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NPM Cantor Newsletter

National Association of Pastoral Musicians (NPM) <npsmsing@npm.org>

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Welcome to Advent & Singing Through the Mass in a Year!

As we begin the new liturgical year A, may the following inspire and enhance your journey through the beautiful season of Advent:

- **A psalm reflection;**
- **Tips and tools to grow in spiritual, ministerial, and music skills;**
- **Readings links;**
- **Formation opportunities;**
- **Certificate updates;**
- **Facebook link to connect with your peers; and**
- **Musings on Music!**

I hope you also will enjoy this launch of a seven-part series of Tips & Tools articles titled **"Singing Through the Mass in a Year!"** Responding to survey requests—and with props to Fr. Mike Schmitz for inspiring the series title—the articles will share a special focus in each issue. Providing tips and tools specific to the many various elements we sing at Mass, from the Entrance to the Recessional, this first issue will share ways to grow in cantor ministry as you sing, pray and lead **litanies, the Kyrie, and the Lamb of God.**

We are always looking for new voices to share with all our readers. If this is the year you'd have time to share your wisdom, please reach out to me at sglovelette@gmail.com.

This issue's "Musings on Music" comes from our Pope Emeritus. Please, will you send your favorite music quotes to me for future issues?

As you prepare musically for Christmas, be sure to take time for silence and solitude. Let this beautiful Advent season direct your heart and mind to Christ's Second Coming as well as to the celebration of our Lord's birth. Stay alert and ready as you sing **Come, O Wisdom, O Lord of Israel, O Root of Jesse, O Key of David, O Radiant Dawn, O King of All Nations, O Emmanuel, Come!**

In Christ,

Susan Groeschel Lovelette
Cantor Colleague
NPM Cantor Newsletter Editor



The Good, Familiar, and Beautiful

by Georgie Tamayo Clemens

We enter the season of Advent with the assurance that the Son of Man who comes to earth as a tiny baby is the Lord of all. Psalm 122 brings us into the beginning of this new church year: "Let us go rejoicing, to the house of the Lord." The green vestments are gone, and the purple and pink of the Advent season prepare us for the celebration of the Incarnation. How blessed are we to be able to rejoice in the house of the Lord as a community of believers!

In reflecting on the psalm and the thought of going joyfully home, my mind wanders to Advent traditions of family gatherings and the anticipatory happiness they evoke. One home was that of my husband's grandmother ... a legend in her hometown of Pascagoula. ([Continue Reading](#))



Readings for Advent

This **USCCB Daily Readings page** will take you to the first Sunday of Advent on November 27. The great solemnity and the popular feast are:

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Thursday, December 8
(Holy Day of Obligation)

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Monday, December 12

Sign up to receive each day's readings by email [here](#), and let the **Book of the Psalms** enhance your anticipation of our Lord's coming.

For a special treat and some deep digging, consider chanting the seven **O Antiphons on December 17-23**. In Latin, these precursors to "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" reveal a cryptic message on December 23: "Tomorrow I will come!"

Tips and Tools



Tips and Tools: Spiritual



"If I've told you once, I've told you a thousand times!"

by Lyle D. Peters

My mom and dad probably used this line with me at least a thousand times while I was growing up. Maybe you heard it, too. While I have no empirical data to prove it, I would say 90% (or more) of children have heard that phrase, or a very similar one in their childhood. Perhaps you have heard it in a job or ministry situation as well.

In my early days as a convert to the Catholic faith I was somewhat put off by repetitious prayer forms like the Rosary, litanies, and the like. (***Continue Reading***)

Litanies ... *Kyrie, eleison*

by Benjamin Balleza

As we begin a new liturgical year and three-year cycle, part of our cantor ministry preparations should include time reflecting on the season itself. What are we celebrating during this time and what does that mean for us? As we also begin "Singing Through the Mass in a Year," here are some tips and tools to build your skills in singing, leading and praying litanies, the *Kyrie* and the Lamb of God. [*\(Continue Reading\)*](#)

Tips and Tools: Ministry



Tips and Tools: Musical

Litanies: Grace-Filled Repetition in Song

by Michelle Rego

Cantors serve in a variety of roles within their ministry, and an important one is that of leader of sung prayer.. This role is best displayed in the form known as the litany. But the word "litany" can have a negative connotation, sometimes referring to a long list of tedious repetitions that

provide no interest to the listener. To move away from tedium and toward meditative beauty in a litany, cantors can apply a few simple vocal tips.

[*\(Continue Reading\)*](#)



Formation Opportunities

NPM Celebrates St. Cecilia

We are pleased to share a prayer resource for the Feast of Saint Cecilia on November 22, 2022.

We hope that this resource helps you take 10-15 minutes out of your day to pray, reflect and meditate on the Word of God. This prayer resource is made for individual or group use; feel free to forward this to your parish choir, cantors, or other music ministers. Whether you choose to use this resource by yourself or with a

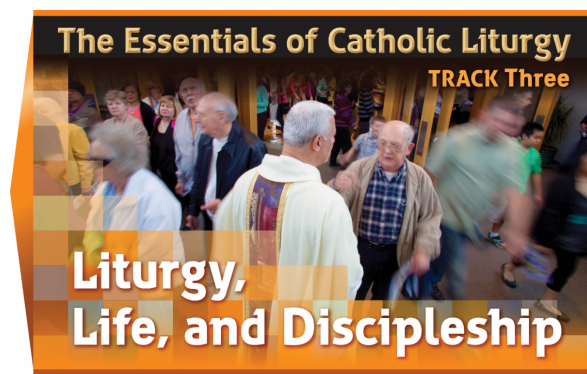


group, we hope you find inspiration and a renewed sense of Christ's presence in your life.

