

Music Ministry Ideas & Insights – Liturgy Re-Opening Considerations

Music is certainly important to our liturgical celebrations as it attempts to lift the soul and express our faith. Each parish needs to consider the following as they begin to return to Mass in limited numbers while observing the required physical distancing.

Minimal Music

- ✦ Consider – Light instrumental as parishioners are seated, Opening Song, Gospel Acclamation, light instrumental for the consecration, Communion Song/Communion Antiphon/Meditation, light instrumental for Closing Song
- ✦ Select music that is widely know (at least the refrain)
- ✦ Do not announce music (not actively encouraging singing), simply offer it
- ✦ Parishioners should wear masks through-out with the exception of receipt of the Eucharist
- ✦ Keep music length tight to match the Altar movements
- ✦ Keep the Closing Song light instrumental so that the parishioner dismissal can be easily heard
- ✦ Mass should be kept shorter to allow for transitions and cleaning
- ✦ Prior to all Masses invite the parishioners to “sing in their hearts” and to not sing at this time since singing is a greater risk than sneezing.

Minimal Musicians

- ✦ Consider pre-recorded music (either licensed recordings or pre-recorded by Parish Musicians)
- ✦ Consider – An Organist/Pianist/Guitarist with a possible Cantor/Song Leader
- ✦ Formal Choirs should not be used at this time unless required distancing from each other and the parishioners can be ensured
- ✦ Consider not providing music at all the Masses

Care for the Musicians and Music Area

- ✦ Wear masks, Keep Social Distancing (paper masks that are breathable are recommended as some clothe masks can cause dizziness due to carbon dioxide buildup)
- ✦ Wear masks when not singing
- ✦ Use Sanitizing Wipes, Soap & Water, Rubbing Alcohol on microphones & instruments (as manufacturers recommend)
- ✦ Singers project lightly (turn-up the gain on the microphones)
- ✦ Keep piano lids down (mic the piano)
- ✦ Be mindful of the musician’s stamina across Masses
- ✦ Use only musicians who truly want to serve and are not “At Risk” (if they are nervous/concerned do not push them)
- ✦ Debrief the musicians after each weekend regarding their comfort levels and suggestions

Be Creative

- ✦ Virtual Offerings
- ✦ Word Projection (for later phases)
- ✦ Providing licensed music copies electronically (for later phases)
- ✦ Have musicians use apps to develop their voices/skills
- ✦ Regularly connect with your musicians, forming them as a Small Faith-Sharing Group
- ✦ Reach-out to fellow Music Directors to compare notes

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Sample Liturgy at Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church – May 16-17, 2020

- ✦ Meditative pre-recorded music as parishioners are entering (20-minutes approximately), intended to provide a sacred and calming atmosphere
- ✦ Announcements echoing the information provided via multi-media all around the process and care for all present
- ✦ Music Director announced to “sing in your hearts” message prior to starting the Entrance Song
- ✦ Piano/Cantor – Sung Entrance Song (no invitation or announcement of the hymn)
- ✦ With the exception of the Gospel Acclamation, all other responses spoken
- ✦ Light instrumental for the preparation of gifts (sole collection basket used as parishioners entered/exited)
- ✦ Piano/Cantor – Sung Communion Song and a Communion Meditation offering
- ✦ Light instrumental for the Closing Song (to allow parishioners to hear usher directions on dismissals)
- ✦ Total Mass time approximately 45 minutes