

Connecting Music to Mass
August 21 2016

Today's readings are found at #1154 in the hymnal.

The message of today's second reading resonates with young and old alike. It is, perhaps, a difficult message to swallow – endure your trials as **discipline**. (Remember the close relationship between the words discipline and disciple.) The author of Hebrews leaves us with good news – *“At the time, all discipline seems a cause not for joy but for pain, yet later it brings the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who are trained by it.”* If we learn from the trials of this life, we will stay on the path of righteousness, and on the path to the Kingdom of God.

The segue into the gospel is perfect as someone asks Jesus how many people will be saved. It's the cerebral approach we hear so much from the crowds in Jesus' public ministry. “Teacher, just tell me how to do this.” Remember, the Jews were operating from the context of the Law. Jesus' teachings - the fulfillment of the Law - require a little thinking outside the box. Preaching in parables helped the followers relate to every day experiences.

Our challenge this week can be summed up in the phrase “Strive to enter through the narrow gate.” Narrow = challenging. Strive = extra effort. It all goes back to the second reading - discipline, dying to self, joyful service.

We hear a new hymn this week for the processional - “The Kingdom of God” (#736). We got a preview of this hymn two weeks ago when we sang it as the recessional. We'll also use it next week. The nobleness of the tune pairs well with the subject matter. It tells us what the Kingdom of God is all about – justice, joy, mercy, grace, and much more. Pray on this text a bit. Be conscious this week of how we model these virtues in our daily lives, and how we're doing our part to make this text come alive in our world today.

As for the discipline and trials we're supposed to swallow? The familiar Beatitude-based communion song “Blest are They” (#735) counters our trials with hope. And if that isn't enough to cover your strife with a smile, then check out the recessional hymn “How Can I Keep from Singing” (#685).

Through all the **tumult** and the **strife**, I hear the music ringing.
It finds an echoing my soul. How can I keep from singing? (vs. 2)

The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, A fountain ever springing!
All things are mine since I am his! How can I keep from singing? (vs. 4)

With that message, I dare you to walk out of church without a smile on your face!

Stephen Eros
Director of Liturgy & Music

[Click here - Sunday Readings for August 21, 2016](#)

The Kingdom of God



1. The king - dom of God is jus - tice and joy;
2. The king - dom of God is mer - cy and grace;
3. The king - dom of God is chal - lenge and choice;
4. God's king - dom is come, the gift and the goal;



For Je - sus re - stores what sin would de - stroy.
The cap - tives are freed, the sin - ners find place,
Be - lieve the good news, re - pent and re - joice!
In Je - sus be - gun, in heav - en made whole.



God's pow - er and glo - ry in Je - sus we know;
The out - cast are wel - comed God's ban - quet to share;
God's love for us sin - ners brought Christ to his cross:
The heirs of the king - dom shall an - swer his call;



And here and here - af - ter the king - dom shall grow.
And hope is a - wak - ened in place of de - spair.
Our cri - sis of judge - ment for gain or for loss.
And all things cry "Glo - ry!" to God all in all.

How Can I Keep from Singing?



1. My life flows on in end-less song. A -
 2. Through all the tu - mult and the strife I
 3. What though my joys and com-fort die? The
 4. The peace of Christ makes fresh my heart, A



bove earth's lam - en - ta - tion I hear the clear though
 hear that mu - sic ring - ing. It finds an ech - o
 Lord my sav - ior liv - eth. What though the dark - ness
 foun - tain ev - er spring-ing! All things are mine since



far - off hymn That hails a new cre - a - tion.
 in my soul. How can I keep from sing-ing?
 gath - er round? Songs in the night he giv - eth.
 I am his! How can I keep from sing-ing?



No storm can shake my in-most calm While to that Rock I'm



cling - ing. Since Christ is Lord of heav-en and earth,



How can I keep from sing - ing?

Text: Robert Lowry, 1826-1899, alt.

Tune: HOW CAN I KEEP FROM SINGING, 8 7 8 7 with refrain; Robert Lowry, 1826-1899; harm. by Robert J. Batastini, b.1942