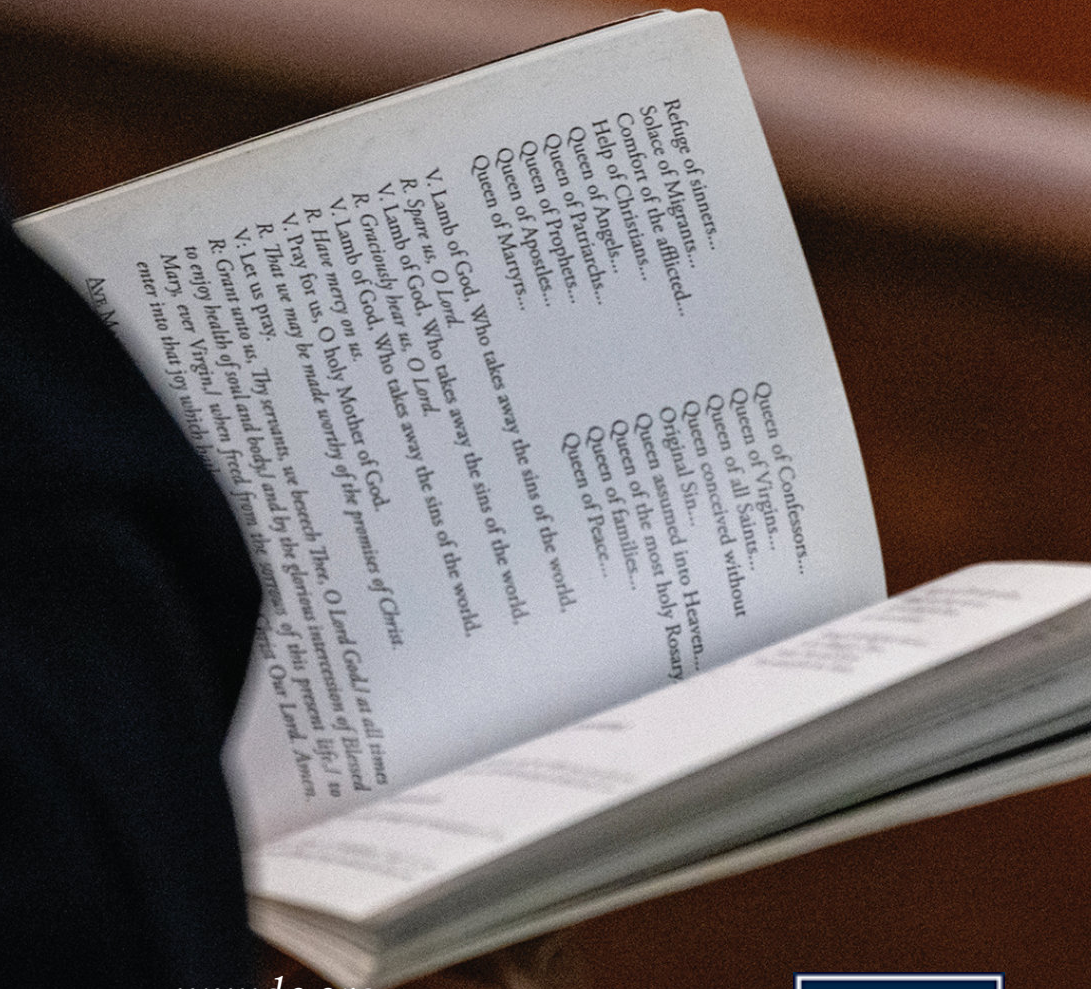


Newsletter

DC / Arlington

Fostering the Art of Musical Liturgy

July - August 2025



npmdc.org

npmarlington.org



In This Issue

“Lord, send out your spirit, and renew the face of the earth.”

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Director's Corner

The liturgical year of 2025 has been filled with Solemnities we have not normally seen! June featured a Solemnity every Sunday, capping off with Saints Peter and Paul. We also had the Presentation of the Lord this past February 2nd, my birthday, so I enjoyed a good Candlemas instead of more candles on my cake. Moving into the fall we will be graced with the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (Sept 14) landing on a Sunday, as well as All Souls (Nov. 2) and the Feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica in Rome (Nov. 9). I am thankful for the many feasts and solemnities that land on a Sunday this calendar year, because it provides a time of catechesis to the rich traditions of our faith, and we as musicians are bestowed with providing the sacred music for these special occasions.

