

Connecting Music to Mass
September 18 2016

Today's readings are found at #1166 in the hymnal.

“No servant can serve two masters.
He will either hate one and love the other,
or be devoted to one and despise the other.
You cannot serve both God and mammon.”

The clever, dishonest steward acts quickly when his position is threatened. Knowing he's going to get canned, he makes friends at his master's expense so he'll have fallbacks. It's an act of immediate gratification - a quick fix - which is certainly applicable in 2016! Alas, that's another article. For what it's worth, the steward is smart. The master even *commends* him for acting in such a manner! The closing lines of the gospel (above) are among the most well-known bible verses. While we think of money and material objects being “mammon,” the real point of this parable is found when we simply look in the mirror.

Our music today embraces the idea of servitude. The opening hymn (#616) gives praise to God as our one, true master. The danger of very familiar hymns is that take for granted the power of the text! “Ponder anew” as we pray this text together to begin our celebration. The images of praise are so full of meaning. “O let *all* that is within me adore him!” The hymn also tells us *why* we praise God – “And, as on wings of an eagle, uplifting, sustaining...”

The communion refrain is a simple, yet beautiful testament of discipleship. “Take, O take me as I am; summon out what I shall be; set your seal upon my heart and live in me.” We sing this text of **surrender** as we approach the altar to receive Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. Let that idea sit with you in your prayer time after communion. How will you let the Eucharist make this text come to life in you?

And finally, “I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light” expresses our desire not only to be disciples, but *why* we feel this way. We're looking for the Coming of Christ; we want to see the brightness of God! We want to enter the city of God where Christ shines brighter than the sun.

So back to the closing sentence of the first paragraph. The parable addresses the sin of self-service, which is an easy charge to rack up on our confessional bill. It's a question for even those serving in ministry. For *whom* am I doing this? Even in our good-hearted service, we must keep ourselves in check! It's a question for liturgical ministers, musicians, presiders, and the like. The **solution** is to center ourselves as a parish on the Mass. And not only on *attending* Mass, because that, too, can be false piety. If our life and everything we do - within and outside of the Church - is centered on receiving God in Word and Sacrament, we will find ourselves devoted to the right master.

Stephen Eros
Director of Liturgy & Music

[Click here - Sunday Readings for September 18, 2016](#)

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty



1. Praise to the Lord, the Al - might - y, the King of cre -
 2. Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things is won - drous - ly
 3. Praise to the Lord, who will pros - per your work and de -
 4. Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me a -



a - tion! O my soul, praise him, for
 reign - ing And, as on wings of an
 fend you; Sure - ly his good - ness and
 dore him! All that has life and breath,



he is your health and sal - va - tion!
 ea - gle, up - lift - ing, sus - tain - ing.
 mer - cy shall dai - ly at - tend you.
 come now with prais - es be - fore him!



All you who hear, Now to his tem - ple draw near.
 Have you not seen All you have need - ed has been
 Pon - der a - new What the Al - might - y can do,
 Let the "A - men" Sound from his peo - ple a - gain!



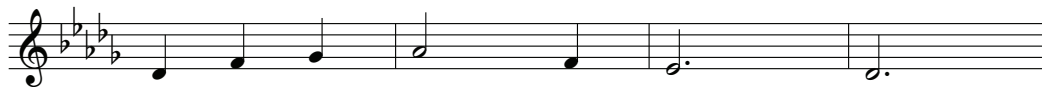
Praise him in glad ad - o - ra - tion!
 Met by his gra - cious or - dain - ing?
 Who with his love does be - friend you.
 Glad - ly with praise we a - dore him!

Text: *Lobe den Herren, den mächtigen König*; Joachim Neander, 1650–1680; tr. by Catherine Winkworth, 1827–1878, alt.
 Tune: LOBE DEN HERREN, 14 14 47 8; *Stralsund Gesangbuch*, 1665; descant by C. S. Lang, 1891–1971

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light



1. I want to walk as a child of the light.
2. I want to see the bright-ness of God.
3. I'm look - ing for the com - ing of Christ.



I want to fol - low Je - sus.
I want to look at Je - sus.
I want to be with Je - sus.



God set the stars to give light to the world. The
Clear sun of right-eous-ness shine on my path. And
When we have run with pa-tience the race, We



star of my life is Je - sus.
show me the way to the Fa - ther.
shall know the joy of Je - sus.



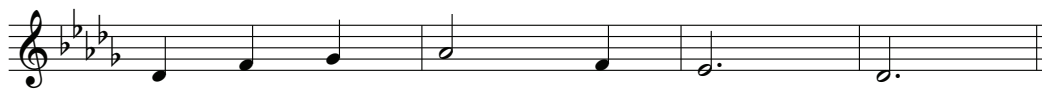
In him there is no dark - ness at all. The



night and the day are both a - like. The



Lamb is the light of the cit - y of God.



Shine in my heart, Lord Je - sus.