all youth, not just those involved in music ministry.

Dr. Mario Pearson and the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception are again hosting the annual St. Cecilia concert on

Sunday, Nov 17, 3:00 pm. Several choirs from the area will sing and all attendees are invited to participate in the hymn singing. A reception follows. The concert is free, although an offering is gratefully accepted.

The Wichita, KS, NPM Chapter is hosting ValLimar Jansen for a workshop on Saturday, Jan 25, 2020. ValLimar is a highly regarded inspirational/catechetical speaker, singer, composer and recording artist. Stay tuned for more information.

St. Rose Philippine Duchesne, St. Cecilia and St. Gregory, pray for us!



NPM CONVENTION 2019 IN RALEIGH

(Ed. Note: Several local NPM members attended the 2019 Convention. Here are highlights from two of the members.

(1) Highlights from Kristen Beeves: The NPM Convention in Raleigh, NC was a wonderful event, filled with prayerful services, performances, plenum speeches, and inspiring breakout sessions, which gave me resources and ideas which will help me strengthen the music ministry at my parish. This year's convention theme, "That You May Be Healed," was portrayed throughout the convention. A "Service of Healing and Anointing" combined a beautiful anointing of the sick service with a story told by Fr. Michael Joncas, describing how he was strengthened by the anointing of the sick when he was experiencing a debilitating illness. A plenum speech was given by Marie Monville, which was a testimony about how she received healing amidst a tragedy by keeping her faith in God. A "Night of Worship and Healing" was a beautiful worship service, led by Matt Maher, with the presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament.

The convention offered numerous resourceful breakout sessions, two of which gave me some inspiring ideas. "Nurturing the Young Musician," with presenter Katie Houts from Choristers Guild, gave me some fun creative ideas to incorporate spiritual formation, music reading, and singing in my children's choir rehearsals. The resources she presented were: "All Hands In: Volume 2," by Brian Hehn and Mark Burrows, and "Again, I Say Rejoice!" by Mark Burrows. "Teaching Sight Reading in Seven Minutes a Day," with presenter Jennifer Kerr Breedlove-Budziak, demonstrated a strategy to teach choir members to sight read with limited rehearsal time, using the Curwen hand signs.

Another great opportunity the convention offered are resource showcases, where convention attendees gather to sing through new music from major music publishers. Packets of octavo samples are given to all who attend. If you have the chance to attend an NPM convention, it is a worthwhile experience!

(Ed. Note) (2) Highlights for Barbara Leyden include two fabulous concerts—the nationally-known Raleigh Ringers and the University of the Incarnate Word Cardinal Singers from San Antonio, Texas, performed completely different but highly entertaining, expressive, engaging and moving programs. The choral concert featured gorgeous a capella Spanish works written from the 1500's to the 1970's. "Who'll Be a Witness: The Healing Power of the Spiritual" was a combination of spoken sections interspersed with either choral or solo sung prayer. One evening we experienced Choral Evensong in the Episcopalian tradition that is used in Catholic worship. Finally, an interesting short workshop introduced us to Body Mapping, a process of learning about, being more aware of, and re-imagining our body joints and their function. Page 4 of this newsletter explains more.

We don't
learn from
talking; we
learn from
listening.

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The Kansas
NPM FB is
"National Assoc of
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Missouri is
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Cantor Corner—Listen to Your Assembly Choir

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How is your assembly singing? The cantor or song-leader is never to replace the sung prayer of the assembly in the pews, i.e., the "big choir," but rather assist, lead and enliven everyone. Do you listen to your fellow worshippers? Are they singing prayerfully, with ease and enjoyment? Why or why not? Evaluating the success of the worship of your assembly is an important part of music ministry. After singing the refrain of the responsorial psalm, do you allow the assembly to sing back to you without you singing in the microphone? The skilled cantor assists the people with the first repeat if needed, listens, and gradually quiets or stops singing the assembly's part if they are singing it with ease. As a cantor, if you are not prepared to proclaim the psalm and lead the hymns and acclamations prayerfully with ease and focus on prayer, you might not be able to listen to your assembly at the same time you sing. The cantor ministry requires much vocal, musical and spiritual preparation. Although a beautiful voice is pleasing to the ear, having the psalmist think only of their technique or what word or pitch comes next will not have the desired effect of inspiring the assembly to pray. All three areas of preparation are essential, especially the oft-neglected spiritual area. Next liturgy—listen to your assembly choir!

