

American Federation Pueri Cantores

Growing Voices in Parishes and Schools - A Conductor's Seminar

“Where to find Excellent (and inexpensive!) Liturgical Music for Classroom and Parish Choirs”

Presenter: Heidi Stirling

**Tuesday, July 28 – 2009
3:00pm**

In its recently published *Sing to the Lord, Music in Divine Worship*, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops calls on educators in Catholic schools and parishes to cultivate the repertoire of sacred music. Teachers and choir directors around the country who are struggling now more than ever with time and budget constraints, are wondering how to best meet this directive. Session presenter Heidi Stirling brings ideas and navigational tools to help you find both excellent and inexpensive music and resources for your classroom and/or parish choir.

Thinking Outside the Box

We all know that respected colleague that we can turn to when we need to borrow 30 copies of the Faure Requiem (and in one case that I can remember, even hymn books!) but remember that there are many resources available if you can spare a little time to look. As we all know, being a choir director requires some resourcefulness and some places that I have had luck finding music (in some cases even dozens of copies of a single piece or work) include:

- the public library (sometimes inter-library loan can be faster than ordering)
- community choirs and orchestras
- local high schools and universities
- professional performing ensemble's libraries and archives
- professional music organizations such as ACDA (American Choral Directors Association), MENC (Music Educators National Conference), NPM (National Pastoral Musicians), have bulletin boards and forums for members to post music for hire, samples of new compositions, and
- the internet (more about that next!)

The World Wide Web – Resources Galore

<http://www.cpdll.org>

Begun in December 1998, the CPDL is one, if not **the**, world's largest free sheet music site containing *only choral music*. It has numerous links to other sites as well and most pieces are downloadable as PDFs, though you might need Finale and Scorch for some. This website based in the US so it follows USA copyright laws. Type in any combination of title, composer, era, genre, or language to find scores, texts, translations, and historical information. If searching by psalm setting or key word, search for any word or phrase in the text of a piece of music and CPDL will find it if the text is available. (Interesting to know that texts and translations are all **added by volunteers**, so proofread your translations!) It's also important to note that searches with strings of 3 or less digits will not be recognized. The *Advanced Search Engine* is useful for searching when you only have limited information, for example, try: "mass SA", "sacred Mozart", "modern English unison", "Easter Charles Wood", "Ave verum corpus", "Joshua Jericho", "sacred treble duets", "Psalm 122", etc. The *Multi-Category Search* allows you to be more specific and offers searches based on specific categories such as Liturgical Season (thirty-six to choose from) and specific sub-genres (with thirty-one options) including "Anglican chant", "descants", and "evening canticles". I've found the accompaniment category useful when looking to feature a student instrumentalist or vocal soloist.

http://imslp.org/wiki/Main_Page

The International Music Score Library Project is a website sponsored by the Petrucci Library that is dedicated to scanning in *all* published and/or manuscripts of pieces in the public domain. There is a very large selection of PDFs, large works which are mostly orchestral and chamber, and some octavos. (I found Vincent d'Indy Deus Isreal for chorus at this site.) They are based in Canada and follow copyright laws of all countries of origin. Everything published prior to 1923 is Public domain in the US; if you want something published after 1923 it prevents download. One item to note is the scanned original Grieg manuscripts at this site!

www.sibeliusmusic.com

You will need Sibelius Scorch (download free on website) in order to view and print from this site. Many original compositions, some require fees, others are free. Don't miss the music of David Rice, Christopher Maxim, Jon Hutchings and Derek Bourgeois at this site.

www.artsongcentral.com

A comprehensive resource for singers and voice teachers (and choir directors!) with an emphasis is placed on standard classical and traditional repertoire. Many of the songs contain individual posts which provide additional information about each song, including the range and text of each song and resources like MP3 and MIDI files, when known. You can browse titles in the [Song Index](#).

<https://urresearch.rochester.edu/handle/1802/292>

The University of Rochester Sibley Library is an extensive website of works in public domain. It contains both large and small works including chamber, choral, orchestral, opera, oratorio with printable scanned originals.

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/smhtml/smhome.html>

Lots of octavos at this website and it is uniquely all 19th Century American composers. Each page is a downloadable. Note that all works copyrighted at Library of Congress between 1860-1870 are missing.

<http://www.dlib.indiana.edu/variations/scores/scores.html>

Indiana University Bloomington Libraries, [William and Gayle Cook Music Library](#):

An extensive collection of online scores including the categories of Song Literature, Orchestral and Choral Literature, Chamber Music Literature, Piano Literature, and Solo Instrument Literature. Scores are best viewed using at least a 17-inch monitor set at a resolution of 1024 x 768 with all additional browser buttons removed.

<http://freesheetmusic@ix.netcom.com>

A “directory” with links to download thousands of free sheet music pieces for guitar, piano, choral, brass, violin, woodwind, etc. No download limits. This website changes frequently and I’ve used in the past to find some nice carol arrangements such as a choral setting of *Greensleeves* with 5-part brass accompaniment.

<http://www.freesheetmusic.net> and <http://www.freesheetmusic.net/Spiritual.html>

These sites offer a vast variety of liturgical sheet music that are always changing. If you are looking for something more unique such as a hymn in Spanish, a jazzy arrangement, or a contemporary setting of a standard hymn, you’ll need a bit of time to sort through this large (and ever-changing) site.

<http://www.pucpr.edu/diocese/14cantoral.html>

Especially useful for school directors, this is a huge collection of Catholic liturgical music posted by the Diocese of Ponce, Puerto Rico with option to translate (our gratitude to the Catholic University of Puerto Rico). Hundreds of songs in Spanish. Listed alphabetically and by church season, click on the yellow “score” tab to view and print.

