

Musicians

Prelude

- Make sure you complete a Musician Planning Sheet (<https://docs.google.com/file/d/0B8btU9QgLVqwMGdrQ19tTVU2UEk/edit>) to give to Father prior to the start of Mass.
- Prelude music is encouraged and can support preparation for Mass by the musicians and the Assembly. **Please allow five minutes before the start of Mass for silence and reflection.** Do not start playing music within the five minutes before Mass begins.
- Even if the prelude music is only instrumental, do not use music that reflects another Church season (e.g., No Christmas music during Advent or a hymn that contains the word “Alleluia” during Lent).

Mass

Musicians need be aware that the Priest determines the speed and the flow of the Mass. Musicians support the Mass and the Priest and should always support the flow of the Mass and not detract from it. Personal feelings and personal statements are never acceptable and should never be injected into the Mass.

1. Use “Gathering Hymn,” “Preparation Hymn,” and “Sending Forth Hymn” when announcing the hymn numbers.
2. Make sure the accompanist plays with enough volume for the Assembly to hear.
3. The Cantor should only sing the melody line of the hymns since s/he is assisting the Assembly in singing participation. A Cantor should never sing harmony.
4. Musicians should add to the celebration of the Eucharist and not detract from the celebration. Announcing hymns should be simple – “Our Gathering Hymn is number 909, ‘God is With Us’.” There is no need to say anything else.
5. Begin the hymns immediately when the cue has been given. For example, once the Introduction to the Mass has been read by the Commentator, the musician should immediately announce the Gathering Hymn (unless the Priest has informed the musician(s) that he is going to announce something prior to Mass beginning). Pauses and excessive silence distracts the Assembly and causes frustration with those participating in the Celebration.
6. Do your homework! Look at the parts that the Assembly sings and see if there is notation that the music speeds up or slows down. **Do not slow down during a hymn/Gloria/response unless it is specifically noted in the Assembly’s music.** When a musician uses personal interpretation the hymn/Gloria/response becomes a performance rather than an accompaniment for the Assembly’s signing. The exception: Having a slight ritardando or rallentando at the end of a hymn is acceptable as long as it is slight.
7. Do not announce the Gloria, the Psalm, or any other part of the Mass other than the Gathering, Preparation, and Sending Forth hymns. The accompanist/cantor should never announce the number or page number of these while the Mass is being celebrated.
8. Once Father is in his place by his chair after processing to the front, the Gathering Hymn should conclude. If only one verse has been sung, it is appropriate to sing a second verse. However, if two verses have been sung, conclude the hymn.
9. The Gloria should be sung except during Advent and Lent. In the event you are not able to sing it, make sure Father is informed prior to the start of Mass on the Musician Planning Sheet. If the Gloria can’t be sung, Father will introduce the Gloria.
10. The Psalm should be sung. In the event you are not able to sing it, make sure Father is informed prior to the start of Mass on the Musician Planning Sheet.
11. The first choice of Psalm should be the Psalm of the day that is provided in the hymnal. If another Psalm is chosen, it **must** be one of the recommended Psalms provided in the hymnal (these are found underneath the

given responsorial psalm on any given Sunday). **At no time should the Psalm be a Psalm that is not recommended for the day or a Psalm that states that it is “based on” a Psalm.** Take the time to check this if you are not going to use the Psalm for the day from the missalette. Using a song that is *based* on a Psalm is not the same as the legitimate Psalm for the day. Using something different would be equivalent to changing the text of the readings or Gospel to suite a personal preference.

12. The Gospel Acclamation does not begin until Father signals that he is ready for it to begin. Watch for him to stand and then start the Gospel Acclamation.
13. During Lent, the “Alleluia” is not used. Use a Gospel Acclamation that is recommended for Lent.
14. The Preparation Hymn should last through Father cleansing his hands. It is appropriate to use instrumental music near the conclusion, if needed. Watch carefully: Father does not want the hymn to go into another verse when he is close to washing his hands.
15. During designated seasons (Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter) all churches in the Pastorate should use a common Mass setting (agreed upon at the October musician meeting). This promotes commonality and consistency across the Pastorate.
16. Wait to begin the Lamb of God until Father has opened the Tabernacle and is carrying the Ciborium to the Altar. The “Lamb of God” should be sung while Father begins breaking the Body of Christ (just like when it is spoken).
17. **The Communion Hymn should begin as Father is consuming the Body of Christ.** Do not wait for Father to drink the Precious Blood (or after). Begin immediately.
18. Do not announce the Communion Hymn title or number.
19. The Communion Hymn should last as long as there are people in the Communion line. The Communion Minister who is distributing the Body of Christ (or other specially assigned Communion Minister) will distribute the Body of Christ to all musicians leading the Mass singing when they are sitting in the organ/choir loft. Musicians who are in the organ/choir loft should not descend and be a part of the Communion line since the music should be sung while all in the Assembly are receiving. After everyone has received, musicians *can* descend the stairs and receive at the bottom of the steps and then return to the organ/choir loft.
20. If a larger than normal number of people attend Mass and the Communion Hymn finishes early, repeat it or begin a second hymn. It is always advisable to have a second hymn ready to go just in case you need it. Music should be played/sung during the entire distribution of Holy Communion.
21. After Communion, another hymn can be sung or an instrumental selection can be played as long as it concludes by the time Father goes back to his chair. Silence after Communion is also an option. Do not continue a hymn that was started prior to the musicians receiving Communion. Silence or another hymn is acceptable but stopping then starting a hymn is not advisable.
22. The Sending Forth hymn should conclude soon after Father has left the Assembly. Do not sing more than two verses of a hymn if Father has left the Assembly.

