



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

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**MARK YOUR  
CALENDARS**

Aug 22, 12:30 pm,  
Board Meeting  
Holy Spirit Church

Sept 21, 9:00 am  
Chapter Meeting

Sept 28, 8:00 am  
Day of Spirituality and  
Skills Workshop  
Nativity of Mary,  
Independence, MO

January 25, TBD  
Winter Workshop

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# NPM News

Volume II, Issue I

July 1, 2019

## ELECTION TIME

Election of new boards for both Missouri and Kansas Chapters takes place in 2019. The new boards will be elected at or before (electronically) the Sept 21 meeting. Only members of NPM National are allowed to vote on local NPM chapter board members.

Proposed board members for Kansas are:

Director: Maureen Henderson  
Secy/Treas: Diane Schell  
Communications Webpage:  
Kristen Beeves  
Comm/Newsletter and Facebook:  
Barbara Leyden  
Membership: Vicky Neely  
Prayer/Hospitality: Denise Slaven  
Programming: OPEN—please volunteer to be on the joint MO/KS committee

Proposed board members for Missouri are:

Director: Danny Baker  
Secretary/Treasurer: James Wagner  
*(continued next column)*

*(Missouri board continued)*

Programming Coordinators: Alejandro Manso, Maria Milazzo, Danny Baker  
Communications/Website: Ron Sondag  
Prayer/Hospitality: Karen Engebretson  
Membership Coordinators: Sean Holland, Pat Woodrum, John Winkels

Your NPM Chapter needs YOU! We have openings for board positions, and very much need the following volunteers:

- \*serve on a committee for just one workshop or meeting;
- \*host a board or open meeting,
- \*host a workshop,
- \*email the directors with your ideas and suggestions,
- \*write short articles for the newsletter or the website on any subject to do with Catholic liturgy or formation of Catholic music ministers,
- \*comment or ask questions on Facebook and post your special events there,
- \*sign-up for Facebook if you haven't already
- \*coordinate your special event with NPM and receive assistance and advertisement

## Past and Upcoming NPM Events

Our combined chapters enjoyed several events this past winter. Our twice-weather-delayed Cantor Workshop and Master Class took place April 6 at Visitation Parish in KCMO. On March 1st, the chapters hosted a social at O'Neill's in Leawood, KS. On May 3, Nativity of Mary Parish in Independence hosted David Haas on his "Farewell Tour." Tacqueria Mexico #1 in the Crossroads District of KCMO

was the site of our open meeting on May 17. Several of our local members are attending the NPM National Conference at Raleigh, NC, July 16-19, and will return to share what they have learned.

An open meeting to elect and install the new boards will take place on Saturday, Sept 21.

Mark your calendars now to attend a Day of Spirituality and Skills on Saturday, Sept 28, 8:00 am – 2:00 pm, hosted by Nativity of Mary, Independence. Keynote

speaker is Fr. Paul Turner, nationally-recognized expert on all things liturgical and an excellent musician. Watch for emails giving more information about the varied workshops offered that day and the registration information later this summer.

Our winter workshop is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, Jan 25 with the topic of funeral and wedding music. Please consider volunteering to host or help organize this one event.



**What has helped your assembly to participate fully and actively? Post your success on our chapter Facebook pages!**

The Kansas NPM FB is “National Assoc of Pastoral Musicians Archdiocese of KC in KS.”

Missouri is “NPM Kansas City/St. Joseph MO Chapter.”

## TOP SEVEN Ways to Encourage Assembly Participation

Often overheard at any workshop of Catholic liturgical musicians is the disappointment over the assembly participating fully and actively in the sung prayer. Here are a “Biblical” TOP SEVEN areas to consider.

- **Singing Celebrant**—assemblies will “answer” the priest in sung dialogue even if they don’t sing anything else. Once singing, they are more apt to continue.
- **Fervent Faith**—have you ever attended a religious order worship service where most everyone did not sing? Assemblies with a lively faith tend to participate more vigorously in communal prayer. Faith development relies on the total liturgy being engaging, particularly the homily, as well as outside-of-worship education and a strong sense of parish community, all developments requiring the efforts of more ministers than just the musicians.
- **Repetition**—assemblies are largely composed of non-musicians. They love to sing their favorite hymns but will require several hearings/trials to learn and be able to pray new music. A parish will only pray well about four Mass Ordinary settings and respond best to psalm refrains that they sing frequently. New hymns should be introduced sparingly, perhaps only one or two a year and used several times initially—until the assembly can easily sing it.
- **Clear Music Leadership** is essential. Requirements: keyboard leadership that emphasizes the melody, lifts when the singers breathe; singable tempos for the space and the assembly; a cantor who sings with clear diction and not too much vibrato and is always musically correct; musical leadership that engages and empowers but doesn’t over-power.
- **Singable Hymns and Acclamations**—some beautiful music has been written for solo artists that simply does not transfer well to assembly singing. At least the refrain has to have a solid rhythm with stepwise or small-interval leaps and a limited range. Naturally strong syllables should fall on strong as opposed to weak or off-beats. Complicated, syncopated rhythms are difficult for a group of people to sing together.
- **Making it Easy**—The assembly needs words and notation, especially if the music is not familiar—and guests will always need assistance. This includes the responsorial psalm refrain if it is longer than four measures.
- **Harmony or Not**—Hold off adding choral harmony or solo instrument parts until the assembly is firmly established. If they know the music, still wait until verse two before starting embellishments and use soprano descants sparingly, as dependent singers are easily confused by music over the melody.

