

Singing Our Faith 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time – October 1, 2017

The power of the words we hear, say, and sing at Mass too often slip by without us even recognizing half of their true meaning. Our hyper-communicative culture trains us to think about the future, rather than being present in the moment. Check out the opening hymn below – “Lord Whose Love in Humble Service.” The words of the first stanza say, “*We, your servants, bring the worship not of voice alone, but heart.*” In other words, our worship shouldn’t just be a habitual show of responses and aimless singing. **True** worship lifts the **heart** to God, uniting with the Divine! The text goes on to say that **every gift** we receive from God should be **consecrated** to his will. By truly being present in the moment, the power of this text lifts our heart and mind to God, and introduces us to the sacred mysteries.

The passage from St. Paul’s letter to the Philippians tells us not only to live in the present moment, but to live in that moment for others! **“Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves, each looking out not for his own interests, but also for those of others.”** We’ve got our work cut out for us. Paul goes on to describe how Jesus humbled himself out of obedience to God...and God exalted him. God gives us the perfect model of humble service.

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Often times I will use this “mission hymn” for the recessional, sending us out into the world. This weekend, though, I’d like us to begin Mass by reflecting on how we’re doing on our mission. We’ve established that we’re here for true worship, and that we want to consecrate our gifts to God’s will. The wake-up call in stanza two reminds us of the poor, homeless, and downtrodden that need our help. What steps are we taking in our journey of discipleship to help these people? We can start not only by praying for these people in the Mass, but by asking the Holy Spirit to empower us to serve them. Stanza three - “As we worship...” - is leading us to just that. Ultimately, this text inspires us to bring God’s abundant mercy to those who need it the most.

After all this talk of ministry and mission, we have to challenge ourselves. Which son from Sunday’s gospel do we want to be? Jesus is full of surprises, and today, he wants us to be like the defiant son, or the tax collectors and prostitutes. He wants us to conquer our sinfulness and follow him! Just as we want to be true worshippers “not of voice alone, but heart,” so too do we want to be true workers in the vineyard, as St. Paul says, **“of the same mind, with the same love, united in heart, thinking one thing.”**

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1. Lord, whose love in hum - ble serv - ice
 2. Still the chil - dren wan - der home - less,
 3. As we wor - ship, grant us vi - sion,
 4. Called from wor - ship in - to serv - ice,



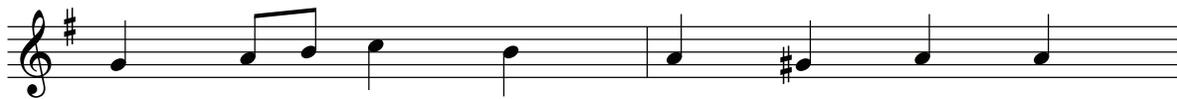
Bore the weight of hu - man need,
 Still the hun - gry cry for bread.
 Till your love's re - veal - ing light
 Forth in your great name we go



Who up - on the cross, for - sak - en,
 Still the cap - tives long for free - dom,
 In its height and depth and great - ness
 To the child, the youth, the a - ged,



Of - fered mer - cy's per - fect deed:
 Still in grief we mourn our dead.
 Dawns up - on our hu - man sight,
 Love in liv - ing deeds to show.



We, your ser - vants, bring the wor - ship
 As you, Lord, in deep com - pas - sion,
 Mak - ing known the needs and bur - dens
 Hope and health, good - will and com - fort,

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Not of voice a - lone, but heart,
Healed the sick and freed the soul,
Your com - pas - sion bids us bear,
Coun - sel, aid, and peace we give



Con - se - crat - ing to your pur - pose
Use the love your Spir - it kin - dles
Stir - ring us to faith - ful serv - ice,
That your chil - dren, Lord, in free - dom,



Ev - 'ry gift that you im - part.
Still to save and make us whole.
Your a - bun - dant life to share.
May your mer - cy know, and live.

Text: Albert F. Bayly, 1901–1984, alt., © 1988, Oxford University Press
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