

SACRED MUSIC CONFERENCE

SPLENDOR AND MAJESTY ARE BEFORE HIM: THE POWER OF MUSICAL WORSHIP

July 24-26, 2024

BREAKOUT SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

WORKSHOP: CHANT ACCOMPANYING THROUGH IMPROVISATION

— *Dr. Richard K. Fitzgerald*

This session will focus on learning to harmonize chant melodies on the spot and/or with very little practice. To get to this point, of course, work must be done to gain some improvisational facility. To that end, we'll explore (1) the unique qualities of each Church mode, (2) how to transpose them for ease in accompanying singers, and (3) modal harmonization with emphasis on the accompaniment of Psalm tones, simple chant melodies, and more complex chants. In addition, harmonizing with a chosen interval (mainly Perfect 4ths and 5ths) will be introduced. Lastly, we'll examine several different harmonization scenarios for a given chant/Psalm tone, and consider subtle inflection of texts through harmonic coloring.

THE CANTOR'S ROLE- ART AND PURPOSE

— *Catherine Fishlock*

So important to the liturgical life of the Church, the role of cantor deserves thoughtful consideration and understanding. This breakout will explore the origin and liturgical function of the cantor and how to improve one's execution of this role. We will begin with a brief look at the ancient practice of chanting the psalms, which is the foundation of the Divine Office, followed by a closer examination at how the Mass cantor can become more effective in accomplishing both the practical and spiritual goals of their role, through intentionality in training, understanding, and a commitment to beauty.

PLANNING MUSIC FOR THE LITURGICAL YEAR

— *Dr. Alexis Kutarna*

Is there a Gloria today? An Alleluia? What is the sequence and when do we sing it? For both parish music professionals and volunteers alike, this session will review the principles of the liturgical year. The focus will be on a practical look at planning for Sundays and Holy Days in harmony with the documents of the Church and the Roman Missal, along with many resources to assist in planning.

UNCOVERING THE WONDERS OF POLYPHONY THROUGH REHEARSAL: IDEAS TO BRING TRADITIONAL SACRED MUSIC TO LIFE!

— *Bruce Ludwick*

Sometimes (even usually!) beginning/maintaining/growing a choir's repertoire can be a challenge for the director (and singers). The Church gives us a "blueprint for success" in the liturgical documents, but where should we start building? With the foundation! We will use polyphony (and related styles) to help make rehearsal and preparation more fun, more efficient, and more effective in the long run. Rehearsal methods and management will be covered, as well as conducting technique—all with the goal of bearing the most fruit possible for Our Lord and the Church in rehearsal and the Sacred Liturgy. This workshop is targeted to both singers and directors/conductors/accompanists and will cover applicable concerns for all of these groups, both as regards achievement and cooperation, with plenty of "audience participation."