

Diocesan Music Ministry

A vibrant music ministry is vital to any parish liturgy. This holds true for the *Diocesan* Music Ministry which serves diocesan liturgies where Bishop is main celebrant. Diocesan liturgies celebrated by Bishop are to clearly demonstrate the diversity of our diocese — evident in all the liturgical ministries and most especially in the music provided by the Diocesan Music Ministry (choir and instrumentalists). For this reason, it is necessary to constantly improve our Diocesan Music Ministry, to increase the choir in number, to expand their repertoire, and to develop an appropriate instrumental group.

In August of each year, a schedule of diocesan liturgies and their corresponding Diocesan Choir rehearsals is sent from the Office of Worship to parish Directors of Liturgy and Music and to the current Diocesan Choir. With this schedule is included a request to help publicize the Diocesan Music Ministry with the aim of expanding the number of singers and instrumentalists. There is an appeal to scout for talent, to invite new people to come lend their talent and time in prayer to the God of all creation and the giver of all gifts and talents. A Diocesan Music Ministry should include singers from every parish to be truly a Diocesan Choir; the rich diversity of cultures in our parishes should be represented by the choir. Choir members should be of every age from school age students to senior citizens. There should be skilled instrumentalists lending their varied sounds to liturgical prayer. We have all experienced the uplifting sounds of a full choir with instruments when our spirits and prayer soared.

The reality is that there is not representation from every parish and every culture in the Diocesan Music Ministry. There is a real need for instrumentalists and instruments of every kind. (The Office of Worship has a set of congas and bongos just waiting to be sounded.) There is a large repertoire of music on hand but a need for more persons who can read and sing parts. More tenors and basses are necessary to round out harmonies.

Everyone has packed schedules. There is hardly enough time or energy to squeeze in one more commitment. That is why the Diocesan Music Ministry is free to choose which diocesan liturgies they can participate in. Rehearsals take place two Tuesdays before a liturgy from 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM at St. Anthony Cathedral Basilica Chapel — intense rehearsals reviewing the familiar and learning new music. There is a final rehearsal one-hour before each Mass.

The Diocesan Music Ministry is blessed that last year new members joined lending their talents as singers, cantors, and flautist. The challenge is to continue this growth to be sure there is a full choir for every diocesan liturgy with Bishop. To be part of the Diocesan Music Ministry, participation in a parish choir is NOT a requirement. What is required is a desire to offer praise to God through music. To sing with the choir one must be able to carry a tune; this is determined by a short audition. To play an instrument with the choir, one must be sufficiently skilled in the instrument to enhance the music; this also is determined by a short audition.

To find out more, please call Rosalind Sanchez, Director of the Office of Worship, at 409-924-4321. You may also email rsanchez@dioceseofbmt.org. The gift of your talent is welcome!

Let every instrument be tuned for praise.
Let all rejoice who have a voice to raise.
And may God give us faith to sing always.