



Choral Workshop

with

Michael Kemp

Saturday, March 14, 2015



Michael Kemp is an internationally respected choral clinician, having conducted more than 400 workshops and festivals for over 40 years. He has been a presenter at several NPM National and Regional Conventions. His music is published with Augsburg, Choristers Guild, and GIA. Michael's book, *The Choral Challenge: Practical Paths to Solving Problems*, received rave reviews in the *Choral Journal* (April 2010) and *Choristers Guild*. His most recent book, *Innovative Warm-Ups for the Volunteer Choir*, was written with choral directors in mind, and includes warm-ups designed to improve a choir's sound. For more information about Michael Kemp go to his website www.michaelkemp.org.

Participants will sing for Our Lady of Mercy's 5 pm Mass. All are welcome to attend that Mass and sing and pray along with the participants in the workshop.

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DIRECTOR'S CORNER



I hope your Lent is proceeding peacefully and productively. Here are a few NPM activities I want to be sure you are aware of.

Choral Workshop

Our Choral Workshop experience with master conductor Michael Kemp is on Saturday, March 14, 10am-6pm at Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church, 9200 Kentsdale Dr. Potomac Md. (less than 10 minutes from the River Rd. exit of the Capital Beltway.) Participants will prepare a program of choral repertoire and sing at Our Lady of Mercy's 5pm Mass. All are welcome to attend that Mass, to sing and pray with the choir and members of Our Lady of Mercy Parish. If you have questions about the deadline and your attendance, please contact (DC/MD) Charlene Dorrian at mcdorrian@yahoo.com or (VA) me, David Mathers, at dmathers@stmaryfred.org. We want to maximize participation and at the same time make sure you have time to prepare the music.

Please help spread the word to your colleagues and friends about this event which NPM is providing to enhance our choral and vocal skills, encounter some new repertoire, and continue to build a community of musical excellence leading sung worship in our parishes!

NPM Convention

Grand Rapids, July 5-10

This year's convention is sure to be an amazing experience! Please see the page in this newsletter concerning registering for the convention and consider participating in the group registration organized by our chapters. Let us know if you have any questions.

Future Programming

We want to hear from you! If you have ideas, thoughts or suggestions about what our NPM chapters could be providing for you, let us know. This could be a specific speaker, or a session on wedding music, more social gathering opportunities, or even an event to address professional concerns. Let us know. All our board members are happy to be contacted. NPM is for you!

Snowy Mardi Gras

Our Annual Shrove Tuesday lunch was, due to very bad weather, an intimate – though joyful – event. We are likely to schedule a “make-up” date in Easter Season for all who wish to gather. Stay tuned!

David Mathers

NPM Arlington Chapter Director

Be sure to visit the Washington, D.C. and Arlington Chapter Websites for the latest information on Chapter happenings, registration forms, and events:

www.npmdc.org
www.npmarlington.org

Chapter Dinner at NPM National Convention in Grand Rapids *Washington, DC and Arlington Chapters*

Plans are underway for Arlington and Washington, DC folks to gather for dinner at Bobarino's on Wednesday, July 8, at 5:45pm. Further details will be published in next month's newsletter

Plan to join us in Grand Rapids!

IN SEARCH OF AN EDITOR



Our newsletter is a joint publication of the DC and Arlington Chapters, published 10 times a year. Current editor Jim Wickman has faithfully served for three years, and, in addition to his duties as at Georgetown University, now serves as Chair for NPM's National Committee on Education. Jim will complete his work as editor with the June 2015 Issue.

The newsletter is our primary source for getting information about chapter activities to members and local parishes. If you think you could serve the music ministry in our region by editing our newsletter or just want to know what's involved, please contact the Arlington Chapter Director, David Mathers (dmathers@stmaryfred.org /540-373-6491, x 217) or DC Chapter Director, Charlene Dorrian (mcdorrian@yahoo.com / 301-384-5796).

38th Annual Convention
National Association of Pastoral Musicians
“Called to Hope and Joy: Let the Servant Church Arise”
July 6-10, 2015 – Grand Rapids, Michigan
De Vos Place Convention Center

All of the details on how you can be part of this wonderful week are below!

<http://www.npm.org/EducationEvents/convention/ConventionBrochure.pdf>

Is an NPM Convention for you?

YES If you are a pastoral musician: director of music ministries - psalmist - cantor - bishop - priest - deacon - seminarian - choir director - ensemble leader - organist - keyboardist - guitarist - player of another instrument - youth pastoral musician - music educator - or anyone seeking time away in a retreat environment filled with prayer, filled with music, filled with the support of other ministers.

Is there a local Chapter member discount?

