

Diocese of Galloway - Music Core Group

20 January 2003

To all Parish Musicians

Dear Everyone

The core group has been busy thinking about events for the coming year, and hopefully some of the workshops in Kilwinning or Dumfries will appeal to most of you.

FUTURE EVENTS AND DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

We have set dates for music ministry days on Saturday 15 March (in Kilwinning) and on Saturday 10 May (in Dumfries). Booking forms and bulletin notices for Kilwinning are enclosed, and to avoid confusion publicity materials for Dumfries will be sent out with the next newsletter at the end of March.

15 March - Kilwinning

In the morning we will be looking at the practicalities and opportunities for providing music for weddings and funerals. What do you need to find out when you attend a wedding rehearsal? What do you do when the family (for either a wedding or a funeral) suggest some music that is inappropriate? We will consider the more usual hymn choices, and hopefully introduce you to some new ideas including psalm settings.

In the afternoon we will have a 'brainstorming' session on alleluias! We will introduce some different settings, and give you the opportunity to share some of your favourites with everyone present.

The topic for the second afternoon workshop will be the metrical index. Do you know what the metrical index (to be found in all good hymn books including Liturgical Hymns Old and New) is and how to use it? If you know the words of a good hymn, but haven't got a tune for them, do you know how to go about finding one?

10 May - Dumfries

In the morning, we are inviting two or three parish priests to speak for a few minutes each about music in the Mass and how they see it and have experienced it. The musicians present will then have the opportunity to ask them questions. We are intending that this should be a sharing of experiences rather than a formal detailed look at the liturgy, and that it will help us to grow in our understanding of the issues involved with music ministry. We held a workshop like this in Kilwinning last year and it was very successful.

The other workshops will be 'repeats' of 15 March - alleluias, and how to use the metrical index.

And later in the year . . .

This year's Galloway Music Festival Mass will be on Sunday 17 August at 2.30 pm at Smithstone House in Kilwinning. There will be the usual rehearsal beforehand. More about this, and the music selected, in the newsletter being sent out early in the summer.

We are also planning for a workshop in Kilwinning on Saturday 25 October. Nothing is confirmed as yet, but we are hoping it may be possible for it to be led by Paul Wellicome of the Society of St Gregory.

OTHER EVENTS THAT MAY BE OF INTEREST

The **2003 Society of Saint Gregory Summer School, 'Grace as From a Fountain'** is from 29 July - 2 August at Worth Abbey (15 minutes from Gatwick Airport). The Director of Music will be Richard Jeffrey-Gray. The SSG summer schools provide a prayerful, purposeful and enjoyable environment in which to refresh and develop liturgical skills, reflect on worship, and experience inspiring liturgy and good liturgical music.

This year's school celebrates the fortieth anniversary of Sacrosanctum concilium, Vatican II's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. The talks, workshops and liturgies are all co-ordinated toward the goal of reflecting on the vision of liturgical renewal set out by this document.

For further information, contact Mrs Helen Murphy, 23 Hawthorne Road, Finedon, Wellingborough, Northants, NN9 5DR, tel (01933) 680955, e-mail helen.murphy@ssg.org.uk.

The **Music and Worship Foundation** are holding a day for musicians and singers '**Music that Works in the Local Church**' on Saturday 8 March 2003 in Tulliallan and Kincardine and Culross parish churches. The keynote address is by John Bell, and there is a choice of workshops. For more information contact Revs J and M Stein, 62 Toll Road, Kincardine, FK10 4QZ or telephone (01259) 730538.

The **RSCM** are organising a two-strand event '**Singing and Conducting**' with a pot luck supper on Saturday 1 March at Cluny Parish Church, Edinburgh. Workshops start at 2.15 pm. While one strand takes part in a conducting masterclass, the majority will revisit or become acquainted with some of the finest music for Lent and Easter. Later, conductors and singers will come together and prepare for the closing service which will be constructed round the pieces sung. (It is hoped that the event will be repeated later in the year in Glasgow). The '**Dunblane Singing Break**' is from 14 - 17 July at Scottish Churches House and Dunblane Cathedral. For more information, contact the RSCM on 01306 872800.

A SPONSORED HYMN SING?

The Anthony Nolan Trust is inviting churches to join in a huge sponsored hymn sing over the weekend of 1 - 2 March (although you can choose another date if this doesn't suit). The Trust exists to match unrelated stem cell and bone marrow donors with leukaemia sufferers, many of whom are young children. The challenge is to sing 50 hymns - non stop! For more information contact Katie McCulloch, The Anthony Nolan Trust, EBS House, 25 Hope Street, Lanark, ML11 7NE, telephone 01555 660388.

BOOKS AND PUBLICATIONS

Sing a New Song to the Lord - Brian Castle

A very interesting book - but only read it if you enjoy this type of thing! It explores the power of hymns, their relationship to culture, and their potential for communicating theology. Background material is presented on the historical development of hymns, and there is a chapter on the last thirty 'explosive' years, when a phenomenal hymn output has coincided with an unsettling time for the Church and the world at large. The use of hymns within the different denominations is also considered.

The best known example of a hymn making a social and political comment must be the third verse of 'All things bright and beautiful' - which for some reason doesn't usually appear in modern hymnbooks! It reads

The rich man in his castle,
The poor man at his gate,
God made them, high or lowly,
And order'd their estate.

Brian Castle argues that the author, Mrs Cecil Frances Alexander, was endorsing the political status quo, and by enabling such words to be sung in church, giving it a 'divine sanction'! In fact Mrs Alexander, who was the wife of the Bishop of Derry (who later became the primate of all Ireland), wrote hymns for children in the Sunday schools in which she taught, to explain the basic doctrines of Christianity. She also wrote 'Once in royal David's city' and 'There is a green hill far away'.

A Guide to the Pipe organ for Composers and Others - Sandra Soderlund

This is an easy to read pamphlet (20 pages plus index) about what a pipe organ is and does. It explains pipe varieties, pitches of pipes, couplers, divisions of the organ etc in an easy to understand manner. It is designed for those who want a basic understanding of the organ and how it is played.

AND A SURVEY!

Many thanks to those of you who returned our psalm survey. A summary of the findings is attached.

It was good to note that out of the eleven parishes responding, all sing the alleluia on a regular basis and most also sing the Gospel verse. (Together with the acclamations of the Eucharistic prayer, this is considered the most important priority for singing in Mass - allowing everyone present to acclaim the presence of Christ in his Gospel).

Over half the parishes responding also sing the Psalm on a regular basis. Slightly more parishes use song/versified settings than chants. The organ is the usual method of accompaniment, but in two of the parishes, guitars are used.

TO CONCLUDE . . . SPREADING THE MESSAGE

As ever, we welcome any suggestions for what the core group should be doing, and ways in which we can support and promote music.

Volunteers to lead workshops are always welcome!

If you have other musicians in your own parish 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 the activities the core group is involved in.

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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