The local chapters of DC and Arlington have always provided opportunities for connections with other directors, cantors, and choir members, so that we can have fellowship and ask important questions about our profession. If you have a question, we hope you feel comfortable emailing the local chapter for knowledge and understanding. If we do not know the answer, we will find it!

This year also marks the Jubilee Year of Hope, initiated by Pope Francis and continued by our new Pope Leo XIV. I would like to extend an invitation to all parishes in DC and Arlington, to join us for the 2025 Choral Jubilee Festival on Saturday, November, 15 at the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle, Washington DC. This is a joint chapter effort and planning is already in the works. We welcome our guest clinician, Dr. Peter Kadeli, Head of Sacred Music and Choral Activities at The Catholic University of America. Registration will open August 1 for this exciting event to commemorate November the month for musicians within the Jubilee year. Please PLEASE Save this date! We need representation from both Dioceses and many diverse parishes. This will be an all day event (9am-6:30pm), lunch provided in the registration cost. We will also have parking options, but encourage carpool and Metro from your parish. This will mark our pilgrimage to the Cathedral, and it will be a spiritually and musically filled day where you will be able to bring back songs and memories to your parish. Set aside this time for the Lord and for yourself and each other.

Have a blessed summer and please join us in Philadelphia for NPM On the Road. It is almost sold out! We will have a Chapter Lunch before the start of the first day. Details and RSVP on page 5.



Katie Evans
DC Chapter Director

Calendar of Events

2024 - 2025 Season

- August 6-7th - NPM on The Road 2025/ Chapter Luncheon, Rosemont College, Philadelphia, PA (page 5).
- September TBA, NPM DC Chapter Dinner & Mass
- November 15th, NPM DC/ Arlington Choral Festival, St. Matthews Cathedral, Washington, D.C. (page 8).

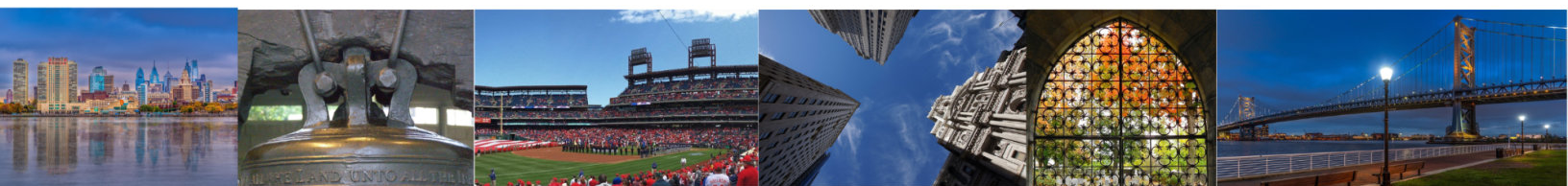
2025 - 2026 Season Coming Soon!

Forever We Will Sing:
Celebrating 50 Years of 

The National Association of
Pastoral Musicians
48th National Convention
July 19-24, 2026
Catholic University of America
Washington, District of Columbia



On the Road Philadelphia



When:

August 6-7, 2025

Where:

Rosemont College

1400 Montgomery Ave, Bryn Mawr, PA 19010

For accommodations and registration [click here!](#)

Register Soon!

NPM On the Road Philadelphia Chapter Luncheon

Seasons 52 Fresh Grill & Wine Bar

August 6th @ 12 PM



160 N. Gulph Rd., Ste. 101
King of Prussia, PA 19406

Please RSVP [here!](#)

Join us for lunch at Seasons 52. Offering a la carte lunch options. Here is a link to the restaurant so you can browse menu options: <https://www.seasons52.com>

Please RSVP [here!](#)



National Association of Pastoral Musicians

May 1, 2025

Reviews of Organ Music from MorningStar Music Publishers

Heather Martin Cooper

Heather Martin Cooper is Associate Organist at the Church of St. Michael and St. George in Clayton, Missouri. She facilitates the Basic Organ Certificate for NPM and has been a music reviewer for more than twenty years.

