

- “Servers, Lectors, Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, Commentators, and members of the choir also exercise a genuine liturgical function. They ought to discharge their office, therefore, with the sincere devotion and decorum demanded by so exalted a ministry and rightly expected of them by God’s people.”
(Sacrosanctum Concilium, No.29)

- “Singing is one of the primary ways that the assembly of the faithful participates actively in the liturgy.”
(Sing to the Lord, No. 26)
- “So that the holy people may sing with one voice, the music must be within its members’ capability. (Sing to the Lord, No. 27)

The A.C.T.S. Retreat movement is a positive and unique weekend experience that renews and encourages our faith as a “call to action” within our parishes through the power of God’s Holy Spirit. While the structure of each A.C.T.S weekend retreat is very flexible according to the wishes of each director, the “return Mass” and the music prepared must remain true to the liturgical norms established by the Bishops of the United States in the official document “Sing to the Lord”.

*Diocese of Victoria in Texas
Liturgical Commission
P.O. Box 4070
Victoria, Texas 77901
1-361-573-0828*

It is very important that the music team of each particular weekend retreat use hymns, psalms, acclamations, and songs that are in the parish hymnals. If music that will be used is not in the parish’s existing hymnals, a worship aid should be provided. If a worship aid is necessary, proper copyrights should be secured for the printing. This is the responsibility of the director of the music team or someone appropriately appointed by the director of music.

The participation of the assembly is essential.

- “Within the gathered assembly, the role of the congregation is especially important. The full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else.....”
(Sing to the Lord, No. 11)



A.C.T.S. Retreats

Guidelines for appropriate music for the “return Mass” on the A.C.T.S. Retreat Weekend in the Diocese of Victoria, Texas

Liturgical musicians are first of all disciples and only then are they ministers!

All musicians should receive appropriate formation based on their baptismal call to discipleship that grounds them in a love for and knowledge of scripture, Catholic teaching, liturgy, and music. Training and formation equips them with the musical, liturgical and pastoral skills to serve the Church at prayer.

- *Faith grows when it is well expressed in celebration. Good celebrations foster and nourish faith. Poor celebrations may weaken and destroy it.*

(Music in Catholic Worship, No. 5)

- *“to determine the value of a given musical element in a liturgical celebration a threefold judgment must be made: MUSICAL, LITURGICAL, AND PASTORAL.”* *(Music in Catholic Worship, No. 25)*

Ministers of music for the A.C.T.S. teams must consider the faith community when planning music for the “return Mass”. The music should be appropriate for the particular Sunday liturgy being celebrated. It should have a connection to the gospel or the readings for that Sunday. If the music team repertoire does not include these necessary elements, then time must be taken to learn new music that would better serve that particular Sunday liturgy

- *“Musical selections and the use of additional instruments reflect the season of the liturgical year or feast that is being celebrated.”* *(Sing to the Lord, No. 112)*



- *“But although all liturgical music should be good, not all good music is suitable to the liturgy.”*

(Music in Catholic Worship, No. 29)

- *“The role of music is to serve the needs of the Liturgy and not to dominate it, seek to entertain, or draw attention to itself or the musicians.....the primary role of music in the Liturgy is to help the members of the gathered assembly to join themselves with the action of Christ and to give voice to the gift of faith.”* *(Sing to the Lord, No. 125)*

If music is too loud or performed poorly, it can create distractions and cause a lack of participation for the community gathered.

Acclamations such as: the *Gospel Acclamation, Holy Holy, Memorial Acclamation, Great Amen, and Lamb of God*, should always be sung, preferably from a Mass setting that is familiar to the assembly gathered. When it is required, the *Gloria* should also be sung.

All pastoral musicians should take part in ministerial formational opportunities offered by the Diocese namely, music showcases, workshops, Pastoral Institute courses, studies, conferences, or other local workshops, as well as national and regional ministry and pastoral music association’ study weeks, and conventions pertaining to music and the liturgy. Those who are leaders of musical teams should especially attend so that they may be properly trained to fulfill their roles as pastoral leaders of liturgical music and ministry.

When returning to a parish for the “Sunday Return Mass”, the Pastor and/or Presider, Lectors and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion of that parish should be considered. If there is someone on team or one of the retreatants who is a Commissioned Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, they may serve with permission of the Pastor. This is because the “return Mass” is not an “A.C.T.S. Mass”, but instead, it is the Sunday Mass of the entire parish.