Don't forget to join NPM in a "Prayer Choir" on the Feast of St. Cecilia! All NPM members will join in prayer wherever they are, at 12 pm local time on November 22. Thousands of pastoral musicians will take a moment of prayer that day, asking for the intercession of St. Cecilia, the patroness of music.

St. Cecilia Prayer Resource (PDF)

The Essentials of Catholic Liturgy: Track Three



Registration for Track Three of *The Essentials of Catholic Liturgy* is open! This six-week virtual course begins on **Monday, January 23, 2023**.

In partnership with the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, Liturgy Training Publications offers *The Essentials of Catholic*

Liturgy—a series of foundational courses perfect for music directors and music ministers. Track Three: Liturgy, Life, and Discipleship, explores the way our faith call us into action and how to bring the liturgy into our daily lives.

Contact events@ltp.org for questions or visit [LTP's website](https://ltp.org) for more information.

Register for the Essentials of Catholic Liturgy: Track Three



A Message From Dr. Gail Hartin

Advent is a time of promise, hope, and renewal. What will the coming year bring? How can we shape our experience as liturgical musicians and as members of the Body of Christ? Is this the year to consider earning one or

more NPM Cantor Certificates? To learn how to affirm your skills as a cantor and enrich the spiritual aspect of your ministry, visit [Cantor Certificate Programs – NPM](#). If you've received a Certificate, consider earning the next one! The process is virtual and the adjudication is carried out in your own parish, so no travel is involved. Our team looks forward to walking with you on this journey.

Congratulations to **Basic Cantor Certificate** recipients Sarah Huie, Mary O'Neil, and Debbie Rogers of Orland Park, IL, Jeffrey Kwong of San Francisco, CA, and Dave Rybczynski of Baltimore, MD.

Dr. Gail Hartin

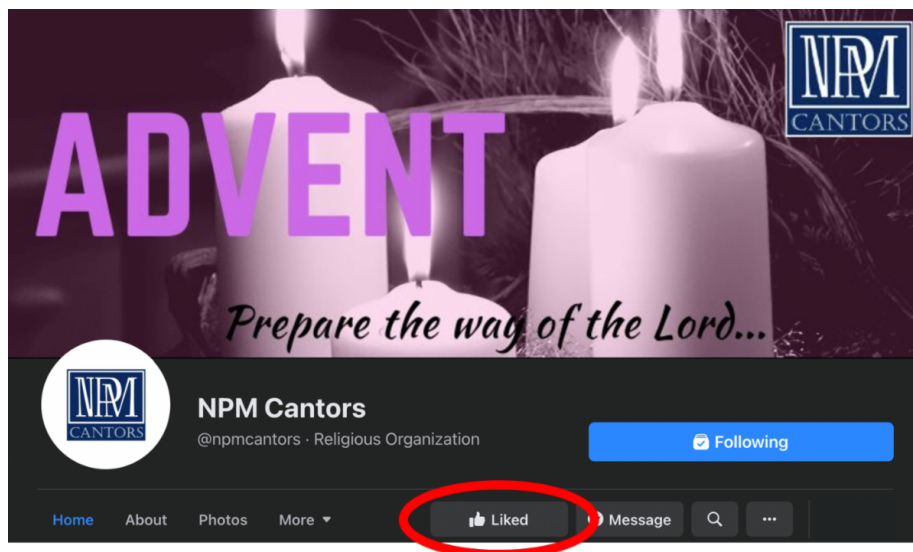
Cantor Certificate Committee Chair

Certificate Program Testimonial: The BCC Process was a Gift!

by Ann Grupe
Alexandria, VA

Being able to sing in support of the liturgy is such a privilege. But particularly when you haven't had any professional training, it can be difficult to understand the potential of your talent and how you might be able to improve. The Basic Cantor Certificate program was such a wonderful, supportive experience. Instead of being a source of stress or anxiety, the BCC adjudication process was a true gift. Professionals provided amazing guidance and concrete strategies and evaluated my singing at a level that I'm not able to do for myself right now. They inspired me to be much more self-aware of my vocal sound, my breath, and even the way I carry and care for my "musical instrument," this body that the Lord gave me. They've also given me such encouragement to continue to develop and improve so that I can, in return, share that talent in service through music. I am so grateful to have had this opportunity!

**Have you visited our Facebook page lately?
"Like" us @npmcantors!**



Find Certificate recipient news, prayer resources, and the Newsletter preview! Respond to our polls about the latest trends in the ministry of cantors around the country.

Musings on Music

"The singing of the Church comes ultimately out of love. It is the utter depth of love that produces the singing. "Cantare amantis est", says St. Augustine, singing is a lover's thing. In so saying, we come again to the trinitarian interpretation of Church music. The Holy Spirit is love, and it is he who produces the singing. He is the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit who draws us into love for Christ and so leads to the Father."

Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI
The Spirit of the Liturgy
 (Ignatius Press, 2000, p. 142.)



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