## Cantor Corner—The Final “S”

Communicating text clearly and with expression is essential for a successful psalmist and song-leading ministry. This issue’s tip concerns silence or space after the consonant “s.” The letter “s” is one of the most commonly used letters in the English language, as well as one of the loudest and most troublesome, especially for choirs. Initial “s” is not a problem, and rarely in the middle of a word, but it causes havoc at the end of words. Looking ahead to the lectionary psalms for July 28 and August 4, one finds a plethora of “s” words: thanks, praise, kindness, distress, hearts, dust, wilts, past, grass, gladness, prosper and gracious. Words with “k” and “t” combined with “s” need special care to articulate those consonants and not lose them to the “s,” as does the “p” after the “s” on “prosper.” One never needs to accent a final “s”—the challenge is to place it concisely and shorten it, rather than allowing it to sloppily extend. A big room needs some silence or time immediately after it, as the “s” sound takes extra time to clear the room before the next word. This time is brief: the goal is not to make your proclamation sound labored, but space is essential for clarity. Remember also to put a schwa “ə” (uh) in between syllables in kindness and gladness.

## Volume As a Tool

Volume is a powerful tool to cue the assembly that it is their turn to sing. The basic plan for all organists should be to play on the swell or choir manuals choosing a soft volume for your space under the cantor. Then, as the standard practice, the organist switches to the great when the assembly enters. This practice works well for any responsorial psalm, Gospel Acclamation, communion antiphon with refrain, or hymn with solo cantor on the verses and all present joining in on the refrain.

It is more difficult to make a large, very noticeable change in volume when playing the piano, particularly an unamplified instrument in a large space. In those cases, the pianist is very used to playing as loudly as he can to fill the room and may still have to play fairly loudly so a cantor stationed far away during their solo verses can sufficiently hear. A difference in volume between cantor solo and assembly still gives the signal and should be attempted.

If an instrumental ensemble is present, the guitars, bass and other instruments should not play (or play softly) during the solo cantor parts, but instead enter as a cue for the assembly, especially for the repeat of the refrain the first time. Solo instrument parts can cover the initial proclamation of the refrain, hindering assembly participation. If a metered, composed version of a psalm is chosen, one that has a beautiful part written by the composer, the solo instrumentalist will still want to play more softly on the verses with a soloist and balance a choir singing the verses at an appropriate volume.

**How loud is loud enough? Or too loud?**

### Singing Our Kinship by Bob Sandford

*We are God's people, the sheep of His flock.  
Sing joyfully to the Lord, all you lands;  
Serve the Lord with gladness;  
Come before God with joyful song. Ps 100*

*(Singing our Kinship continued)*

The more complete answer is everyone who sings their faith at Mass—the auditory testimony of each worshiper shepherds others around them into the heritage and the here-and-now reality of our spiritual kinship.

The first thing I notice is that the proclamation that “we are His people” is immediately followed by “sing joyfully to the Lord.” Singing together joyfully is a spontaneous, heartfelt response to being God’s people. Knowing this, how can we keep from singing? And when we forget, singing together in the Spirit enacts and makes real the spiritual fact: we are God’s people.

The second thing I notice is the image that we are “the sheep of His flock.” Who shepherds us into this realization that “we are His people” and into its sung expression? A quick answer is our music ministers by the power of the Holy Spirit. Shepherding begins with the gathering song, that reminds us who we are and opens our hearts for worship. *(continued next column)*

### BOOK CORNER

Here are two suggestions for some spiritually refreshing summer reading. Both are succinct and easily digestible reflections. Jeremiah takes the book of Ecclesiastes verse by verse. Both discuss Robert Greenleaf’s idea of the servant-leader, which is so helpful to keep in mind as we labor in the Lord’s vineyard. Ideally, we work for the glory of God and to assist His people, not work for praise, compliments or money.

*In the Name of Jesus: Reflections on Christian Leadership* by Henri J. M. Nouwen. NY: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1989, 2002.

