



# Newsletter

The monthly joint publication of the NPM Arlington and DC chapters  
*Fostering the art of musical liturgy*

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**St. Cecilia, pray for us!**



Do you have an event, article or idea to share with other Chapter Members? Please submit all articles and inquiries by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month to: Katie Evans at [music@ccjgs.org](mailto:music@ccjgs.org). All submissions subject to review. Thank you.

# DIRECTOR'S CORNER



Happy New Year! As we enter this new year of 2022, we near the mark of 2 full years of this global pandemic. How far we've come from those early days of 2020! And yet, sometimes it seems we haven't gone very far at all. In my own ministry, Christmas seemed a bit

more "normal" this year, although attendance was still lower than 2019 and more people are wearing masks again. Nevertheless, Christ is born, and the world rejoices!

January is often a time to reassess our lives (new diets, resolutions, and goals), and recover from holiday stress or overindulging. In my parish January is also when we begin calendar planning meetings for the upcoming program year (August through July) with (at least) two, four-hour meetings! The department heads (Music, Youth Ministry, Religious Education, Pastoral Care, the school, etc.) review week by week scheduling needs to ensure everyone has the spaces they need for ministry. As you can imagine, in the weeks between Christmas and these meetings there are several off-the-books negotiations between staff members to try to find wiggle room for conflicting events. It is both tiring and exciting! Tiring because it can get overwhelming staring at the digital calendars for so long and looking back at notes from years past to be sure we haven't forgotten anything. Exciting because our parish is so busy, reaching out to so many in our parish and community to share our faith. As you can imagine, with the pandemic continually evolving, we also need to at least discuss the "what if's" as we go.

How can we reassess what our chapters are doing for pastoral musicians in the Archdiocese of

Washington and the Diocese of Arlington? In these past two years we've tried virtual programming, and recently been able to gather in person. Many of us are stretched thin in our church positions or in our other day jobs. Families are trying to balance pandemic restrictions with "normal" school, family, and work activities. How do we continue to serve our parish communities and grow our own skills if it seems like we're operating day-to-day?

In his Christmas address, Pope Francis reminds us it is important to dialogue with one another; to be open to those around us:

*The Word of God, who created the world and who gives meaning to history and to humanity's journey, became flesh and came to dwell among us. He came like a whisper, like the murmur of a gentle breeze, to fill with wonder the heart of every man and woman who is open to this mystery.*

*The Word became flesh in order to dialogue with us. God does not desire to carry on a monologue, but a dialogue. For God himself, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, is dialogue, an eternal and infinite communion of love and life.*

*By the coming of Jesus, the Person of the Word made flesh, into our world, God showed us the way of encounter and dialogue. Indeed, he made that way incarnate in himself, so that we might know it and follow it, in trust and hope.<sup>1</sup>*

As we begin this new year and we plan and reassess for the year to come, may the joy and peace of the Christ Child bring us calmness and hope in our hearts.

- Tim Lewicki, Arlington Chapter Director

<sup>1</sup> "URBI ET ORBI" MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS

## SINGING WELL: "GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO!"

by Michelle Rego (re-printed with permission from NPM Cantor Newsletter).



Many of us will lead our congregations in robust renditions of "Angels We Have Heard on High," in which the ever-famous chorus "Gloria in excelsis Deo" will be proclaimed from the rafters. After all, the Gloria is the ultimate Christmas carol! But these words can present a host of singing challenges for cantors. From the sheer length of the melisma on the "Glooooooooooooooooooooo" vowel, to the quick attempt to fit in the remainder of that word ("ri-a"), to the often-debated pronunciation of "in excelsis," one can find a lot of vocal mishaps. Even the word "Deo" is too often mispronounced, with too much emphasis on the "ay" portion of that vowel.

