

NPM (6-17-23)

Accompanists

Congregational singing vs. cantors/soloists

Lead congregation or follow soloists
Volume

Speed of hymns

Good conversational pace
Don't let congregation drag you down

Introductions

First line or first and last
Use this to set tempo

Pause before first verse, pause between verses

Slow down at end of song, especially if not singing all the verses

Especially for Catholic organists, need to be aware of what is happening

Know when to fill, know when to stop
Be prepared for the unexpected

Work in advance with visiting priests

Tell what you do, listen to what they want

In general, the priest is always right – discuss but do what they want

Father Mike at first Mass
Father Mike vs. Father Gary
“I will outlast the priest”

Working with cantors/soloists

Regulars vs. guests

Weddings/funerals are a special challenge

Unusual songs – soloist sings like recording rather than the music

Tempos

Keys

Different cantors

Deal with differences

Help as much as you can

Adapt to strengths and weaknesses

Accompaniment vs. notes

Playing melody

Ultimately, you need to be in charge. Adapt, but stick to your guns when needed.

Piano vs. organ

Notes same, but technique different

Organ needs to be connected

Pedal is optional

Stops (Families, feet)

Different manuals

Change for contrast

Melody vs. accompaniment

Presets

Swell pedal determines volume

Choir

Obviously, follow the director – Always

Be very conscious of balance

Maybe ask for someone at rehearsals to go out into the church

Be prepared to help individual sections

Obviously true at rehearsals, but may need to alter accompaniment during performance

Preludes and postludes

Depends on priest and local preference

Really is your opportunity to “perform.” Not necessarily a naughty word.

Prelude needs to be more reflective. But can get a little more fancy toward the end

Can be hymns, but there is a lot of good music that is not