*Thirty-One Days to Happiness: How to Find What Really Matters in Life* by David Jeremiah. Nashville, TN: W. Publishing Group, 2004.

## Guitar Tips from Marty Haugen

Using a guitar or guitars to lead worship is an appealing timbre to many people, but guitars in liturgical prayer present several challenges. The range of the guitar played uncapoed and without barre chords is from the E below middle C to around the G two octaves above middle C. First position chords thus are in the same range as male and female voices.

Doubling the range of the singers, “encircling” them as Marty Haugen describes it, provides comfort, but can also confuse dependent singers while at the same time competing dynamically with the choir or cantor singers. If only a guitar is present, a strong

vocal song-leader is indispensable.

If two guitars are in the ensemble, both playing a first position, strummed rhythm pattern presents the challenge of first, playing completely together so the sound is not muddy, and secondly, of being so loud that again the singers and/or other instruments can’t be heard. Preferably one guitarist will play a rhythm pattern and the second one will play up the neck (capo or a higher position) and play more of a color part that emphasizes certain beats, rests or is between phrases with a melodic or rhythmic pattern.

Use the same principle if the ensemble has both guitar

and piano. The pianist might play the melody the octave above at times, which is like adding the 4’ stop on an organ, at other times the guitarist should play up the neck at times, so not to double the voices and the piano part. If the ensemble does not have a bass player (every ensemble should have one), then the pianist might often double or play the bass line an octave lower.

A guitar strummed with a plastic pick provides percussive, rhythmic energy that propels the assembly along with a hymn they know fairly well. Because the pick sound is, by its very nature, percussive, be careful adding *(continued pg 4)*



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today?

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## Bits and Pieces from *The Liturgical Singer* by Barbara Leyden

I recently caught up on three years' worth of issues of *The Liturgical Singer*, a quarterly publication by the Cantor Interest Group within NPM. The eight pages of each issue always contain a variety of topics, such as spiritual growth, the mechanics of singing, psalm proclamation, reading music, technology and much more.

David Dreher wrote one article on the advantages of using Doodle, a scheduling software; and Dropbox, Google, I-Cloud or Office 365 to share music and recordings to his cantors and choir members. A second article suggested several available phone/Ipad apps (applications). Some of his suggestions are: for sight-singing or ear training check out the Apple store Solfege Singing Training (\$39), for vocal training at home try eMedia Singing Method (\$50) from Apple or the Vocal Training Master Class (\$4) and Singing Lesson (\$4.79) from Google Play. If you try out any of these, please let this author know what you thought of the by emailing [bleyden@stjoeshawnee.org](mailto:bleyden@stjoeshawnee.org).

Jaime Cortez gave three main tips for singing Spanish as an English speaker. He emphasizes that Spanish is sung with one short, clear vowel; that each vowel in a Spanish diphthong must be pronounced clearly and rhythmically and that Spanish consonants are pronounced softer than in English. English speakers tend to make every final vowel into a diphthong—listen to someone say or sing “no/know” and you will hear the “oh-oo” as opposed to a pure “oh.” Cortez uses the word “cuerpo” as one to work on articulating the initial “cue” or “koo-eh” as two clear vowels as opposed to melding them together into one indeterminate vowel—and again, make sure the final “oh” is pure and not a diphthong.

If you would like to subscribe to *The Liturgical Singer*, go to <https://npm.org/choir-directors-the-liturgical-singer/>. It appears that you do not have to be a member of NPM National to purchase one. The cost is \$22 a year for one copy; the cost drops if you purchase multiple copies. The NPM Cantor Interest Group is very active and also sends an electronic guide to NPM members that lists the psalms for each season, along with other articles of interest.

### Guitar continued

percussion instruments that sound in the same range. For example, maracas sound a lot like a guitar pick on strings, and if maracas double the rhythm of the guitar(s) it may create more volume than you wish in the singers' range. Unpitched percussion instruments are, in a sense, noise; noise can be delightful, but should be used tastefully and sparingly, rather than constantly.

Marty Haugen's book *Instrumentation and the Liturgical Ensemble*, GIA Publications, 1991, has been an excellent resource for many years. This edition is currently out-of-print, although copies are still available from Amazon and other places. The second edition is called *The Liturgical Ensemble*, available from GIA, G-9522, for \$29.95.

Finally, consider attending one of NPM's Guitar Ensemble summer workshops. The week-long sessions are offered in three ability

levels and provide a wealth of information and practice to make your liturgical leadership more effective. This year's session is at Milford, OH, from July 22-26. Kansas City should host one—how about contacting your chapter director and volunteering to serve on a committee to organize one here? Meanwhile, go to <https://npm.org/featured-content/annual-guitar-and-ensemble-institute/> to learn more about the Institute and register for this year's workshop.

### NPM 42nd Annual Convention in Raleigh, NC