YES – Before you send in that registration form, we hope you will consider registering through the local chapters (Arlington & DC are considered as one). The Chapter Discount is the best available, even better than the \$295 early bird fee:

\$293 - for 10-19 members

\$276 - for 20-29 members

\$259 - for 30+ members

Please note:

1. Again this year there is a \$20 discount if you choose an Electronic Program Book
2. Registrant must be a parish/individual member of **both** National AND the local chapter (Arlington/DC).
3. Only one discount per registrant (e.g. cannot be combined with Clergy/Musician Duo)
4. Chapter discount is not available on Youth, Daily, Companion, or Child registrations

Here's what you do:

1. Complete a registration form (available at www.npm.org)
2. Make a check payable to NPM/Arlington (\$293* - plus any extras you've chosen)
3. Mail both to Anne Shingler, 3146 Woodland Lane, Alexandria, VA 22309 by May 6.

*If 20 or more sign up with us, you will receive a refund in the mail.

Questions, including how to join your local chapter? Please email

npmarlington@gmail.org

Celebrating Funerals in Our Churches - *A Follow Up*

Last month we asked for your thoughts on the following questions:

1. *Should there be a tasteful welcome and preparation by the cantor/song leader a few minutes before Mass? Do you have an example to share with your fellow musicians?*
2. *Are we asking too much by using hymns and songs? The funeral repertoire is pretty standard around here, yet even those pieces may not be familiar to all.*
3. *Should we focus on singing the dialogues, psalm response and service music, with instrumental music played instead of sung hymns? Yes, a communion hymn should be sung, but that's a subject for another discussion.*
4. *Last fall a beautiful funeral Mass was celebrated at the Cathedral in Montreal for hockey legend, Jean Beliveau. Words of Remembrance were delivered right after the Greeting, at the beginning of the liturgy instead of at the end. Interesting? What do you think?*

Here are the first three responses we received. They are being published anonymously so that no parish is identified.

First Response: I think a tasteful welcome and preparation by the cantor/song leader a few minutes before Mass is very helpful. There are often many people new to the parish. A welcome and preparation time helps people feel more at ease and comfortable with the way things are done at this church. Also, the folks who come out for funerals generally want to do something for those who are grieving and want to express their own grief. Singing and participating is spoken prayer fits the bill.

After "Happy Birthday," I'm not sure if I can think of any music that is familiar to a great number of people than funeral repertoire. I think hymns are fine, and of course short responses and acclamations. Having notes in front of people does help. Do they know where to find the music in the hymnal?

I can certainly see how one might think having the Words of Remembrance at the beginning of the liturgy would help draw people together and focus them, but first we need to try the rite as it is written. Too often I have witnessed a spoken response in place of the Song of Farewell. I think that putting the Words of Remembrance right after the Greeting might feel like we are placing the deceased rather than Christ at the center of our liturgy.

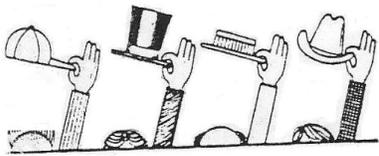
Second Response: For funerals, I sit down with every family and 99 % want music. But music in their minds are hymns, not responses. So 90 % of the time, I do the liturgically correct thing and sing all responses, but I notice that they participate much more on the hymns. Occasionally if there is a time issue with the cemetery, I will sacrifice Mass parts for the hymns requested.

It's obvious that the words and melodies of songs resonate comfort to them much more than short sung responses. I almost always use Mass Of Creation because it is so universally well known. But *Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God of hosts* doesn't comfort them like *Amazing Grace* and *How Great Thou Art*.

I am all about the comfort. So do the hymns burden them? In my opinion, "no." Very rarely, after they have asked for music, do they desire to have anything sung. So we do responses and throw in a solo. At my church, most of my funerals are for the elderly who are African American and Caucasian, folks who have been in the parish from its beginnings.

Third Response: I do think that it is helpful to have a brief and tasteful welcome by the Cantor a few minutes before the funeral Mass. It should not include a lot of rehearsing. If any, it would only include a "heads-up" about any sung responses that might come as a surprise. It should also include brief hospitality notes, such as a word of Welcome and where guests may find the "necessary room". Our goal is to minister to the bereaved, and that means doing what we can to help them feel "at home" as much as possible.

I have always asked the families of the bereaved if they or their dearly-departed have any special requests for music, i.e. songs that have meant a lot to them, and that are appropriate to a funeral Mass. If many Protestants will likely be in attendance, I have no qualms about drawing from that repertoire as long as the song choices are in keeping with Catholic theology. This approach tends to invite more singing. I do like the idea of using instrumental music at transition points if the family has stated that they either do not have any preferences for sung hymns or if they declare that they are not a family that sings. Anything we can do to add the solace of beauty to ease their pain is a good thing.



HATS OFF!

The following choirs have provided music for the TV Mass for Shut-ins, celebrated in the Crypt Church of the Basilica of the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC, and broadcast on WDCW TV each Sunday at 10:30 a.m.

St. Peter Parish 9 a.m. Music Ministry, Olney, MD.
 St. Catherine Labouré Parish Contemporary Ensemble, Wheaton, MD

Want to become a member of NPM National?

There is a membership drive happening right now for the National Membership in NPM. Please join if you are not already a member. See this link for more information:

<https://www.npm.org/member2.html>

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