Here are some vocal tips to keep in mind when singing this beloved phrase:

1. **Tank up:** before you start the GLORIA chorus, make sure you take a singer's breath—from the diaphragm, not just the lungs. As you sing the melisma on "Glooooo...", use your well-taken breath as though you were gently blowing out a candle from far away. A deep breath, combined with consistent air pressure as you exhale, is a must for singing long phrases such as this.
2. **Use an open "O" vowel** when singing the melisma. If you hear any "ha," "ho," or any "h" sounds while singing this syllable, that means your throat is tight, and your voice will sound choppy or breathy. Relax your throat and use the breath support instead to move your "O" vowel forward through the phrase.
3. **Keep the "r" of "Gloria" out** of the picture until the last second, and then lightly roll or "flip" the "r" rather than make it a "voiced" consonant. If you are not able to use your tongue to roll or flip the "r," you can replace it with a very light "d" sound: "Glo-----dia".
4. **"In excelsis"** is pronounced, "een eggshellsis" with the accent on the "shell" syllable. Love the "eggshell!"
5. **"Deo"** is pronounced "Deh-oh" with the accent on the "De" syllable, (as opposed to "DAY-O" which is part of an entirely different song!).

Why, you might ask, are these tips important, when most of the congregation will sing the same chorus any old way they want to? As a cantor, you not only lead the singing, but you MODEL good singing technique with your posture, your eye contact, your body language, and, of course, with your voice. Singing this angelic chorus correctly and with proper technique will give your congregation both a visual and aural example to emulate, even if they're not fully aware of it. Remember to sing with joy, and your parishioners will, too. Let our "Glorias" be heard all over the world this Christmas season!

About the Author: Michelle Rego serves as the Director of Music at Saint Mary, Our Lady of Grace Church in Saint Petersburg, Florida. A nationally known consultant and clinician in the field of church music, Ms. Rego is also a published author of a first book, entitled THE CHURCH MUSICIAN'S SOUL SURVIVAL GUIDE. [www.michellerego.com](http://www.michellerego.com) or [blog.michellerego.com](http://blog.michellerego.com). Get in touch at [MRegoReatini@msn.com](mailto:MRegoReatini@msn.com).

# CHRISTMAS RE-CAP

## Thy Perfect Light - Christmas Concert 2021

<https://youtu.be/P19UtVOBOxo>



The Choir of the Basilica offered a one-hour Christmas Concert that aired on Youtube Dec. 22, in the Crypt Church of the National Shrine. Peter Latona, Music Director of the Basilica, conducted Thy Perfect Light: a Choral Meditation on our Lord's Nativity. Some of the works include Warlock's Benedicamus Domino, Shepherd's Carol by Bob Chilcott, and beautiful female duet included in Verbum Caro by Heinrich Schutz. Ben

LaPrairie, Associate Director of Music, played a rousing Bach Canon on Von Himmel hoch, da komm ich her, BWV 769.

## Nine Lessons and Carols

Sunday Dec. 5, 2021

<https://youtu.be/BNrT8jt6P70>

The Cathedral of St. Thomas More, Arlington, Va. The Cathedral, under the direction of Rick Gibala, rang in the Advent season with a traditional Lessons and Carols evening, including The Cathedral Choir, the Youth Choir, and Handbell Choir. Some of the carols

include Joseph's Song, a contemporary piece by John Shevlin for the Youth Choir, Joseph Dearest, Joseph Mine, arranged by Raymond Herbek for Handbell Choir, and the yearly commissioned piece Advent Carol with music by Rick Gibala and text by the Rev. Peter Scagnelli scored for choir, organ and handbells.



## St. Pius X Christmas Eve Contemporary Mass in Bowie

<https://youtu.be/6FTyLmi0LbU>

SPX states "Our vision is to form disciples, in Bowie and beyond, who joyfully live out the mission of Jesus Christ." SPX livestreamed a Christmas Eve Mass with dual screens for words, A Professionally filmed Christmas Message, contemporary prelude music with worship band and worship quartet. This parish has projected screens for the assembly, dually used on the live



stream, as well as a Children's message during the homily shared with a female staff member, and a homily series that interweaves a message monthly with the readings. Their Tech for Worship Coordinator is Patrick Skerpon.