<http://www.musicnotes.com>

This digital sheet music was either arranged by Musicnotes.com’s staff of professional arrangers and composers or it is a new engraving of the composition’s original printed arrangement. When you purchase any Musicnotes Edition (most are \$4.95 and they often go on sale for 25% off), you are granted performance and recording rights and you may print an unlimited number of copies of your purchased sheet music. Many categories to select from, including classical and Christian-themed. Can select the voicing, instrument, and genres to narrow your choices. (Also a great site to download highly popular solo selections used in both a more classical and contemporary Christian setting.)

<http://www.hymncharts.com>

Hearts to God offers free downloads of contemporary church music including SATB choir, 2 part choir, 3 part praise team vocals, instrumental parts, piano and chord charts. They give you permission to make as many copies as you need. To download free music, sign up for a free newsletter and they’ll email you whenever they add a new arrangement to HymnCharts. (hint: you may unsubscribe at any time.)

<http://music.russianorthodox-stl.org>

Free downloads of Orthodox Church sheet music in English. 1000+ music arrangements are available online with more being added each week. The choral arrangements are suitable for small choirs and represent the common usage of the [Russian Orthodox Church Outside of Russia](#). Most of the English texts are from publications of Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Monastery (Jordanville, NY), St. John of Kronstadt Press, and the Monastery of the Veil (Mother Mary and Bishop Kallistos Ware). In addition to general arrangements, they offer a growing collection of stichera arranged to Russian Podoben Melodies (Prosomia). All music is available for free download and may be copied for parish or personal use.

A few more suggestions for your music library.....

-“Leader’s Manual : Hymnal for Catholic School Students” (GIA Publishing, 1989) is a supplement to the hymnal and can also be used with the more recent “Singing Our Faith” (GIA Publishing, 2001). This book contains practical information, including the explanation of the Catholic Mass and the role of music, with 287 selections of psalms (refrains), hymns, and service music for use in school and catechetical settings.

-“Choir Curriculum: Church Music for Children” (Aberdeen Press, 1996) is a 3-year curriculum to follow the church year that offers Scripture-based anthems and lessons for teaching basic music theory and ear training skills. There are four levels divided by grade and they are designed to accompany the Revised Common Lectionary, but it is a useful aid.

- “Vela Vela” (www.MollieStone.org, 2008) is a DVD/Booklet designed to help choral conductors, music educators and singers to learn about South African choral music and learn to teach it in the oral tradition. Molly Stone, Associate Conductor of the Chicago Children’s Choir, has included seven songs, each performed with a demonstration of the individual voice-parts, dance movements, pronunciation, and background information from South African singers and including translations of each song and IPA. Adding a song from this tradition to your children’s choir repertoire will provide your choristers with an opportunity to learn about another culture’s music and gain an understanding of how music can be directly connected to political and social change. Order your own copy for \$35 and photocopy as many copies as you need.

-The Naxos Music Library is a tremendous resource where there are over 500,000 tracks of music you can listen to. Available at most public and university libraries, it is only accessible online and there is an annual fee of \$225 (or \$25/month) if you opt for a home subscription. Hours and hours of listening pleasure.....

- “Sing Out – A Children’s Psalter” (WLP, 1994) A collection of 32 unison responsorial psalms for the church year. Optional CD containing all.

-“Sing with the World – Global Songs for Children” (GIA, 2008) A collection of unison and two-part 24 global songs for use in liturgy. Pronunciation guide and historical backgrounds included.

Don't forget....

Remember: The Pueri Cantores National Repertoire list is now available online and will be used at all festivals. AFPC members receive a 25% discount by placing orders with Loser's Music at: losers@lmf.net

Mrs. Heidi Stirling - In addition to an active performing career and cantor throughout the diocese including Holy Name Cathedral and Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Mrs. Stirling sings with several of the areas top ensembles including the Chicago Symphony Chorus, the Cathedral Singers directed by Richard Proulx, the William Ferris Chorale directed by Paul French, Chicago Chorale Artists, Bella Voce, Bach and Beyond, a session singer for GIA and World Library Publications, and frequent soloist. Mrs. Stirling taught for four years in the Archdiocese of Chicago schools, playing an integral part in the formation of the St. Alphonsus Academy of the Arts, before accepting her position with the Chicago Fine Arts Magnet Cluster. Now in her eleventh year of teaching, she currently serves as a Lead Teacher in Music for the Chicago Public Schools to students in grades K-12 and regularly teaches professional development seminars to teachers for the Fine Arts Magnet Cluster. Mrs. Stirling is the Vocal Arts Director and Performing Arts Chairperson for Gallery 37 Center for the Arts. She is a recipient of numerous teaching awards and grants including the CPS "Gotcha!" Award, a current nominee for the CPS "Drive" Award, the Oppenheimer Grant Foundation, the Building Bridges Neighborhood Grant, the Joffrey Ballet Residency, Donors Choose, and the International Music Foundation's Neighborhood Partnership. Mrs. Stirling has held teaching positions with The Grant Park Symphony, The Chicago Symphony Orchestra, The Merit School of Music, The Oak Park River Forest Children's Choir, and the YMCA. She regularly serves as an adjudicator for the IMEA Junior/Middle and Senior High Division Solo and Ensemble Contests and the International Championship of Collegiate A Cappella (ICCA) and the International Championship of High School A Cappella (ICHSA) Midwest Competitions. She is currently beginning her Illinois Administrative Certificate Type 75 and she holds an MA in Vocal Pedagogy from Northeastern Illinois University and a BA in Music Education from Millikin University. Her memberships include: AGMA (American Guild of Musical Artists), SIA (Sigma Alpha Iota), ACDA (American Choral Director's Association), MENC (Music Educators National Conference) and IMEA (Illinois Music Educators Association).

For Questions or Comments, you may contact Heidi at:
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