Toccatas for Organ: An Anthology of Toccatas from the 16th Century to the 20th Century

Compiled and edited by Michael Burkhardt

E.C. Schirmer Music Company 9136

Toccata is a title for perhaps thousands of keyboard compositions from the past 500 years. The word itself comes from the Italian word meaning “to touch.” A piece with this title will in some way showcase what the instrument and player can do in terms of technique, expression, and often, virtuosity. The form and function have developed over time in response to needs and circumstances. The preface of this anthology offers a brief introduction to compositional styles for toccatas since the Renaissance, and specific information for each piece included in the collection. The book is 100 pages and spiral bound. Composers are represented in 20 pieces by Anonymous, Bach, Buxtehude, Diruta, Dubois, Fletcher, Frescobaldi, Gigout, Lemmens, Martini, Murschhauser, Pachelbel, Pasquini, Reger, Renaud, Rossi, Sweelinck, Walther, and Zipoli. Well done.

Partita on Truro

Maureen Howell

MorningStar MSM-10-468

These seven variations offer fresh material based on the hymn tune, employing a nice contrast of color, motive and mood. The final movement is the longest at four minutes, and the others last one to two minutes. Total playing time is about thirteen minutes. Noteworthy are the three quieter movements, each offering a reflective moment. On a Sunday of Eastertide, one could easily fill all the needs for organ solos with this partita. Recommended for worship and recital.

At the Cradle: Four Organ Transcriptions for Christmas

Michael Burkhardt

MorningStar MSM-10-997

The Christmas repertoire for organists includes so many carol-based pieces. Here are four transcriptions of well-known pieces originally composed for instrumental forces and not based on carols or hymns. All are played on quiet registrations. The pieces are Edvard Grieg's *Cradle Song* from *Lyric Pieces*, op. 68 for solo piano; Archangelo Corelli's *Pastorale* from *Concerto Grosso in G Minor*, op. 6 no. 8; *Pifa* from Handel's *Messiah*; and the *Prelude* from the *Christmas Oratorio*, op. 12 of Camille Saint-Saens.

I Need Thee Every Hour: Eight Hymns of Robert Lowry

Edwin T. Childs

MorningStar MSM-10-096

Childs has provided eight pieces based on some of the most popular hymns of the 19th-century composer and preacher, Robert Lowry. Some have gospel flair, with others quite mild. Titles included are *All the Way My Savior Leads Me*, *Come, We that Love the Lord (Marching to Zion)*, *He Arose*, *How Can I Keep from Singing*, *I Need Thee Every Hour*, *Nothing But the Blood*, *Shall We Gather at the River*, and *Something for Thee*.

Adagietto

Gerald Near

MorningStar MSM-10-281

This gentle lyrical piece, about four and a half minutes in length employs quiet strings and flutes. Not difficult.



Wolf Trap Opera Un-Trapped

Wednesday, July 9, 2025

(concert time 7:00pm, doors open at 6:30pm)

Come hear today's rising opera stars from Wolf Trap Opera as they present a selection of arias and scenes from this season's mainstage productions plus works by Donizetti, Verdi, Mozart, and more. Holy Trinity is excited to host the 2025 Studio Artists from Wolf Trap Opera at this special Wednesday evening concert.

This concert is an opportunity to meet these world-class artists and hear them perform in an acoustical space ideally suited to celebrate the beauty of the human voice.

This is a free concert, and no reservations are needed.

Address: The entrance to the church is located at 1315 36th Street NW, Washington DC

Parking: Limited free parking will be reserved for concert attendees at neighboring Georgetown Visitation Preparatory School (1524 35th St NW, Washington, DC 20007), a one block walk from the church. Non-metered street parking is also available.



CATHEDRAL OF ST. MATTHEW THE APOSTLE

JUBILEE CHORAL FESTIVAL

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2025

REHEARSALS FROM 9:00 AM - 5:30 PM

VIGIL MASS AT 5:30 PM

Guest Conductor, Peter Kadeli

Head of Sacred Music and Director of Choral Activities
at The Catholic University of America

Registration Link: npmdc.org/events

NPM Members: \$20 Non-members: \$30

Rehearsals and lunch are included in the registration fee.

The Cathedral is located at 1725 Rhode Island Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. just off the intersection of Connecticut Avenue, Rhode Island Avenue, and M Street Northwest. It is near the Farragut North and Dupont Circle Metrorail stations. The Cathedral does not have a parking lot. Limited street parking is available and several parking garages are located next to and across the street from the Cathedral.

Questions? Contact: WashingtonDC@npm.org or Arlington@npm.org

Co-sponsored by the Arlington and DC Chapters of NPM



SPANISH-LANGUAGE WORKSHOP A SUCCESS

By Eugene Harper, Past Director, Arlington Chapter

The Arlington chapter sponsored a music workshop for Spanish-language vocalists in the Diocese of Arlington on May 31, at St. Joseph parish in Herndon, VA.