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



## **Organ Recital - Paul Hardy - Cathedral of St. Matthew, DC**

January 9, 3:30pm: <https://youtu.be/ioR6O9oHell>

Cathedral Organist Paul Hardy begins our 2022 Concert Series with a recital on our Lively-Fulcher Organ, featuring works of J.S. Bach, Joseph Jongen, Maurice Duruflé, and Jonathan Scott. About the artist: Paul Hardy has been the Principal Organist of the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle since 2000. He also assists the musicians at the Basilica of the National Shrine as organist and carillonneur. Paul studied organ with Dr. Robert Grogan.

## **Virtual Cantor Retreat: RESCHEDULED!!**

January 16, 23, 30 at 7:30pm

LTP is offering a 3-part online retreat series for cantors in January 2022: "In the Midst of Our Storms: A Virtual Retreat for Cantors". It offers music, art, poetry, and reflection, exploring who a cantor is in the presence of God, inviting cantors to encounter the risen Christ, and revealing how, through their ministry, they grow as contemplative disciples who accompany others on the journey of faith. Led by Roc O'Connor, SJ, this is a perfect gift for a fellow cantor - or yourself! [Register Here](#)



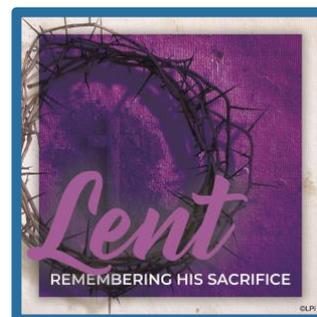
## **The Romeri Duo – St. Thomas More, Va**

Feb. 18 at 7:30 pm

Father-son pair, John Romeri (organ) and John Romeri II (flute) are welcomed back to St. Thomas More in Arlington. Their repertoire ranges from baroque sonatas to beautiful orchestral works transcribed for the organ and flute. Enjoy the many colors of the pipe organ and the exquisite beauty of the flute all in the sonic splendor of the Cathedral.

## **Save the Date: NPM DC Chapter Lenten Retreat** Saturday March 12, 2022

St. Rose of Lima, Gaithersburg, MD, guest speaker Timothy Johnston, ADW Office of Worship. Come join us on a Saturday morning where we will prepare for the season of Lent and Holy Week. More details to follow!



## NPM NATIONAL

### Lunchtime Concert Series:



Every week, NPM holds Thursday Thoughts at 3! Here are the latest and greatest in case you missed it! The videos are also archived and can be viewed [here](#).

[In Winter and Waiting \(by Joshua Frilling\) \(Lunchtime Concert Series\)](#)

[A look back at Christmas from 2020: Virtual Choirs!](#)



[Ministry Monday #182: Simple Ways to Improve This Advent \(Part 2\)](#)

[Ministry Monday #177: Authenticity in Liturgy \(with M. Roger Holland II\)](#)

## MEMBERSHIP



### Which membership is best for you?



**BASIC** membership is \$39. This is also a good option for those who feel philanthropic about our organization and want to continue supporting us.

**STANDARD** membership is \$119. For those planning liturgies, professional growth opportunities, receive *Pastoral Music* magazine, and are likely to want a discount on attending conferences.

**PREMIUM** membership is \$169. For Directors of Music Ministries Division (DMMD). They receive all the above-mentioned benefits, as well as access to more premium content and the colloquium, among other professional events.

*It is vital that you choose your local chapter in order for us to be notified of your registration and receive a portion of your dues to support local events.*

We encourage you to take the leap and register for your national membership at [www.npm.org/membership](http://www.npm.org/membership)



### A Prayer for Life

Father and maker of all,  
 you adorn all creation  
 with splendor and beauty,  
 and fashion human lives  
 in your image and likeness.

Awaken in every heart  
 reverence for the work of your hands,  
 and renew among your people  
 a readiness to nurture and sustain  
 your precious gift of life.

Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ,  
 your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the  
 unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.

Prayer taken from the Catholic Household Blessings and Prayers, Revised Edition (Washington, DC: USCCB, 2007), 365. Copyright © 2007, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, DC. All rights reserved.

### The Board of Directors for DC and Arlington

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