

1 Kings 3:5, 7-12

Ps 119: 57, 72, 76-77, 127-128, 129-130

Rom 8:28-30

Mt 13:44-52

“O Lord, my God, you have made me, your servant,” a musician in your church; “but I am a mere youth, not knowing at all how to act. I serve you in the midst of the people whom you have chosen.” Give your servant, therefore, an understanding heart to lead your people in heart-mindful musical prayer. And so with that paraphrase I consider the many years God has gifted me with the opportunity to musically minister to our parish family.

Having always wanted to help the faithful pray, I realize that all I can do is try to anticipate what musically might affect our community worship in a meaningful way. The challenge is real and consistent because we are a consistently varied people. My up-time may be your down-time. Your week of difficulties may contrast my week of successes. What is on your mind may make it difficult to think about God and yet you persist in seeking Him and giving Him thanks and praise. Like the disciples of the gospel, you have answered “Yes” to Jesus’ query; “Do you understand all these things?”

Fr. Martin O’Hara, for whom one of our gathering halls is named and also who invited me into this ministry of music some 39 years ago (yes, you can blame him☺), often began sentences with “You do not know...” It seemed to me at those times he was struggling to find words to help us understand the true message of Christ, to understand the real love He has for us, the real purpose for our being. “You do not know...” the depth of God’s love. “You do not know...” what God has done for us. “You do not know...” what awaits us in the Kingdom of Heaven. Perhaps partly due to his Irish roots, Fr. O’Hara believed music helps to connect minds to hearts and thus makes it possible for us to hear the word and see the action of salvation in new ways.

We do catch glimpses when we hear Jesus tell us “The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field.” “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant searching for fine pearls.” “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net thrown into the sea, which collects fish of every kind.”

“We know that all things work for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose.” This has been made manifest by those who have chosen to be a part of the ministry of music with me. The blessing is two-fold, the friendships we share in our common faith and the music that is enhanced by their contribution of time and talent. Surely you have also been blessed by those with whom you serve in our community. These are our witnesses to God’s love.

May we grow in our understanding of God’s treasure for us and may the liturgical music enhance our worship as with one voice we acclaim...“Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts”.

John Kennedy