



# The Principles of Selecting Music for the Sunday Eucharist



## Part I – Musical Priorities

Within the celebration of the Eucharist there are many texts which may be sung. Depending on the occasion, the nature of the assembly and the degree of solemnity with which the liturgy is being celebrated, some or all of the texts may be sung. When determining which elements are to be sung, musicians should consider which ones are more important than others.

- **Acclamations**

Of primary importance are the acclamations: the acclamation before the Gospel and the acclamations proper to the Eucharistic Prayer (Sanctus [Holy, Holy, Holy], Mystery of Faith and Great Amen). These are to be sung by the entire assembly during every Sunday Mass.

- **Psalms and Canticles**

In addition to the acclamations, the psalms and canticles ought to be sung at every Sunday celebration. This means that the *Gloria in excelsis* (*Glory to God in the highest*) and the Responsorial Psalm are normally sung at every Sunday Mass.

- **Processional Songs**

When the community or ministers process as part of the liturgical action singing is essential. Two primary moments when the song of the assembly is required are during the entrance procession and during the Communion procession. Other processional moments in the celebration of the Eucharist include the presentation of the gifts during the preparation of the altar, and the recessional of the presider and other ministers. It is fitting to have song accompany these processions. Appropriately, instrumental music may also accompany these processions.

- **Litanies**

Litanies are ideally sung. There are three litanies in the celebration of the Eucharist: the Kyrie (Lord, Have Mercy), the Universal Prayer and the Agnus Dei (Lamb of God).

- **Ritual Dialogues**

(e.g., the Sign of the Cross, greetings, the response to the presidential prayers, acclamations at the conclusion of the Scripture readings, Preface Dialogue, the doxology at the conclusion of the Lord's Prayer, and final blessing and dismissal). Depending on the musical abilities of the presider and the solemnity of the celebration, these may be sung.

- **Sung Prayers**

Depending on the musical abilities of the presider, the presidential prayers (Collect, Prayer over the Offerings, Prayer after Communion, and the Eucharistic Prayer) may be sung, together with the assembly's responses.

During every Sunday liturgy, the following ought to be sung: ***Entrance Song, Glory to God, Responsorial Psalm, Gospel Acclamation, Eucharistic Prayer (Preface, Sanctus, Mystery of Faith, Great Amen), and Communion Reflection.***

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