**Wedding Music Guidelines**



**Guidelines for Music at Marriages in the**

**Parish of Bonane/Glengarriff**

**Introduction**

These guidelines are to help those who lead the music at Marriage Liturgies. They are to help develop the repertoire of what is used at Marriages and to add to the liturgical understanding of those involved. These guidelines are to accompany a booklet on best practice for those intending to get married.

Music has always played a significant part in liturgies. It is not meant solely for decoration or entertainment, but to assist all who take part to raise their voice in praise to God. Music is then to be seen at the service of the liturgy as a whole, co-operating with the rest of what is taking place to express the faith, hope and love of the occasion.

If at all possible before a wedding it is good to make contact with the priest who will be celebrating the liturgy to co-ordinate the music and share any ideas with him. This might be important as well for certain times of the year to ensure that the music is suitable for the liturgical season, for example in Lent the word *Alleluia* is not used, either for the Gospel Acclamation or in any other piece.

The position in the church is also important to ensure that the music group does not become a rival or detract from the Altar or draw undue attention to itself, so as to take from the central aspects of the liturgy.

It is good to encourage the congregation to join in the singing as well, especially in the parts appropriate to them; for example the psalm response, the Gospel acclamation, and the Amen at the end of the Eucharistic Prayer. The Amen at the end of the marriage vows could also be sung by all. While this may not always be the practice it would be good to encourage. Why not use the gathering time before the bride arrives to invite the congregation to take part in the music and to practice the elements mentioned above with them?

The music that is used can be of various styles but it must always be respectful of the liturgy and appropriate. It is important that whatever is used would reflect also the part of the Liturgy that it is accompanying, for example at communion time the music should express the Eucharist that is being received.

Quite often the music that is used at Marriages is not commonly used in the liturgy; this can be a pity, as to have pieces of music that would be commonly used in the liturgy can be a constant reminder to the bride and groom of their wedding day, when they participate in other times in the Liturgy.

*These are a few pointers regarding the various parts of the liturgy. They are listed in order of priority, with the most important mentioned first.*

**Psalm:**

This is an essential part of the Liturgy of the Word. It is not simply a place for another hymn or song. What is sung here should be taken from the Psalms. Listed below are some of the psalms that would be appropriate here:

* The Lord fills the earth with his love Ps 32
* Praise the name of the Lord Ps 148
* How good is the Lord to all Ps 144
* The love of the Lord is everlasting Ps 102

*Some pieces based on these are*:

* In the shadow of your wings Lord E. Feeley
* Taste and See T. Kendzia
* Endless is your Love T. Kendzia
* How can I repay the Lord Liam Lawton
* Mo Ghra Thu Liam Lawton
* Hiding Place Liam Lawton
* Eagle’s Wings Michael Joncas
* This is the day that the Lord Bernard Sexton
* The Shepherd Song Bernard Sexton
* In you creation finds its Joy Ronan McDonagh

**Parts of the Mass**

With the new translation of the Missal a new collection of Music by Irish Composers has been printed**; Sing the Mass**. It is appropriate that the parts used would come from this collection.

**Entrance**

Quite often it is just an instrumental piece that is used here and that can be very fitting, however the music is called to have a gathering effect and set the scene for the occasion. Some composers have combined classical pieces of music with a gathering song to achieve this goal; for example Marty Haugen’s: Gathered in the Love of Christ, from the Song and the Silence. This uses Pachelbel’s Canon in D and is adapted into the Hymn.

*Examples:*

When Love is Found Haas/ O Waly Waly

Christ be near Gillen

We will praise you Kendzia

Praise my Soul Lyte

This day God gives me Traditional

Be thou my Vision Slane

Bride and Groom Slane

Wherever you go Haas

Holy is God Lawton

Here in this Place Lawton

Sing a Song Lawton

**Communion**

If the Marriage is held within a Mass, the communion pieces of music need to express the receiving of the Eucharist with sentiments like: We are one body, Bread blessed and Broken, God’s example of Love, Unity and harmony in our lives.

Examples:

* I will be the vine Liam Lawton
* Come to the Feast Divine Liam Lawton
* In perfect Charity Randall de Bruyn
* Faith, Hope and Love McDonagh/ Haas
* Let us be bread Thomas Porter
* Lord increase our Faith David Haas
* Set your hearts Steve Warner
* I have loved you Michael Joncas
* Where two or three are gathered Liam Lawton
* Bread that is Broken Marty Haugen

From an older tradition pieces like these might be chosen:

* O Taste and see Vaughan Williams
* Laudate Dominum Mozart
* Ubi caritas Durufle
* Jubilate Deo Mozart
* Pania Angelicus Franck
* Ave Verum Mozart/ Byrd

It is important to note that if using a piece in Latin, that the translation also be suitable, for example Pie Jesu is actually for a Funeral and it talks about giving them eternal Rest, This would not be suitable for Weddings. The same is true of another language composition that is used.

**Post Communion**:

Normally would have a reflective piece like: ‘This is’ by Lawton

Other points are:

* Ave Maria is not suitable for Communion but would be more appropriate for the Offertory.
* Offertory piece is normally a quiet or gentle piece quite often instrumental.
* The lighting of the Candles, any music here should be brief
* Sign of peace should not have a piece sung with it unless it is during a Marriage liturgy outside of Mass. The Lamb of God should be sung directly after the sign of peace has been given.
* While the signing of the register is not a part of the Liturgy, care should be given to any piece sung here that it is in keeping with the whole ceremony. It is best that secular pieces be kept for the reception as there is such a large variety of music that is now available for use in the liturgy. It would be good to become familiar with it so as to replace any secular music that has been used before in weddings.

**Resources:**

Many of these pieces are available on CD from Veritas. They provide a wide variety of musically styles.

Here is a list of some of the Collections of music, on CD, that you might find of use. From these the above lists of music have been gathered.

* Wedding Memories from Ireland
* Music for your Wedding
* Our Time
* The Wedding Album
* A Day of Our Own
* When Love is Found

Irish Traditional music can also be appropriate when it is used in harmony with the movement of the liturgy itself.

There are a large number of Irish Composers, whose music is well worth discovering and using in our repertoires. Most of these have websites with their music, or it can be sourced through Veritas Shop.

*Some of these are*:

Fr. Liam Lawton

Bernard Sexton

Ephrem Feeley

Ronan McDonagh

Fr. Columba John McCann

John O’Keeffe

Music can be sourced from Veritas.

These guidelines are given to help you in your role and to assist in making the celebration of the Liturgy an uplifting experience.

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