Facilitator and workshop leader was Nelly Solares, Director of Choral Activities at West Potomac High School in Fairfax County, Va. She came highly recommended by Arlington chapter board member Hannah Masson, who had Solares present similar workshops at Precious Blood Catholic Church in Culpeper, VA.

Twenty attendees, mostly from the host parish and St. Bernadette's in Springfield, Va., took part in the Saturday morning event. They represented central and South American countries of Paraguay, Bolivia, Peru, Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras and Ecuador.

Solares presented a foundation of vocal techniques. "I gave them a preliminary understanding of breath techniques as well as vocal placement and resonance," Nelly said. "This appeals to older choir members who may have never been exposed to being taught music in schools. It's all about voice mechanics and how to use voices more appropriately for the purpose of singing."

She provided a list of resources to the attendees for them to continue their development.



Nelly Solares and attendees on May 31, at St. Josephs in Herndon, VA.

Interview

Young Voices in Sacred Music at The Catholic University of America



By: Alberto M. Cortez

Ava Seastrom, Catholic '28, is a Vocal Performance major from Baltimore City, MD. In this second part of a two part series I continued to understand what attracts young adults to sacred music. Ava provided me with wonderful insights into her journey with sacred music.

Alberto: What inspired you to get involved in sacred music?

Ava Seastrom: For much of my life, my mother possessed an intuitive understanding of the path I was destined to follow. Long before I recognized it myself, she envisioned me pursuing vocal performance and immersing myself in the world of sacred music. She was not only my greatest advocate but also the cause for my journey into this profound and transcendent art form.

At my home parish, the National Shrine of St. Alphonsus Liguori, an announcement was once made before the homily, inviting those interested to join the choir schola. At the time, overwhelmed by schoolwork, I dismissed the idea without much thought. Without realizing, my mother was quietly working behind the scenes, sending emails, inquiring whether a high school student could participate, and persistently encouraging me to reconsider. She never ceased praying for my conversion, firmly believing that this calling was meant for me, even before I was ready to accept it.

Then, one seemingly ordinary day, something within me shifted. I decided I was ready to embrace this opportunity. Stepping into my first rehearsal, I was unprepared for the depth and beauty of what I would encounter. The music was unlike anything I had previously sung; it was alive, breathing with an ineffable spirit that resonated beyond mere notes and lyrics. Each harmony carried an almost divine presence, stirring something profound within me.

From that moment forward, my passion for sacred music flourished, and I resolved to pursue vocal performance. Without my mother's unwavering prayers, inspiration, and perseverance, I may never have found the clarity to recognize God's calling. Her faith and dedication illuminated a path that would become my life's passion, one that I now cherish deeply.

Alberto: How has participating in sacred music impacted your faith journey?

Ava: As my passion for sacred music deepened, so too did my spiritual journey. I found that my participation in the Mass became more profound when I sang with the schola, allowing me to engage in the liturgy with newfound depth and devotion. Through my voice, I was not merely performing, I was becoming a vessel through which others could encounter the splendor and majesty of God's divine sacrifice.

In those sacred moments, I felt as though I was offering a glimpse of heaven itself, echoing the celestial harmonies of the angels who ceaselessly sing in adoration. Each note, each phrase, became an expression of the transcendent beauty that reflects the divine. The more I immersed myself in sacred music, the more I came to understand the boundless glory of God and the profound gifts bestowed upon us through worship.

Alberto: How do you feel sacred music contributes to the liturgy experience?

Ava: Each phrase of Gregorian chant conveys the sacred texts as breathing life into the Psalms and Scripture, transforming them into a living testament of God's eternal Word. The chant flows with an organic, almost divine rhythm, a pulse that, to me, symbolizes the very heartbeat of God, the breath through which He imparted His Word to humanity.

The convergence of voices in harmony transcends mere sound; it stirs the soul, resonating with the deepest longings of the human heart. I believe sacred music articulates the unspoken prayers and yearnings of many words that remain ineffable yet find expression through melody. It elevates the liturgy, painting a radiant vision of heaven and the profound mystery of Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

Through its sacred beauty, this music imbues biblical narratives with profound emotional depth. It expresses the anguish of Mary Magdalene and the Apostles as they mourned the death of their beloved friend. It illuminates the quiet peace and resolute faith of Mary, the Mother of God, who bore the sorrow of her Son's crucifixion, knowing He was fulfilling His divine destiny. In this way, sacred music does more than adorn the liturgy, it unveils new dimensions of Scripture, allowing us to experience its mysteries with both the heart and soul.