Additional

- Remember to use older, traditional hymns.
- A rule-of-thumb for Mass hymns is to use 3 familiar hymns during each Mass with no more than 1 newer or unfamiliar hymn. Remember that people attend from many different parishes. Using new and/or unfamiliar hymns puts the “brakes” on the assembly singing.
- If you are going to use a new hymn during Mass, practice it starting about 10 minutes before the start of Mass. Stop practicing 3-5 minutes before Mass begins to allow for silence and reflection.
- Resist the urge to over-sing. A screechy voice, shouting voice, or an over-powering voice singing harmony detracts from the Mass and draws attention to an individual rather than focusing on the Mass. Music at Mass is about ministry; not performance.
- Choirs should be used sparingly, otherwise the Assembly believes that it does not need to sing since the choir will do it for them. This does **not** mean that a Choir should never be used; they just shouldn’t be used more than several times per month.

- A musician should never detract from the Mass and draw attention to himself/herself. Excessive movement, laughing, hand gestures, background talking, etc. detract from the focus of the Mass: the proclamation of the Word of God and the receiving of the Body and Blood of Christ.
- If a weekend Mass falls close to a secular holiday, it is permissible to sing a hymn (preferably the Sending Forth hymn) that acknowledges the holiday. For example, the 4th of July being celebrated on a Saturday, Sunday, or Monday offers the opportunity to sing a patriotic song for the Sending Forth hymn. However, if the holiday falls on a Tuesday-Friday, this is too far outside the weekend Mass celebration to have a patriotic hymn being sung. If you are a musician at a week day Mass, however, a patriotic Sending Forth song is acceptable.
- On days that celebrate the Blessed Virgin Mary, use hymns that celebrate Mary. The exception is the Communion hymn which should not be a Mary-related hymn.
- Communion hymns should reflect the theme of Holy Communion. Choose hymns that reflect this. Mary hymns, patriotic hymns, and general hymns should not be used for Communion hymns.
- Do not always rely on the “Respond and Acclaim” hymn selections. It is very simple to look at the bottom of the hymnal pages and choose the Church season hymns that are appropriate for the Mass.
- Solo songs during Mass should be used very sparingly since the assembly should be invited to sing. If a solo is going to be sung, after the Celebration of the Eucharist has concluded is fine. However, the song should conclude when the Priest sits down.

Song forms:

A – An acclamation is a spontaneous joyful vocalization sung by all, accompanied or unaccompanied.

C – a cantillation is a kind of spoken singing, usually unaccompanied, where the melody and rhythm is close to that of speech. It is used when prayers, readings and proclamations are sung instead of recited. Cantillations are sung by the priest celebrant or other minister and conclude with an acclamation of assent sung by all.

D – A dialogue between priest and people is used at the start of the Mass, and to introduce each major part – the Gospel, the Eucharistic Prayer, the Communion, and the dismissal. Dialogues are sung unaccompanied.

H – A hymn is a song of praise with no other accompanying liturgical action. There are only two hymns in the Mass, and they are not always sung. Singing of the “Glory to God” is by the choir or cantor alternating with the people, or entirely by the people or entirely by the choir alone (GIRM 53). If there is a song of praise after communion, singing is by the entire assembly (GIRM 88).

L – A litany is a prayer with a series of invocations or intercessions sung by a cantor or other minister, with a repeated response sung by all.

P – A processional song is one that accompanies another liturgical action. Songs with refrains and a variable number of verses are most appropriate. The beginning and ending should match the liturgical action. Singing is by the choir or cantor alternating with the people, or entirely by the people, or by the choir alone; alternatively, an instrumental solo may be played instead of singing a song (GIRM 48, 74, 87, 313; MS, 36, 66-67).