Listen at the Keyboard

Nothing brings joy to an organist/pianist like the sound of the assembly singing with gusto during liturgy. Hopefully many of our readers are uplifted by the sung prayer at every liturgy. Listening to the assembly is paramount and part of a triffecta of attention: (1) the correct notes played in the correct, singable tempo; 2) the cantor, choir or conductor who is part of your ministerial combo, and (3) the assembly. The keyboard player first has the music sounding correctly in their inner hearing and reproduces it. Depending on the situation, the keyboard player is either following the conductor's lead, conducting the choir from the keyboard, or leading and supporting a song leader. If the keyboardist is leading alone or with a single cantor, listening to the assembly is especially important. Liturgical musicians are capable of multi-tasking to the highest level.

A fine line exists between bringing the assembly along with a lively tempo or their getting completely out of sync with the musical leadership. If the assembly seems tentative on a hymn they may not sing as often, or if it is a new hymn, the accompaniment needs simplifying so the melody can be easily followed. Adding clear, rhythmic bass pedal or left-hand octave notes helps lead a quicker tempo.

Does your assembly sing hymns with incorrect pitches or rhythms? The blame for that error falls squarely on the shoulders of the musical leadership. The people will generally sing what they hear and what the keyboardist plays. If a mistake is made when they are learning a new hymn, they will follow by example.

Keyboard arrangements for hymns must sometimes be adapted for single keyboard/cantor leadership, particularly when the composer writes a note higher than the melody. Members of the assembly will learn the wrong pitch and may consistently sing it incorrectly.

As new music is introduced, listen and see how well the assembly is singing before changing it. New music will take several weeks for the assembly to learn, and they may not sing a new Mass setting well until the second time it is scheduled.



Listen to the Sound of a People at Worship—by Bob Sandford

“Sing with all the saints in glory;
sing the resurrection song!
Death and sorrow, earth's dark story
to the former days belong.”

When we sing our resurrection song, our voices are united with those who have gone before us; those who know firsthand what we have only begun to see. When we sing the song of the angels around God's throne from Isaiah 6:3 “Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory” we join our voices to those of the heavenly host. What company we keep when we sing our faith! Why go to church? Why sing together? In God's house, listening with the ears of our hearts, we can hear that we are not alone. “Faith comes by hearing” (Romans 10:17) Joining with all the faithful, the saints and the angels, together we sing our faith, our community and the kingdom of God into being. Listening with the ears of faith to the sound of the people of God in worship, we can hear our Triune God united with God's people as one and many.

Contemporary Ensembles Listen For....

Liturgical music ensembles have the challenge to balance the instruments and singers into one blended and pleasing sound. Many ensembles that use guitar or bass as the main instruments to lead along with piano, may need to amplify the instrumentation and, commonly, the singers.

Multiple musicians playing in an ensemble have to listen at all times to (1) their instruments' tuning and for correct pitches, (2) how their instrument is leading the people to sing with ease, (3) how their instrument complements the other instruments in the en-

semble, and (4) the balance of volume with the other instruments, the lead singers and the assembly.

Ideally, the group has a sound engineer who balances microphones throughout the liturgy like a performing group. The basic settings must be ascertained at rehearsal and then individual musicians monitor themselves. For example, a picked guitar pattern is softer than a plastic pick with a heavy strum, so the musician should turn up their volume when picking and back down when strumming. If the instrument does not have its own pick-up, then someone has to change the vol-

ume on the mixer. All musicians should develop their technique so they can play both loudly and softly.

A step that is sometimes omitted is listening to the entire ensemble's volume level in the church as a whole. People come to Mass to pray. Liturgical music is called to lead people to prayer, including making them feel joyful and grateful. What can be an uplifting experience, at times can have the opposite effect if the music is either too loud or too soft to be heard. Proper volume is an ongoing challenge and a delicate balance.



Have you prayed
today?

