



## Encouraging Liturgical Participation Through Music

### Building the Faith in your Music Ministry

#### Introduction

The Disciple Maker Index Survey offers parishioners the opportunity to provide their feedback on their parish and the Sunday experience. These questions can help your parish understand opportunities to develop in creating a vibrant liturgy experience. One of these statements is: “My parish helps me grow spiritually by offering music that deepens my desire to participate more fully in the Sunday liturgy”. The survey is asking how strongly we feel about this statement from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

The keys to a vibrant Sunday experience are the three “H’s”: Hospitality, Homilies and **Hymns**. The music portion is grounded in scripture and in tradition. In fact, through the Holy Spirit we are compelled to lift our voices. As song leaders, our objective is to be drowned out by the singing of the congregation. Unfortunately, the music ministries at many parishes are struggling with a lack of congregational participation.

The following provides an overview and specific strategies for **growing your music ministry in their faith** so that they can help develop the faith of fellow parishioners..

#### Recognize synergies

Actively seek out and recognize the synergies between ministries for a greater good. An example of that would be funerals, where many ministries come together for family support and comfort. This reduces the concept of ministry silos.

Look too for synergies with other parishes and faiths.

#### How To’s:

- ❖ Study and get to know all the parish ministries. What do they do and how might the Music Ministry benefit from connecting with them?
- ❖ Be open to support requests, but be transparent on your bandwidth. Do not overextend yourself.
- ❖ Recognize your role in a synergy and do not look to take the opportunity over.
- ❖ Ask other ministries for support. Don’t wait for them to ask you.
- ❖ Make sure that ministries understand what you do and what you are looking for. This can be helpful in recruiting efforts.
- ❖ Build and develop relationships with other Music Directors. Joint retreats, concerts, fundraisers and other opportunities are available. Also, look to gain insights and techniques from others, as well as sharing your own.



## Missionary Discipleship

Look at your ensembles and the ministry through the lens of **Missionary Discipleship** with each as a Small Faith-Sharing Group. Prayer & Share moments are wonderful offerings prior to each Mass and at rehearsals. So many stories of how members felt comfort during tough times. It also is key to reminding us why we are serving and to whom we give the glory.

Support each other as we meet people where they are and accompany them on their faith journey. Understand that we are growing in our faith (constantly). What are we doing when we are not rehearsing or serving at Mass?

### How To's:

- ❖ Identify Music Ministry Members who are comfortable with leading prayer.
- ❖ How comfortable are you?
- ❖ Explore different prayer styles (e.g., Ignation, Spontaneous, Formal, Petition, etc.).
- ❖ Consider the prayer style "PAL" (Praise, Ask and Listen). Thank the Lord for his support, offer intentions, and then a moment of quiet to listen.
- ❖ Encourage sharing of missionary discipleship stories and/or opportunities, challenges.
- ❖ Recognize how the musical offerings tie to the weekend readings/lessons.
- ❖ Pose the question: "What will be our role during this Mass in welcoming, encouraging and affirming parishioner's faith journey?"

### Prayer Resources:

- ❖ Pray as You Go app (daily guided reflections/Ignation style) - <https://pray-as-you-go.org/>
- ❖ Breviary (Liturgy of the Hours and more) - <https://www.ibreviary.org/en/>
- ❖ Bible Gateway (searchable database - enter "hope" and every citation from the Old to New Testament are provided - so many amazing uses) - <https://www.biblegateway.com/>
- ❖ iRosary - <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/irosary-catholic-rosary/id301340979>
- ❖ Rediscover (confession, prayers, answers to common questions) - [http://rediscover.archspm.org/rediscover\\_news/rediscover-app-version-2-0-now-available-download/](http://rediscover.archspm.org/rediscover_news/rediscover-app-version-2-0-now-available-download/)
- ❖ My Parish App (prayers, readings, parish news...) - <https://myparishapp.com/>
- ❖ [Formed.org](https://www.formed.org/) (faith formation: videos, age sortable, books...) - <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/formed/id1212963367>



## Develop a Vision/Values/Mission for the Music Ministry

Development of a Ministry Vision, Values and Mission is helpful on a number of fronts. Why are we necessary? How do we conduct ourselves? What is our hope? These identifiers assist in recruiting as well as a way to keep everyone focused on Christ and not on ourselves.

### Model:

One model from the Music Ministry at Our Lady Star of the Sea in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL ([olsspvb.org](http://olsspvb.org)):

- ❖ **Vision:** Offering our God-given gifts to provide music that encourages full engagement not only in liturgy, but in living-out our faith.
- ❖ **Values:**
  - *Christ-centered ministry* – To ensure that all we do is in line with Christ’s teachings and example.
  - *Inclusion* – To provide a creative, encouraging environment that allows musical talent to be recognized and offered at liturgies across a variety of musical styles.
  - *Humility* – To understand that we are the accompaniment to the liturgy and not to detract from the Altar.
  - *Musical Excellence* – To give Jesus our best.
- ❖ **Mission:** Combining our ministry values and musical gifts, we will attract, develop and serve as music ministers who will, in turn, enhance the celebration of the Mass and other liturgical celebrations and to support the congregation in singing, so that all who attend services will be inspired and engaged in their faith.

Examples of when behaviors or decisions tie to these areas, especially values, are communicated often for reinforcement.

### How To’s:

- ❖ Develop a Ministry Leadership Team (4-6 members).
- ❖ Review the parish mission, values and vision. Look for how the Music Ministry can support these.
- ❖ Ask the Pastor for his input.
- ❖ Review the General Intercessions of the Roman Missal for direction on the purpose of music at Mass ([usccb.org](http://usccb.org)).
- ❖ Select values that will help you move through challenges (e.g., ego, laziness, self-orientation, etc).
- ❖ Use for on-boarding new members as well as recruiting potential members.
- ❖ Publish on the Parish Website and other appropriate media.