R – The responsorial psalm is sung scripture with no other accompanying liturgical action. All sing the psalm response at the beginning and after each verse; the cantor of the psalm sings the intervening verses. The texts are prescribed, with options to use the given psalm of the day or one of the common seasonal psalms or antiphons in the lectionary, or a chant from the Graduale Romanum or the Graduale Simplex (GIRM 61).

http://www.liturgydow.org.au/assets/guidelines-music_within_the_mass.pdf for “Song Forms” and the below chart. Faith and Life Liturgy Notes, vol 1 no 10 (December, 2012)

Importance of Music Parts During Mass (a visual guide) / 5 Star Scale

	Ritual Element	Priority	Form	Summary of Purpose & Timing (cf. GIRM paragraph)
Introductory Rites	Entrance Song	★★★★	P	Foster unity; reflect on the day, feast or season. Start before ministers begin procession; end when ministers are in place and any incensing is finished. (47-49)
	Sign of Cross & Greeting (Kyrie / Penitential Rite)	★★ ★★☆	D L	Symbolise unity of priest and assembly with Christ. (50) Pray, acknowledging God's grace in Christ. Allow a time of silence before sung invocations. (51-52)
	(Sprinkling Rite)	★★★★	P	(Option for Sundays, especially in Easter season.) Recall the grace of baptism. Start when priest begins sprinkling; end when priest returns to sanctuary. (51)
	(Glory to God)	★★★★☆	H	(Sundays and major feasts, except in Advent and Lent.) In union with the Spirit, praise the Father and Son. Agree with presider a time and signal to begin. (53)
	Opening Prayer	★★	C	Pray, reflecting on the day, feast or season. (54)
Liturgy of the Word	1 st Reading	★	C	Proclaim / reflect on the Word in the Old Covenant. (59)
	Responsorial Psalm	★★★★	R	Reflect on Christ in the songs of the Old Covenant. Allow silent period after reading before beginning. (61)
	(2 nd Reading)	★	C	Proclaim / listen to the teaching of the Apostles. (59)
	Gospel Acclamation	★★★★★	A/P	Acclaim the arrival of Jesus Christ. Start when minister stands; allow time for procession of book of Gospels; end when minister reaches lectern. (62-64)
	Gospel Greeting	★★	D	Rouse the assembly to listen to the Gospel. (60)
	Gospel	★	C	Proclaim / listen to the life and teaching of Jesus. (60)
	Homily			Break open the Word. (65-66)
	(Creed)	☆	C	(Sundays and Solemnities) Proclaim our faith. (67-68)
	Prayer of the Faithful (Offertory Song)	★★☆ ★★★★	L P	Pray for the church, the world, the needy & us. (69-71) Reflect on the people and their gifts, the day, feast or season. Start immediately after the Prayer of the Faithful; end no earlier than the placing of the gifts on the altar and no later than the washing of hands. (74-76)
Liturgy of the Eucharist	Prayer over the Gifts	★★	C	Pray, reflecting on our gifts & Christ's offering. (77)
	Preface Dialogue	★★	D	Rouse the assembly to praise & thanksgiving. (78-79)
	Preface	★★	C	Thanksgiving for all God has done for us. (78-79)
	Holy Holy	★★★★★	A	Praise God in union with the praise of heaven. (78-79)
	Eucharistic Prayer	★★	C	In union with Christ, confess the great works of God, and offer sacrifice. Recall the mystery of the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. (2) Invoke the Holy Spirit to transform the gifts, that they may become the body and blood of Christ, and that we in turn may become one body in Christ. Pray for the Church and the reign of God in the world. Give glory to the Father, through the Son with the Holy Spirit. (78-79)
	Eucharistic Acclamations	★★★★★	A	Acclaim Christ's death, resurrection and return. (78-79)
	Great Amen	★★★★★	A	Give assent to the whole Eucharistic prayer. (78-79)
	The Lord's Prayer	★★★	C	Pray to the Father in the words of Jesus. (81)
	Sign of Peace	★★	D	Rouse the assembly to peace and communion. (82)
	Lamb of God	★★★★☆	L	Pray, acknowledging God's grace in the Lamb. Begin when the presider begins breaking the bread. (83)
	Communion Song	★★★★	P	Express our joy and unity; reflect on the day, feast or season. Start when the priest receives the sacrament; end when the last of the faithful receive the sacrament, usually the choir and the musicians! (86-87)
	(Song of Praise)	★★★	H	(This is optional, after a time of silent prayer.) In union with the Spirit, praise the Father and the Son. (88)
	Prayer after Communion	★★	C	Pray for the fruits of the mystery just celebrated. (89)
Conclusion	Blessing & Dismissal (Recessional Song)	★★ ★★★	D P	Rouse the assembly to Christ's mission. (90) Express our mission to the world; reflect on the day, feast or season. Start immediately after the dismissal; end when the ministers have left the church. (MS 36)

The Revised Marriage Rite

Mandated use starting on the Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph (December 30th, 2016)

- Sing the Gloria (a refrain-style Gloria is acceptable with Cantor singing the verses)
 - Put the music for the refrain in the program
- Acclamations are promoted followed by congregational response (Amen). A single sung pitch is acceptable.

