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Recommended Hymns and Songs Approved by the Bishops Conference (Liturgical Documents)

The Vatican curial document "*Liturgiam Authenticam*

(http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccdds/documents/rc_con_ccdds_doc_20010507_liturgiam-authenticam_en.html)" (2001) required Conferences of Bishops to produce a directory or repertory of texts intended for liturgical singing, and to submit it to the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments within five years for *recognitio*. In response to this requirement, the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference established the National Liturgical Music Board in 2005 and tasked this group of national and diocesan musical experts to produce a list of recommended hymns and songs for use in liturgical celebrations.

In May 2009, the list of Recommended Hymns and Liturgical Songs produced by the NLMB was presented to the Plenary meeting of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference which endorsed and approved the list in order to seek the formal '*recognitio*' from the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. This list has been sent to the Congregation in Rome.

Liturgiam authenticam #108: "Sung texts and liturgical hymns have a particular importance and efficacy. Especially on Sunday, the 'Day of the Lord', the singing of the faithful gathered for the celebration of Holy Mass, no less than the prayers, the readings and the homily, express in an authentic way the message of the Liturgy while fostering a sense of common faith and communion in charity. If they are used widely by the faithful, they should remain relatively fixed so that confusion among the people may be avoided. Within five years from the publication of this Instruction, the Conferences of Bishops, necessarily in collaboration with the national and diocesan Commissions and with other experts, shall provide for the publication of a directory or repertory of texts intended for liturgical singing. This document shall be transmitted for the necessary *recognitio* to the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments." (*From the Offices of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments, 28 March, 2001.*)

The National Liturgical Music Board (2005-2009), along with music consultant sub-committees, considered several thousand pieces of liturgical music contained in the five hymn books most frequently used throughout the Catholic Church in Australia (details below). The titles on the 2009 list constitute recommended hymns and liturgical songs, ritual and service music suitable for Catholic liturgy in Australia. The list does not include lectionary music, such as responsorial psalms, as the Lectionary is presently being revised and the translation to be used is not yet known.

National Catholic Liturgical Music Repertoire

In light of the publication of *Catholic Worship Book II* in 2016, the 2009 list of recommended hymns and liturgical songs has been adjusted so that only items **not** contained in *Catholic Worship Book II* remain on the list.

The items endorsed on the 2009 Recommended Hymns and Liturgical Songs List remain endorsed for use in Catholic liturgical celebrations in Australia. The contents of Catholic Worship Book II are listed [here \(https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/acbcwebsite/Articles/Documents/ACBC/Catholic%20Worship%20Book%20II%20Contents.pdf\)](https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/acbcwebsite/Articles/Documents/ACBC/Catholic%20Worship%20Book%20II%20Contents.pdf) and the remaining items included on the 2009 Recommended Hymns and Liturgical Songs List (but not included in CWBII) approved by the ACBC can be found [here \(https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/acbcwebsite/Articles/Documents/ACBC/2009%20Recommended%20hymns%20%26%20songs%20list%20-%20minus%20CWB2%20contents.pdf\)](https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/acbcwebsite/Articles/Documents/ACBC/2009%20Recommended%20hymns%20%26%20songs%20list%20-%20minus%20CWB2%20contents.pdf). Together, both of these lists constitute the officially endorsed and recommended national Catholic liturgical music repertoire at present. A separate list highlighting the Hymns and Songs on the Recommended Hymns and Liturgical Songs list which derive from Latin and Non-English sources is also available [here \(https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/acbcwebsite/Articles/Documents/ACBC/4.3%20Non-English-Source-Hymns.pdf\)](https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/acbcwebsite/Articles/Documents/ACBC/4.3%20Non-English-Source-Hymns.pdf).

The Australian Catholic Bishops hope that the core national liturgical music repertoire will form a widely-known and commonly-used set of music at the heart of the local repertoires of parishes and schools across Australia. In accord with the instruction *Liturgiam Authenticam* #108, it is the bishops' intention that this repertoire is to be "widely used by the faithful" and "should remain relatively fixed so that confusion among the people may be avoided." Having a commonly-known national liturgical music repertoire will enhance the capacity of Australian Catholics to sing their faith in common-union, especially when they gather for large liturgies at the national level. The [Foreword \(https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/acbcwebsite/Articles/Documents/ACBC/Foreword%20to%20Catholic%20Worship%20Book%20II.pdf\)](https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/acbcwebsite/Articles/Documents/ACBC/Foreword%20to%20Catholic%20Worship%20Book%20II.pdf) to Catholic Worship Book II articulates the ACBC's rationale for advancing the core national liturgical music repertoire.

This national Catholic liturgical music repertoire does not constitute an exhaustive listing of all of the possible pieces of liturgical music which are appropriate for inclusion in Catholic liturgical celebrations in Australia. Local Bishops have the authority as chief liturgists in their dioceses to decide what pieces of music they will permit to be included in liturgies celebrated within their dioceses. For example, they may wish to permit settings of the Mass (which use the official ICEL text with permission, and have been approved by the ACBC) or other pieces of appropriate liturgical music which are not included within *Catholic Worship Book II* to be used in their diocesan liturgies.