Alberto: What advice would you give to other young people interested in sacred music?

Ava: For young individuals drawn to the world of sacred music, my foremost advice is to immerse yourself in it. Seek out opportunities to participate, approach your choral director with a desire to learn and engage in the choir. If possible, request lessons to refine your technique and develop a deeper understanding of how to convey the profound beauty of this art form. Music directors are often eager to mentor those with a passion for sacred music, as they recognize its transformative power.

Beyond formal instruction, take advantage of the vast resources available online. Explore performances of renowned choirs on platforms like YouTube, study different interpretations of sacred works, and delve into the rich history of composers who crafted intricate and

Transcendent pieces. Continuously seek inspiration, broadening your knowledge of the diverse traditions that have shaped sacred music over the centuries. The more you explore and engage, the more deeply you will come to appreciate the spiritual and artistic depth that this extraordinary music offers.

Alberto: *Are there any particular composers or musicians who have influenced your approach to sacred music?*

Ava: A composer who profoundly influenced my approach to sacred music is Gabriel Fauré, particularly through his Requiem Mass. I was first introduced to his work in high school, and I was immediately captivated by his ability to portray the mystery of death and the hope of eternal rest with such sensitivity and grace. One piece that especially moved me was Pie Jesu, a centerpiece of the Requiem. Its gentle, soaring melody felt less like a performance and more like a prayer, a musical embodiment of a soul being tenderly guided to the gates of heaven. Fauré's Requiem reshaped my understanding of sacred music, revealing its deeper purpose: to offer comfort, to elevate the spirit, and to accompany the soul on its journey beyond this life.

Alberto: *What is one thing you want others to know about sacred music?*

Ava: Sacred music possesses a beauty wholly its own, distinct from the pleasures of the secular world and imbued with a transcendent character. It is, in essence, divine. Through the ebb and flow of harmonic movement, the intentional placement of breath, and the luminous convergence of voices, sacred music is not merely performed, it is incarnated.

In its resonance, one encounters a foretaste of the eternal; a glimmer of the heavenly liturgy that lies beyond the veil of our mortal experience. It is a language not bound by sight or touch, nor limited by the finitude of human speech. Rather, it speaks in tones shaped by reverence, echoing the mystery of the divine. In listening, we do not merely hear. We are drawn upward into that which is holy, suspended for a moment in the presence of something far greater than ourselves: the music of angels, the breath of heaven made sound.

Alberto: *Where do you see yourself in the future in terms of involvement with sacred music?*

Ava: I envision myself dedicated to singing professionally within the Church, using the gift of sacred music to uplift souls and illuminate the path toward God. Through the beauty and reverence of the Mass, I hope to offer others a glimpse of God's eternal love and divine mystery. In serving the Church through music, I strive to complete the soul's journey to heaven, drawing hearts

This vocation is not only a personal calling, but also a way of giving back to the faith community that has so deeply shaped and inspired me.

Alberto: *How often do you meet with colleagues about your ministry?*

Ava: In my music ministry, I collaborate with my colleagues at least twice a week, often more. I currently serve as a volunteer member of the schola at the Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle in Washington, D.C., and as a cantor for Sunday Masses at The Catholic University of America. Additionally, I participate in a chamber ensemble within the Rome School of Music, Drama, and Art. I am constantly seeking new opportunities to share my passion for sacred music and to bring others closer to God through its beauty and reverence.

Editor Notes:

I would like to thank Aidan Feeney and Ava Seastrom for participating in this installment of "Young Voices in Sacred Music". I'm also grateful to Dr. Peter Kadeli, Head of Sacred Music and Director of Choral Activities at The Catholic University of America, for introducing me to his outstanding students.



