

Ideas for Music at the Beginning of Phase 2

As we begin to open our churches for public Masses, we have been asked to refrain from congregational singing for the time being, out of care and concern for the health and safety of others. As the research on aerosol spray produced during singing is being analyzed, the prudent approach is to not sing, for now. As we move forward in this ever-changing world, the archdiocese will allow congregational singing when it is safe.

As you prepare for public Masses, make sure you have a plan for wearing masks, sanitizing surfaces, etc. More information can be found at

<https://www.archchicago.org/coronavirus/reopening-training>

Here are some ideas and suggestions for a modified approach to public worship:

- For liturgy, on a temporary basis, one possibility is to follow daily Mass patterns, which typically involve fewer ministers and minimal music.
- Spoken Mass parts for now enables people to participate more fully.
- A couple of options for the psalm:
 - Psalm refrain spoken at the beginning (cantor/all), verses chanted all together by cantor (without the refrain after each verse), refrain repeated (cantor/all) at the end of all the verses
 - Psalm chanted by the cantor in a non-responsorial style, similar to the sequence. The cantor could sing the refrain but it is not repeated. Then, the cantor sings the verses to the psalm but omits going back to the refrain.
- Extended music as people enter and leave seems comforting.
- Consider using familiar music instrumentally – a familiar psalm refrain improvised upon as the cantor moves to and from the place of proclamation for the psalm, an instrumental improvisation on a familiar hymn or song at the entrance and communion processions.
- Parishes might think about using proper antiphons at the entrance and communion, sung by the cantor or spoken by the assembly, preceded or followed by instrumental music as needed.
- Remind people of progressive solemnity – what we are doing now is not the new normal, it's the baby step from nothing that will lead to full participation.
- You might want to consider continuing to record or livestream a fully sung Sunday Mass, separate from scheduled public Masses, so people at home can benefit from a greater sense of celebration and participation not possible inside the building right now.
- Intentional use of silence. This takes catechesis, and one announcement won't do it, but as we wait until public singing is deemed safe, we might form ourselves in silent prayer and meditation during the liturgy: in between the readings, after communion, etc.

- Invite people to hum as the cantor sings. You know your assemblies, and if this approach is worth trying. In some assemblies, hand clapping or other body percussion may work.
- Take this opportunity to offer catechesis on sung liturgy, in the bulletin, on your website or social media feeds, or before Mass: “We’re not singing the Gloria right now, out of respect for the life and health of our assembly, but here’s why we usually sing it: —”.
- See if you can find ways to avoid having the cantor sing “for” the people, singing solo the parts usually sung by the assembly.

A possible scenario for Mass:

This is only a suggestion – do what works best for your own community

Extended prelude music – instrumental (or possibly sacred vocal solo, or a new piece that may be used in the future.)

Entrance Procession: Keyboard instrumental with the antiphon sung by the cantor or recited by the assembly at the beginning or end of the procession (call and response style, since we won’t have worship aids). Or, a short, simple procession from the side without music.

Gloria - spoken

Responsorial Psalm – spoken, OR an option named above

Gospel Acclamation – sung by the cantor without repeat, with or without the verse

Preparation of the Altar – instrumental (and short, since there’s no passing of collection baskets)

Eucharistic Acclamations and Lamb of God - spoken

Communion - Communion Antiphon sung by the cantor or recited by the assembly before or after the distribution of communion, combined with instrumental music

Recessional - instrumental, music continues as people are dismissed

This is a new and challenging time for all of us, but we know the Spirit of God is with us whenever and however we gather. It is also a time that we can be creative in how we use music to serve the people of God. And, we can live in sure and certain hope that our eventual celebrations will be all the richer as we emerge from our musical fast.

Please continue to send your ideas and questions, and blessings on your

ministry,

Wendy Silhavy