

April 3, 2008

Dear Cantors,

**THANK YOU!** Great job everyone on the past months of music ministry. I have heard comments from parishioners of the improvement among cantors and how there is a more secure projection coming from each of you. Thank you for all of your efforts.

**PRAISE:** If you haven't heard it enough lately, please know how much you are appreciated and how extremely important your ministry is in the prayer life of St. Raphael Church. It's not just getting up to the ambo and singing the correct words and notes – it's about communicating prayer.

**IMPORTANCE OF YOUR MINISTRY:** I cannot stress enough the importance of your being well-prepared. It has been my goal to provide you with music menus well in advance, rehearsal opportunities –whether it is with a group or one on one; providing copies of Liturgical Singer for more insight to your ministry; and giving personal encouragement and praise. On rare occasions only, were there small changes in the music menu.

**SCHEDULING AND SUBSTITUTES:** Since I will be on maternity leave April 15th – July 10<sup>th</sup>, Jennifer has graciously provided me the latest Cantor Availability Form. She is not the one who schedules you. The scheduling is done by Keith and me. If you need to find a sub, please don't call Jennifer...it is *your* responsibility to do that and to let Keith know by calling 630-355-4545, ext. 119 or by email: [keith.kwiatkowski@gmail.com](mailto:keith.kwiatkowski@gmail.com). You may also email my address at [vgiuliani@st-raphael.com](mailto:vgiuliani@st-raphael.com). If you do not have the latest cantor contact information, ask Jennifer.

**MUSIC:** As you noticed, I stopped making Cantor tapes. I wanted to know you and your individual voices and your abilities. If you can't learn the music on your own, you either need to get help individually or call us to schedule a rehearsal, other than the group rehearsal, well in advance of when you minister. Please do not cantor if you do not know the music – it will not invite prayer.

**DRESS CODE:** Women, please wear tasteful blouses, shirts, or sweaters and *nothing* tight, no spaghetti straps, no off the shoulder, and/or anything that could detract from prayer. Jackets/blazers are encouraged. Pants and skirts must be tasteful, and nothing shorter than above the knee.

Men, please wear shirts with collars and/or a jacket/blazer. Sweaters – OK with a collared shirt under and tasteful, neat pants/trousers.

Men and Women, please wear no shirts/tops with writing on the front.

**WHERE TO STAND:** Let the assembly have its voice. You do not need to be singing loudly into the microphone when the assembly clearly is singing out, such as on a familiar hymn, psalm, or mass parts like Mass of Creation or Mass of Glory. This church is blessed with a participating congregation. Please, respect that, and encourage sung

prayer with your beautiful faces and gestures...you are not Vanna White on Wheel of Fortune. Be simpler with your gestures...sometimes a nod of the head will do just fine. All the above said - remove yourself from the altar in the following places: After the Gospel Acclamation, don't stay at cantor stand for the reading of the Gospel, go and stand and your pew spot.

If the Mass parts are well-known, such as Mass of Glory or Mass of Creation, do not stay at the cantor stand. Rather, look to the congregation, smile and sing as you direct your attention to the ALTAR. It is preferred that the cantor is not on the altar at all during the Eucharist Prayer. The entire attention should be on the altar- not you. You have plenty of time to sing the Memorial Acclamation or Great Amen (given it is a new setting or unfamiliar) if you prayerfully walk as the priest intones his part. "Let us proclaim the mystery of faith" or "Through Him, with Him..."

Do not stand at the altar for the singing of the Lord's Prayer- ever.

Where did I get my information? Much of it comes from the document listed below.

**Sing to the Lord: Music in Divine Worship - issued by the USCCB, November 14, 2007** (Copyright 2007, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. All rights reserved.)

SMILE! Get your faces out of the music and COMMUNICATE the prayer with the people!

THANK YOU!

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