Visit our website at
npminkc.com

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NPM 2.0—A Proposed Vision for the Future

The Catholic Church in the United States is undergoing tremendous change in Church membership numbers and composition as well as NPM. NPM has been at the forefront in encouraging welcoming new members in its midst, encouraging multicultural enculturation in the music ministry for many years. The financial realities inherent in churches who experience declining membership, who close or need to merge with a neighboring church, while other churches in different areas of the country grow exponentially, faster than facilities can be built, affect pastoral musicians greatly. As jobs, particularly in the East coast, where NPM membership has been historically strong, are eliminated or cut back in hours, pastoral musicians can no longer afford NPM membership or may have even changed occupations. As a result, NPM membership has declined greatly in the last decade.

A board of NPM members studied the mission, past, present and future of the organization for the past two years. Some results of their study are:

1. The Church needs NPM because the Church needs well-trained pastoral musicians in every single Catholic church in the country. There is no other organization or office dedicated to providing training and support to the totality of Roman Catholic liturgical music. This providing of training and support to every pastoral musician is NPM's mission. NPM membership comes from only 20% of USA Catholic parishes—there are 12,000 parishes with NO NPM membership.

2. The USA Church is in the midst of a sort of Triduum, passing through on the road to Emmaus. NPM needs to honor the past, engage the present, and shape the future. The original vision of NPM focused on four areas: *Ecclesia*—proclaim the Word; *Didache*—teach; *Koinonia*—fellowship and *Diakonia*—mission. These areas of emphasis are still important, but the NPM priority is to reach those pastoral musicians who lead in their parish: directors, pastors, organists/pianists who lead from the keyboard, those who plan music, and cantors.

3. Five areas of concentration to engage the present and shape the future are: chapters, programming, communication, governance, and membership. Proposals for consideration include:

4. Focus more energy on development and support of chapters and training at the local or regional level. Reconsider the annual national convention model. There will be conventions in 2020 (Louisville) and 2021 (New Orleans) but not one in 2022.

5. Focus will be on “in person” and online training. The website offerings will continue to increase and the site be further improved, building on what has been accomplished the last two years. This year for the first time a tiered membership through the parish is available. With three full memberships there is a \$20 choral membership available that gives access to all online training.

6. More emphasis to develop shorter regional training opportunities, such as a 2-day/2-night workshops, especially for youth; 3-day/2-night regional institutes/workshops, retreats, and institute for youth (One Call) and the DMMD Colloquium

7. Governance will stay largely the same: nonprofit, connected to the USCCB, and Episcopal Moderator Bishop from USCCB, a Board of Trustees elected by an elected Board/Council. Diverse and governed by members.

Body Mapping

Bridget Jankowski presented a session on “Body Mapping: Mindfulness and Knowledge to Heal Body, Mind and Soul.” GIA recently published her book by this title that summarizes her education through the Andover Educators organization.

If your playing, singing or conducting are all perfect and you have never experienced any sort of joint or muscle pain or stiffness, you will not find this subject interesting. Many pastoral musicians, however, do have wrist, neck, shoulder, hip, knee, or back pain soreness or restricted function and will find this technique interesting and helpful. Body Mapping consists of visually studying the function of each joint and how it moves.

One example given was how the spine intersects with the skull in the

(Body Mapping continued)

middle of the head, not at the back of the neck. The skull slides forward and backward at the Atlanto-Occipital joint at the top of the spine as we lean forward, etc. Try taking a deep breath while bending your head slightly forward or backward and you will notice immediately how your breath seems restricted. Singers looking down at their music will not breathe easily. Another area addressed was the hip joint, which is where we should bend over, not from our lower back. Our bodies are our instrument and using them as designed will yield much more musical ability and much less pain.

All Roman Catholic pastoral musicians need to consider how they can contribute to the future as well as the present church. Prayer, reflection and action to adequately train church musicians are all critical. The musical, emotional, social, technical and spiritual preparation of a fine pastoral musician does not happen on its own. How might this necessary training look in our diocese/archdiocese? Please send your thoughts and ideas to Barbara Leyden at bleyden@stjoeshawnee.org. What kind of training for current and future musicians would you or those you know attend? What is needed? Talk to people, listen, and reflect.