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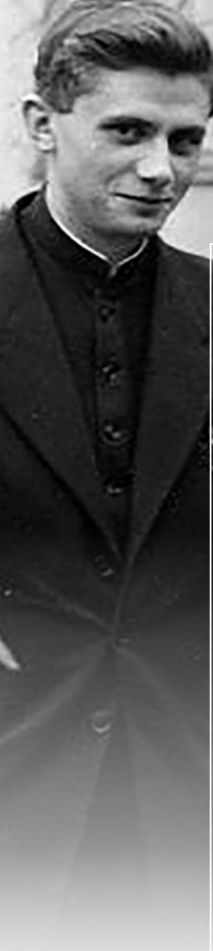
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CALL FOR PAPERS

ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2025



THE CATHOLIC
UNIVERSITY
OF AMERICA



The Spirit *of the* Liturgy

The Liturgical Legacy of Joseph Ratzinger-Benedict XVI

SEPTEMBER 25-26, 2025

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA, WASHINGTON, DC

After the death of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI in 2023, the Church began the process of evaluating and appreciating anew the rich and extensive legacy of his long life. As a scholar and a university professor, and as a Priest, Bishop, and Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith for almost a quarter of a century, Joseph Ratzinger was an undoubtedly influential voice in both the academy and ecclesiastical affairs. Following his election to the papacy in 2005, his work took on a new and even greater significance, introducing his writing and teaching to a new and greater audience.

Now that some time has passed since the conclusion of so eminent a life, the 2025 Annual Conference of The Society for Catholic Liturgy will examine the contribution of Joseph Ratzinger-Benedict XVI to the Church's understanding and celebration of the sacred liturgy. This coincides both with the 25th anniversary of the publication in English of his most famous work, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, and with the Society's own 30th anniversary (1995-2025).

Proposals are therefore sought from scholars across the disciplines for the 2025 Annual Conference of the Society for Catholic Liturgy, to be held at The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC from September 25-26, 2025. Successful submissions will touch on some specific element of the liturgical work

of Ratzinger-Benedict XVI, and seek to contribute to the conference's overarching question: *What is his liturgical legacy for the Church and for the world?*

Papers will be in two categories: full papers (30 minutes) and student papers (20 minutes). All presenters will deliver a written, scholarly paper, and are encouraged to submit their work for peer-review and potential publication in the Society's periodical, *Antiphon: A Journal for Liturgical Renewal*.

Abstracts of no more than 250 words are to be sent in PDF to the Rev. David Friel, S.T.D., (vicepresident@liturgysociety.org) by April 1, 2025.

Further information regarding registration and accommodation will be available in early 2025 at our website, liturgysociety.org.

Notes for Student Proposals:

The Society especially welcomes contributions from graduate students across the disciplines who wish to address the conference theme. Students are invited to propose papers based on: 1) the theme outlined above, and 2) some relevant aspect of their present academic research. Student proposals are to be submitted together with a Letter of Recommendation from the student's advisor or director indicating suitability and relevance to the conference topic. Priority will be given to Student Members of the Society. Membership criteria and other information may be found at our website.

FURTHER INFORMATION, INCLUDING REGISTRATION
AND ACCOMMODATION, WILL BE AVAILABLE IN
EARLY 2025 AT OUR WEBSITE, LITURGYSOCIETY.ORG.

What's Going on At Your Parish

Do you have an event going on at your parish? Do you have something to say or would like to share about your ministry and /or formation? The newsletter is published every other month. Please give all submissions to Katie Evans at WashingtonDC@npm.org and they will be accepted for social media / communications ASAP, no waiting for the newsletter!

Membership Alert

The Local Chapters only receive membership dues through the National Office. When you renew or join you **MUST** elect which local Chapter, or the local Chapters will not receive the funding. This makes programming events and workshops hard for our local area, so **PLEASE PLEASE** designate your local Chapter when renewing Membership at www.npm.org. If you are unsure, please contact Keisna Sosa at membership@npm.org and she will help you!



Renew or Become a Member? Use QR Code!

IMPORTANT! Your Chapter relies HEAVILY on your Renewals!

NPM DC Hospitality Coordinator Open Position

Plans and oversees refreshments and hospitality for Chapter meetings and events, drawing on the assistance of other Chapter members and members of host venue as appropriate. Current board member serving in this position is willing to help in transition to the new Coordinator, and to continue to advise and assist as needed. If interested please reach out to WashingtonDC@npm.org.

Pastorate Director of Liturgical Music

Pastorate of Our Lady
West River, MD

The Pastorate of Our Lady, consisting of Our Lady of Sorrows (West River, MD) and Our Lady of Perpetual Help (Edgewater, MD) churches, seeks candidates for a Pastorate Director of Liturgical Music. With the guidance of the pastor, the Pastorate Director of Liturgical Music will be responsible for the music ministry and coordinating all aspects of sacred music for weekend Masses, Holy Days, Sacramental celebrations, funerals, devotions and some holidays. Part-time position. In need of subs ASAP. Apply [Here](#)

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