

Diocese of Galloway - Music Core Group

20 August 2001

To all Parish Musicians

Dear Everyone

Here's hoping you've all had an enjoyable summer and are feeling refreshed and ready for anything!

With this newsletter we are enclosing publicity materials for the workshops on 15 September and 27 October, and we hope to renew acquaintances and meet some of you for the first time at these events.

PAST EVENTS

The Galloway Music Festival Mass was well attended and enjoyed by everyone present. We were glad that Bishop Taylor was able to join us as Principal Celebrant, and that Father Botter was able to concelebrate. The weather could best be described as '100% cloud cover' - there was just enough rain to bring out a few smiles but fortunately not enough to soak us! The music group consisted of keyboard, flute, violin, viola and six or more (we lost count!) guitars, and the result was a lively and enthusiastic sound. Overall there were slightly less people present than last year (about 60) which is not surprising considering the weather conditions!

FUTURE EVENTS

Saturday 15 September Music Ministry Day with Fr Gerry Fitzpatrick
at St Theresa's (church hall), Dumfries
Fee - £10 (to include materials for the day)
Please bring a packed lunch.

Programme to include psalms, gospel verses and other music for Advent, background to music in the Mass and liturgical music priorities, background to psalms and canticles, Mary music and music for Christmas and the Christmas season. We will end with evening prayer, and the music for this will be prepared during the day. If you would like to join the small group of support instrumentalists, please telephone Nicola on (01465) 714797.

Saturday 27 October Music Ministry Day
at Smithstone House
Fee - £10 (to include soup and rolls at lunch time)

We are pleased that Noel Donnelly will be leading the morning session, and sharing some of his music with us. Noel has been actively involved in Catholic music for many years and is well known as a composer and liturgist. The workshops in the afternoon are not yet finalised but you can guarantee that as always they will be entertaining and interesting!

Booking forms and bulletin notices are enclosed (blue for Dumfries and yellow for Smithstone House) together with posters for both these events. As ever, please will you let your Parish Priest know about the workshops - priests are very welcome to attend.

If possible, please will you let us know if you are able to attend a week in advance of events. For the Dumfries event, there will be workshop booklets (and probably a cassette) and so we need to know numbers to make sure everyone is able to get a copy. At Smithstone House we need numbers for lunch arrangements. Even if a week beforehand you're unsure whether you'll be able to go or not, that's OK, but we'd appreciate a telephone call so that we can make a 'best estimate' of numbers.

Don't forget that we also have a date arranged with Rev John L Bell of the Wild Goose Resource Group - Saturday 19 October 2002 at Smithstone House.

OTHER MUSIC EVENTS AND COURSES

A worship weekend with the Wild Goose Resource Group, 'One in the Body', is being held at Carberry Tower (near Musselburgh) from 1 - 3 February 2002. The WGRG is an expression of the Iona Community's commitment to the renewal of the public worship of the Christian Church. The weekend will be led by Mairi Munro and Alison Adam and will focus on various aspects of worship. Through workshops and discussion, participants will reflect on their own experiences of church worship in an increasingly individualised world, and explore possibilities for enabling people to participate together through music, prayer and creative use of scripture. Carberry Tower is a stately mansion house dating back to 1480 and situated in 30 acres of parkland. The cost is £75 - for more information telephone 0131 665 3135.

Please let us know of any other events you are aware of.

BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS

Worship Today (Spring Harvest)

This book claims to contain the 500 most popular songs and hymns together for the first time! They have been selected using data from Christian Copyright Licensing (Europe) Ltd. On the basis of reports from their 18000 licence holders, CCLE publishes lists of the most popular songs and hymns, and Spring Harvest has used data from these lists (covering the period October 1999 - March 2000) to compile this collection.

The music is well laid out and there are the usual extensive indices including an alphabetical index to titles and first lines, a Scripture index and a thematic index. Many of the accompaniments are more suited to being played on a piano rather than an organ. Guitar chords are of course included.

Giving voice - a handbook for choir directors and trainers, by David Hill, Hilary Parfitt and Elizabeth Ash (Kevin Mayhew)

This book aims to develop training skills in choir leaders (whether the choir is a large professional body or a small ad hoc group), and to build the confidence to bring out the best in a group of singers.

Perhaps it is aiming to cover too wide a spectrum of choir leaders, because if you are leading a large professional body you would probably know most of it anyway, and if you are an amateur leading a small group of amateurs you may find it a bit above your head! The aspects of choir training covered include warm-ups and vocal exercises, the physiology of singing, conducting techniques, group dynamics and psychology, and the preparation of rehearsals and music.

St Mungo's Music

St Mungo's Music are publishing a two monthly newsletter about liturgical music in Scotland. If you would like to receive this, contact the Music Secretary, St Leo's, 5 Beech Avenue, Glasgow, G41 5BY.

MISCELLANEOUS . . .

Do you know about the National Network of Pastoral Musicians? This is an ecumenical organisation for people interested in music in worship. It began in 1996 when 300 musicians gathered in Birmingham for a long weekend conference. It was decided that musicians needed an effective means of communication to be able to keep in touch with what was happening nationally and to find out information about events in their own areas. If you would like to join, send a cheque for £10 (payable to NNPM) to Kathryn Burke, 32 Osborne Road, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 2RJ. This is for 2 years' subscription and you will receive their magazine 'Accord' three times a year.

As mentioned in the last newsletter, we have a copy of 'In the Name of God (Book 2) - a core repertoire for parishes' available for loan. If you would like to borrow this, telephone Nicola on (01465) 714797.

We are beginning to develop a small group of musicians who are willing to visit parishes on a one-off basis and provide informal music for weekend Masses (and give the regular musicians a well earned break). If you are interested in this, please contact us and we will see what we can arrange.

The National Music Advisory Group met again in May and Michael and Nicola attended. The meeting discussed events (past and planned), and other matters related to music in the dioceses. The next meeting is in October.

TO CONCLUDE . . .

We welcome two new members to the core group. George McKeand plays the bagpipes, guitar and mandolin and has led a folk group for the last few years. Gordon Lawrence plays viola and piano, is a parish youth representative, and studies music at the RSAMD junior academy.

As ever, we welcome any suggestions for what the core group should be doing, and ways in which we can support and promote music. We hope very much to hear from you.

If you know that your neighbouring parish has not yet nominated a music contact person, or is missing opportunities to get involved in events being arranged, please talk to them and try to encourage them to get in touch!

Also, if you are receiving this newsletter, and you are no longer involved in music in your parish, please will you let Nicola know so that the mailing list can be updated.

With best wishes, and we hope to see you soon!

The Music Core Group

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