Expanded Introduction

There is a great deal of new theological and pastoral commentary in the introduction, which clocks in at 44 paragraphs versus 18 in the old *Rite of Marriage*. These are lovely and important passages, which uphold preparation for the vocation of marriage as a critical opportunity to evangelize in the face of “prevailing attitudes towards marriage and the family” (no. 20). And in an exhortation that is absolutely imperative for parishes today, we are urged to broadly catechize both children and adults on the meaning of Christian marriage and parenthood, while also providing concrete continued support to those who are already married, so that spouses will be able to preserve their marriage and “daily come to live a holier and fuller family life” (no. 14).

The Gloria Is Prescribed

The ritual book now prescribes that the Gloria be sung at wedding Masses, even on weekdays of Advent and Lent. This change (already included in the new *Roman Missal*) effectively elevates the nuptial Mass to the same level as a liturgical Feast. Although choosing a musical setting can be tricky when the assembly hails from different parishes, this nonetheless provides a tremendous opportunity to encourage singing as a means to foster a heightened sense of solemnity. (See above bulleted item.)

Instructions for the Choice of Readings

The new rite specifies at least one scripture reading that “explicitly speaks of marriage” must be chosen for use at weddings, whether inside or outside of Mass. These readings are now designated by an asterisk from among the usual full range of options for wedding readings (to which has also been added one Old Testament and four New Testament readings).

Moreover, throughout the Easter Season, the eschatological account of the wedding banquet of the Lamb from the Book of Revelation (Rev 19:1,5-9a) should now be used as the first reading instead of an Old Testament option – a fitting change that highlights the paschal context.

Congregational Additions within the Actual Marriage Rites

There are minor modifications in the wording of the questions and the consent. For instance, there’s a new phrase inserted in the second form of the consent: “...in sickness and in health, *to love and to cherish* until death do us part” (this actually aligns the American vows with what’s traditionally been used in England).

However, there are two substantial additions that involve the congregation. The first comes after the Reception of the Consent, when the following acclamation is prescribed:

Priest/Deacon: “Let us bless the Lord”

All: “Thanks be to God.”

“Thanks be to God” is an expression of approval and joy that is also prescribed during the rites of ordination and religious profession, thereby establishing a liturgical connection between marriage and other vocations.

The second addition is the option for the assembly to sing “a hymn or canticle of praise” after the Blessing and Giving of Rings. Heartfelt singing here seems to be an acknowledgment that this moment – after the vows and rings have been exchanged – invites us to pause and celebrate what we have witnessed, rather than proceed unceremoniously to the rest of the liturgy.

Cultural Adaptations

Two new cultural adaptations have officially been incorporated as options within the English marriage rites. These customs, popular in Hispanic and Filipino communities, previously appeared in the United States’ 2010 Spanish edition of the *Ritual del Matrimonio*.

The first is the Blessing and Giving of the *Arras* (coins), done after the exchange of rings. The priest or deacon blesses the *arras*, and then the spouses give them to each other “as a pledge of God’s blessing and a sign of the good gifts we will share.”

The second is the Blessing and Placing of the *Lazo* or the Veil, which can occur before the Nuptial Blessing. The *lazo* is a wedding garland or cord that is used to symbolically bind the couple together, while a veil may also be placed over the bride’s head and the groom’s shoulders. Both convey the indissoluble union of the husband and wife.

Cultural authenticity would recommend that these options be exercised primarily by communities in which they are traditionally practiced. Their inclusion here is a recognition of the expanding role of the Spanish-speaking Catholic community in this country.

As we welcome the *Order of Celebrating Matrimony*, may we heed the words of Pope Francis in *Amoris Laetitia* (no. 213), encouraging couples “to make the liturgical celebration a profound personal experience” and to appreciate the sacrament as a sign of “the covenantal love and union between the incarnate Son of God and his Church.”

September 8, 2016, *What’s New in the Marriage Rite?* by Brian W. MacMichael,
<http://churchlife.nd.edu/2016/09/08/whats-new-in-the-marriage-rite/>

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30. The chants to be sung during the Rite of Marriage should be appropriate and should express the faith of the Church, with attention paid to the importance of the Responsorial Psalm within the Liturgy of the Word. What is said concerning the chants applies also to the selection of other musical works.