

Diocese of Galloway - Music Core Group

7 June 2004

To all Parish Musicians

Dear Everyone

We're sending this newsletter to reach you before the schools break up for the summer, and are providing information about the Galloway Music Festival Mass. We hope you have a good summer, and there will be another newsletter in August about our planned autumn events.

PAST EVENTS

Saturday 22 May

A workshop was held at St Teresa's hall, Dumfries. Although the programme was the same as in March, in reality the day was very different as there were different people present with new ideas and experiences to share. The morning session was led by Sister Dorothy McCaffrey SND (Religious Education Advisor - primary schools) on music for the combined celebration of Confirmation and First Eucharist. There is great excitement in the parish for the celebration of these Sacraments, and it is important that what is sung is liturgically appropriate and highlights the liturgy of the Word (and in the Easter season this is pointing us towards the Risen Jesus), the rite of Confirmation and the Eucharist. This is an opportunity for people to realise they are in the presence of God, and the congregation must all feel involved.

We were introduced to several of the songs used in schools in the Alive-O programme. Preparation for First Communion follows the sequence of Mass - the Christian community gathers to listen and proclaim the Word of God, to learn to say sorry, and to share the Bread of Life so that they can go out into the world and live a life of love and service.

After lunch, Fr Stephen Motroni led us with reflections on Pentecost, and the Holy Spirit. Singing lifts the heart and mind to God, but we must be careful what we sing and make sure it is appropriate and theologically correct! The power of the Holy Spirit is associated with music at various places in the Bible - in Joshua 24 there is the sounding of the trumpets, the psalms highlight singing, dancing and the playing of musical instruments directed to God's praises, the elders are all holding harps in Revelation 5 v 8, and the bagpipes make an appearance in Daniel 3 v 15!

To close the day, Michael McCulloch and Eleanor Glen Kelly introduced us to some new worship songs and choruses. We learnt these very easily and sung them very well!

Our thanks are due once again to all at St Teresa's for welcoming us, providing us with refreshments, and helping make the day a success.

FUTURE EVENTS AND DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Galloway Music Festival Mass

This will be on Sunday 15 August at 2.30 pm at Smithstone House in Kilwinning (the Solemnity of the Assumption) . Booking forms, and a bulletin notice are enclosed. This will be our fifth open air Mass, and last year we got front page coverage on the Scottish Catholic Observer!

We hope to see as many people as possible present. If you are able to, bring a musical instrument, or simply come along and sing. Some chairs will be available, otherwise bring a rug to sit on. It is not essential to book, but if you did it would help to give us an approximate idea of the numbers who will be attending. However, if you need a power point for a musical instrument, please telephone Nicola on (01465) 714797 and we will do our best to arrange it for you.

A list of the music planned is also enclosed to give everyone the opportunity to practice and to know what music to bring on the day. If you can't find or aren't sure about anything, please telephone and we will try and help sort it out! We will be rehearsing from 1 pm (the Mass starts at 2.30 pm) so that everyone who can be there then will have had the opportunity to try out the music beforehand.

Please invite your Parish Priest to concelebrate the Mass. Bring a picnic for after!

Workshop on Saturday 18 September

We are planning another workshop in Kilwinning on Saturday 18 September. This will be led by Fr Michael Hutson from Lochgilphead (and originally from Cumnock). In the morning he will lead us in reflections on liturgy in general and what we should sing, and the day will end with a celebration of Mass.

Concert on Wednesday 6 October

Ian White will perform some of his music and talk about his faith at a specially arranged concert at Smithstone House on Wednesday 6 October at 7 pm. Ian is a Christian singer with an international reputation and has made many recordings - this is an evening not to be missed.

OTHER EVENTS THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST

The Society of St Gregory's 75th anniversary Music and Liturgy Summer School, 'Breaking Bread', will be held from 26 - 30 July at New Hall School, Chelmsford, Essex. The Eucharist will be at the heart of the summer school, and in the talks and workshops participants will reflect upon and respond to St Luke's account of the events on the road to Emmaus, as they prepare, once again, to recognise the Lord in the breaking of bread and to give thanks. For more information, telephone Mrs Helen Murphy on 01933 680955.

The 5th National Network of Pastoral Musicians' Conference takes place from 29 July - 1 August at Newman College, Birmingham, and is called United in Praise. Their advertising literature describes the Conference as a meeting between Europe and Africa - what can we offer each other? Experience African spirituality, music (and even food). There will be a

fundraising concert, as in previous years, with the accent on involving young people. For more information contact Sue Dean on 0845 456 8392.

The Royal School of Church Music hold events and courses all over the UK. For more information visit the web site at www.rscm.com. Events being held in Scotland include the Dunblane Singing Break (19 - 22 July, directed by Gordon Appleton) and a Summer School in Edinburgh (from 2 - 8 August, directed by Alistair Warwick, an opportunity for clergy, musicians and others who lead worship to look afresh at the role of music).

