

Why do we periodically change the Mass musical settings?

For centuries, the Liturgy of the Holy Mass has been interlaced with a variety of “music settings” for the Mass parts (i.e., the Kyrie, Gloria, Gospel Acclamation, Sanctus, Agnus Dei, etc.). Before the Second Vatican Council (SVC), these settings were often a Latin Gregorian chant.

When the third revision of the Roman Missal was introduced worldwide on the first weekend of Advent 2011, all Catholics (from the pews to the instrumentalists and choirs) were introduced to revised prayers and accompanying musical settings also.

The settings’ changes ranged from minor wording adjustments in the “Sanctus,” or “Holy, Holy, Holy” to greater, in-depth revisions in the “Gloria.” All versions of the memorial acclamation — now known as the Mystery of Faith — were also revised, with the most familiar version of “Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again” being replaced entirely by new text.

Prior to and after the introduction of the third edition of the Roman Missal, there were and continue to be close to a dozen Mass music settings, such as: Mass of Christ the Savior; Mass of Renewal; the Heritage Mass; Mass of the Resurrection; Mass of Glory; the Celtic Mass; the Christmas Mass; the Mass of Spirit and Grace; and many, many more.

During recent past years, the OLV Parish predominantly using the musical setting for the Mass of Christ, the Savior. Typically, Catholic parish churches utilize at least 4 differing Mass settings (which generally coincide with the changing liturgical calendar season during the liturgical year: Advent, Christmas, Ordinary Time, Lent, Holy Week and Easter).

In order to better hear, experience and embrace the plethora of the universal Catholic Church’s musical treasures, starting the weekend of September 30/October 1, 2017, we began transitioning into the Mass of Creation and other varied, Mass music settings—and continue to this day.

Adapting to Change

While routines and habits occupy various parts of our human thoughts and routines, it is natural at times to us to feel a bit reluctant or resistant to change. Change simply for the sake of change, is meaningless. Change for the sake of good however, is inspiring and revelatory. We are, by nature, creatures of habit. However, left to our own demise, we can become prisoners of our habit(s)—healthy and unhealthy. That’s why God created us as creatures of change and adaptation also. Change helps us to explore and experience other God-given gifts and opportunities.

Catechetical Opportunity

Utilizing a small variety of the available Mass music settings throughout the year, provides parishes an opportunity to take stock of the Church’s abundance of musical repertoire and helps to ensure that the parish leadership is meeting the needs of the worshipping community of faith.

In closing, let us give joyful praise and thanksgiving to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords!

(SR: (Our Sunday Visitor)

<https://www.osv.com/OSVNewsweekly/ByIssue/Article/TabId/735/ArtMID/13636/ArticleID/7662/Parish-music-ministers-prepare-for-major-Roman-missal-changes.aspx>)