

Memorial Day Mass schedule Catholic cemeteries

Monday, May 31, 2009 – Rain or shine

- Please bring lawn chairs
- Refreshments will be served

Grand Rapids

Resurrection Cemetery
9 a.m., Celebrant – Father Ted Kozlowski
4100 Clyde Park Ave. SW

Ss. Peter & Paul Cemetery
9 a.m., Celebrant – Father Dennis Morrow
1712 Preston Ave. NW

Holy Cross and Mount Calvary Cemeteries
10 a.m., Celebrant – Father Ed Hankiewicz
2000 Walker Ave. NW

Big Rapids

Mount Carmel Cemetery
9:30 a.m., Celebrant – Father Lam Le
21594 17 Mile Rd.



Did Christ like to sing?

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atholics are not especially known for exuberant singing at Mass or at other worship services. We usually don't "raise the rafters" with our music.

Maybe we still think that's the job of a choir or other designated "official" voices.

Did Jesus himself sing at prayer? The Gospels of Matthew and Mark both mention that at the end of the Last Supper, before going out into the night to the Mount of Olives, Jesus and his disciples sang a hymn. Most likely it was a psalm. For a devout Jew, singing the psalms would have been a normal part of prayer and worship.

A few centuries after Christ, the famous bishop Saint Augustine extolled the power of singing as part of the Christian way of worship. He is quoted as writing, "The one who sings prays twice." In other words, our prayer is doubly empowered when we sing. Right away, however, some have disputed the accuracy of that quote. They claim that Augustine wrote: "The one who sings well prays twice." Was he limiting music in prayer to good singers only or to just the trained ones? There are certainly those who would like it that way, including worshippers who don't want to be bothered and who would prefer either a "quiet" Mass or one with the music done by "professionals." Augustine, however, was speaking about the professing ones, that is, all those professing their faith through song.

When people of different ages and a variety of backgrounds come together to form one community of worship and faith, nothing has more power to unify than music and song. Assuming, that is, a big "if" or two: If the music is familiar or can become familiar; if it is reachable by most voices and not only by soprano or tenor ones. And if the combination of music and words somehow moves us toward God and in union with each other.

When all that happens, it is a remarkable achievement, especially in Catholic churches. For, in our culture, when and where do we ever sing together? Maybe at bars. Sometimes at sports games. Not too often at home, except maybe at Christmas time.

We can double the power of our prayer with song.