With local and international music publishers (and self-publishing composers) constantly producing new pieces of music it is not possible to provide an exhaustive listing of music which is appropriate for liturgical use. Many of these pieces will meet the criteria for appropriate inclusion within Catholic liturgical celebrations in Australia. The contents of *Catholic Worship Book II* constitute a benchmark to be met by music being considered for inclusion in Catholic liturgies in Australia. [Further information about the criteria employed to curate the contents of *Catholic Worship Book II* can be found [here \(https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/acbcwebsite/Articles/Documents/ACBC/Review%20Process.pdf\)](https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/acbcwebsite/Articles/Documents/ACBC/Review%20Process.pdf).]

However, not all music is appropriate for use in Catholic liturgies – some is written specifically for catechetical or educational contexts only; some is written for devotional prayer as distinct from liturgical prayer; some is crafted for a praise and worship concert setting and does not translate well into the liturgy; some is appropriate for a meditative context rather than a liturgical context; some is purely secular and is not ever appropriate for use in Catholic liturgy. *Musica Sacra* (1967) #43 states: “The introduction into the celebration of anything which is merely secular, or which is hardly compatible with divine worship, under the guise of solemnity should be carefully avoided: this applies particularly to the celebration of marriages.”

The national Catholic liturgical music repertoire provides a measure against which other music can be considered. The process via which the music presently constituting the national Catholic liturgical music repertoire was identified, is outlined below and includes details of the principles which guided the NLMB and consultants’ work in producing this repertoire (located in *Catholic Worship Book II* (<https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/acbcwebsite/Articles/Documents/ACBC/Catholic%20Worship%20Book%20II%20Contents.pdf>) and the Recommended Hymns & Liturgical Songs list (<https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/acbcwebsite/Articles/Documents/ACBC/2009%20Recommended%20hymns%20%26%20songs%20list%20-%20minus%20CWB2%20contents.pdf>)).

Contemporary Hymn and Song Exemplars

National Liturgical Music Council with the endorsement of the Bishops Commission for Liturgy of the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference © 2021

The last century has witnessed an intentional fostering and development of popular religious hymns and songs for use in liturgy and devotional services within the Catholic Church (Chirograph (http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/letters/2003/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_20031203_musica-sacra.html), 11, cf. SC (https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html), 118). In 2016 the Australian Catholic Bishops Conference published the *Catholic Worship Book II* (cf. GIRM (<https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/acbcwebsite/Articles/Documents/ACBC/The%20General%20Instruction%20of%20the%20Roman%20Missal%20-%20GIRM.pdf>), 393), which includes a significant number of religious hymns and songs that form the core of the Australian liturgical music repertoire.

To promote the full, conscious and active participation of the faithful in liturgical celebrations (SC (https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html), 14), the Church fosters and preserves its treasury of sacred music (SC (https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html), 114), and encourages the development of new compositions (SC (https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html), 121; MS (http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_instr_19670305_musica-sacra_en.html), 53, 59) as well as arrangements of traditional tunes and texts. New hymns and songs may be introduced so long as they “correspond with the spirit of the liturgical action and that they foster the participation of all of the faithful.” (GIRM (<https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/acbcwebsite/Articles/Documents/ACBC/The%20General%20Instruction%20of%20the%20Roman%20Missal%20-%20GIRM.pdf>), 41, cf. SC (https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19631204_sacrosanctum-concilium_en.html), 116). In Australia, the editors of *Catholic Worship Book II* noted that the suitability of new hymns and songs for liturgy is to be “judged according to several interrelated criteria: liturgical, musical and pastoral” (see “Music” (<https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/acbcwebsite/Articles/Documents/ACBC/Music%20in%20the%20Order%20of%20the%20Mass%20-%20CWB2%20information.pdf>), in the Order of Mass”, *Catholic Worship Book II*, 2016).

The following list provides some suitable examples of contemporary hymns and songs for use by the assembly that have been published since *Catholic Worship Book II* or which were included in overseas Catholic collections not considered at the time when *CWBII* was published. As so much contemporary music continues to be published, it is important to have some suitable examples with which to compare other pieces being considered for inclusion in liturgical celebrations. The hymns and songs on this list are suitable examples of music for use at the entrance, offertory, communion and recessional processions (GIRM (<https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/acbcwebsite/Articles/Documents/ACBC/The%20General%20Instruction%20of%20the%20Roman%20Missal%20-%20GIRM.pdf>), 48, 74, 87; MS 36) or after communion (GIRM (<https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/acbcwebsite/Articles/Documents/ACBC/The%20General%20Instruction%20of%20the%20Roman%20Missal%20-%20GIRM.pdf>), 88). An explanation is included as to why each exemplar is considered suitable for use in liturgical celebration, in order to demonstrate a process for determining the suitability of new hymns and songs for inclusion in liturgy employing the criteria mentioned above.

Contemporary Hymn and Song Exemplars (<https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/acbcwebsite/Articles/Documents/ACBC/Contemporary%20Hymn%20and%20Song%20Exemplars%202021.pdf>) (PDF)

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