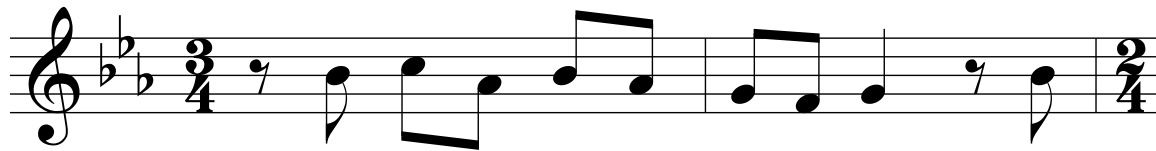
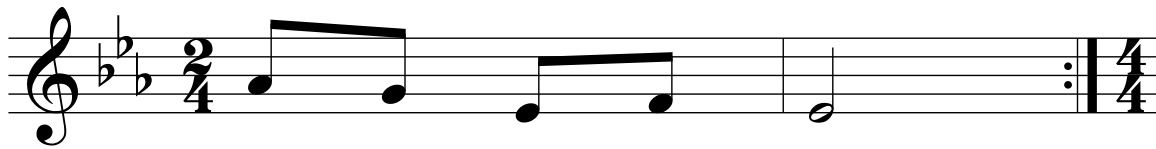


Singing Our Faith
1st Sunday of Advent – December 3, 2017

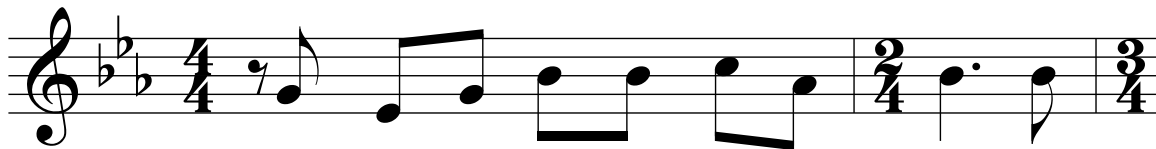
Scroll down to read the reflection on the Advent Entrance Rite.



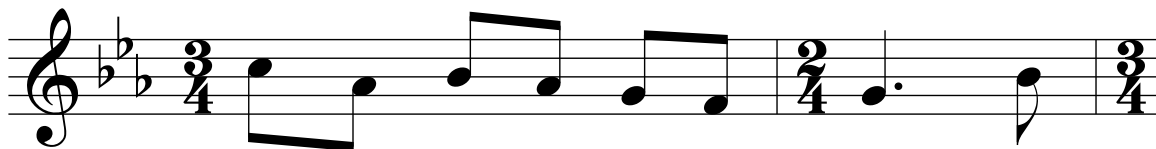
I lift my soul to you, O Lord; I



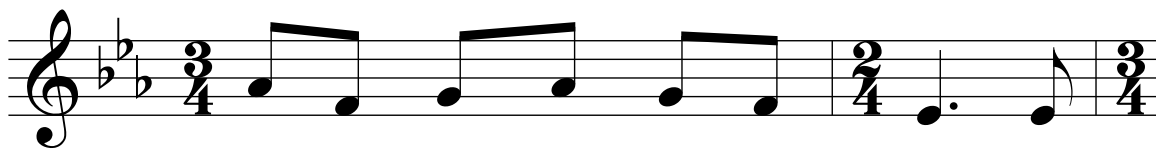
trust in you my God.



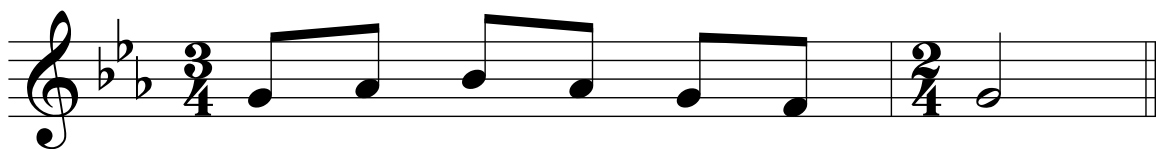
Your church a - waits your com - ing, Lord, With
One can - dle flame shall guide us now, Its



watch - ful, ea - ger eyes up - raised; Spread
light seems frail, but we be - lieve It



jus - tice, joy, through ev - 'ry land. Shed
her - alds Christ our light, the one Our



light up - on our year of grace.
hearts pre - pare now to re - ceive.

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Many of you are familiar with the Entrance Rite we use for the season of Advent. We've used it for the past three years since my arrival at St. Clare, and Sr. Carolyn used it some years before that as well. We also have a similar practice in Lent with an entrance rite that's structured similarly to the one above.

There are advantages and disadvantages to singing the same thing at the beginning of each Advent Sunday Mass. The practical reason is that it's familiar and easy on the assembly! Liturgically, it helps unite the four Sundays of Advent, providing continuity as we anticipate Christ's coming. The rite we use is based on the melody "*Conditor Alme Siderum*" or "*Creator of the Stars of Night*," a well known Advent hymn that dates back to the 9th century. Since this melody is exclusively associated with Advent, singing it every week guides our hearts and minds to the spirit of Advent. While the entrance rite encompasses several parts of the Mass – entrance hymn, sign of the cross, greeting, and penitential act – I'm going to focus on the entrance hymn aspect this week.

As you may know, the text for the entrance hymn changes each Sunday of Advent. Above is the text for the First Sunday of Advent. The first two lines of music are considered the "Antiphon." This text "*I lift my soul to you, O Lord; I trust in you, my God*" is adapted from Psalm 25. It's worth noting that this is the prescribed Entrance Chant for the First Sunday of Advent. **What does that mean???** **Pardon me while I step on my liturgy nerd soapbox.** Just like there are readings

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and prayers assigned to each Sunday Mass, so too are there texts assigned to be sung during the entrance, offertory, and communion. Although a majority of parishes don't sing these antiphons, they are the *first option* for music that should be sung at Mass! The antiphons are usually taken from the book of Psalms – they have a refrain and several verses that follow. If you think of the Responsorial Psalm between the first and second readings, that's exactly what the antiphons are like. The title for these antiphons is the "Propers" since each set is *proper* to the Sunday to which they're assigned. Opposite to the Propers are the parts of the Mass that stay the same from week to week – the Kyrie, Gloria, Creed, Eucharistic Acclamations, and Lamb of God. These are called the "Ordinary" because they're an "ordinary" occurrence at each liturgy.

There's a laundry list of reasons why the "propers" aren't sung as much as they should be. That aside, I'm glad that this Advent Entrance Rite allows us to sing the entrance antiphons for Advent, taken directly from the Sacred Scriptures. The rest of the music above is the "Creator of the Stars" melody. The first verse is based on the Liturgy of the Word. In this Sunday's case, the readings focus on watching and anticipation. The second verse puts the image of the Advent wreath into perspective. The light of the single candle represents several things: Christ the Light of the World, Christ's light leading us through darkness, and a herald or symbol of Christ's birth at Christmas. I hope you find these texts meaningful as we make this Advent journey together as a parish!