The Diocese of Argyll and the Isles are holding their annual pastoral music weekend at Kinoull, Perth from evening (Friday 3 September) to after Mass and brunch (Sunday 5 September). If you would like to go, send a £15 deposit (the total cost is £80) to Irene O'Neill, Glenbreck, Stronvaar Avenue, Campbeltown, PA28 6SW. This covers meals and accommodation (probably a double room).

The Methodist Church Music Society (in association with the Royal School of Church Music) are organising a weekend conference, *Worshipping Through Psalms*, at The Hayes Conference Centre, Swanwick Derbyshire from 22 - 24 October. Booking forms are available on the MCMS website, www.methodistmusic.org.

YOUR FAVOURITE HYMNS . . .

We'll go for a modern hymn this time - **I, the Lord of sea and sky**.

The trouble, of course, with selecting this is that the words are in copyright so we can't reproduce them. However, you will all know it, and it can be found in *Hymns Old and New* at 712 or *Liturgical Hymns Old and New* at 376.

The words and music were written by Daniel L Schutte, who is a Catholic and composer-in-residence at the University of San Francisco, and has worked for many years as musical director in American parishes. He writes of this hymn that 'It's meant to lead people to prayer and for people to participate in'.

However, what does it really mean to the 'person in the pew'? How many of us can relate to 'hearing the Lord calling in the night'? *Songs of Praise* have linked it with air sea rescue missions! It's a rousing tune and enjoyable to sing - one way of interpreting its message is that it's encouraging us all to be more active in response to the practice of our faith - summing up its overall message in a single phrase could amount to 'get off your backside!'.

BOOK REVIEWS

Well the first one is a web site . . . www.methodistmusic.org

Its interesting to find out what other denominations are involved in when it comes to music in churches, and this is the web site of the Methodist Church Music Society. Skimming through the web site you quickly learn that they

- have a membership scheme (and publish a newsletter twice a year)
- have an organ advisory scheme (who provide impartial advice about organs including repair and replacement)
- run a training scheme for people with responsibility for leading music in worship
- run an organ and keyboards in worship training scheme
- have a library containing a comprehensive collection of hymn books, and liturgical and general books on music and composers
- organise an annual conference
- do many other things as well!

The Methodist Church Music Society's aim is 'to encourage and develop the use of all forms of music in worship throughout the Methodist Church' - and if their web site is anything to go by, they do a thoroughly good job of it!

The Nation's Favourite Hymns by Andrew Barr

This book includes information about forty of the most popular hymns in Britain, as voted by viewers of Songs of Praise in a poll in 2002. The top forty list itself is quite surprising in places, and there is a mix of old and new. Number one is *How great thou art* and others that are popular in Catholic churches include *Be still for the presence of the Lord* at number five, *Make me a channel of your peace* at number seven, *Be thou my vision* at number sixteen, *I, the Lord of sea and sky* at number seventeen, *Shine, Jesus Shine* at number twenty, *Living Lord* at number twenty eight, *Amazing grace* at number thirty two, *Morning has broken* at number thirty six and *The Servant King* at number thirty seven.

There is a double page spread about each hymn, containing information about origins and authors, and contemporary stories of the parts they have played in peoples' lives.

NEWS FROM THE PARISHES

The St John's Youth Music Group in Stevenston, or 'The Praise Group' as they are popularly called, started, primarily, because there was a space in the music rota and the opportunity was taken to introduce something fresh to the church. Although the young people involved aren't all parishioners at St John's, they all go to St Andrew's Academy and have sung together in many other groups before. Practices started on Thursday evenings in the church, working towards leading the music at Mass once a month. The Praise Group choose every hymn and Mass part carefully so as to produce a Mass that has music from all sources from traditional, rousing hymns to the most upbeat or reflective newer ones. They also like to prepare calming and inspirational choral music for during the Eucharist.

The group has grown from its original five singers to include a variety of instrumentalists including violinists, clarinetists, trumpeters, cellists and guitarists. This gives the music an extra lift and dimension that enhances not only the singing of the group, but that of the

congregation as a whole. The enjoyment that the young people get from the group is further lifted by the huge amount of positive feedback they have received from congregations whether they are in St John's or St Peter's, Park Church, or the nursing home (where their music provides enjoyment and spiritual uplift).

THE CORE GROUP . . . SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING MUSIC . . .

As ever, we welcome any suggestions for what the core group should be doing, and ways in which we can support and promote music. At times it can be hard for us to know whether we are meeting your needs and aspirations or not.

Volunteers to lead workshops are always welcome!

If you know of other people who would like a copy of this newsletter, please copy it for them - or direct them to the web site to read it (www.gallowaymusic.net). Please also show newsletters to your Parish Priest so that he is aware of our activities.

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

The Music Core Group

Diocese of Galloway - Music Core Group
www.gallowaymusic.net

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