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Welcome to LETUSPRAY A New Service of ALMA

By Jill Maria Murdy

This is an exciting time in our Church History. This week the Cardinals will enter the conclave to begin the process of selecting a new pope. As a Church, we are celebrating the Year of Faith. ALMA-NPM is beginning to celebrate their 30th Anniversary, and we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of Vatican II. Certainly that is a good time to pause and reflect; to pray about how we prepare for and celebrate liturgy here within the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.

Every time we celebrate the liturgy we hear that call to prayer “let us pray” before the priest prays the “Collect” which gathers all our prayers together at the beginning of mass; and again in

the prayer after communion, where we pause to celebrate all that has taken place within the liturgy. Thus it is timely that we begin a new venture, as we share the flagship edition of **LetUsPray**. This newsletter will be a vehicle to share about upcoming events current and upcoming ALMA Events, reflect on workshops and concerts that have taken place as well as to continue to provide timely liturgical and musical advice.

As our mission statement reminds us, “We welcome all music ministers who strive to communicate the presence of the Holy One in the Christian assembly through the art and beauty of music. To this end, we

support each other in our ministry through gatherings of prayer and fellowship, together with opportunities for educational and spiritual enrichment.”

As our Pope Emeritus, Benedict XVI reminded us, “Beauty, then, is not mere decoration, but rather an essential element of the liturgical action, since it is an attribute of God himself and his revelation. These considerations should make us realize the care which is needed, if the liturgical action is to reflect its innate splendour.”

God bless you now, as you continue to prepare for the Sacred Triduum.

A “Thank You” to ALMA from an NCYC scholarship recipient

By Marissa Ellison

I wish to express my deepest thanks to you for your very generous contribution to my National Catholic Youth Choir (NCYC) tuition. Your support was greatly appreciated. I attended the National Catholic Youth Choir from June 12th through June 27th and can easily say it is one of the greatest music and faith experiences of my life. It was amazing to go to a place and meet other teenagers from around the country who want the same things as you: to learn about music and deepen their faith. The National Catholic Youth Choir provided us all with the opportunity to do both of those.

We sang a large variety of music. Six hours of rehearsal a day was a lot, but it was an amazing learning experience and so much fun! We were taught about vocal health and how your voice works. Cantor lessons were provided so that we could come back as trained cantors to benefit our home parishes.

Being on tour was an experience in itself. We had more time to bond with the other choristers and fully develop new friendships in a different setting. The time spent with our host families was priceless. Each family was unique in their own way, but they were all very welcoming and a lot of fun. Each of our concerts was hosted by a different church. The churches that we sang at were all very hospitable and excited to see us. It was fantastic to meet the audience after our concerts. I remember when we performed in Wisconsin and I would have people come up to me and say, “Hey! You’re the Wisconsin

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girl!” I was proud to represent our state. During tour, we also participated in the United Way Day of Caring. We were sent to different locations to do service work. I was sent to do yardwork at a house for people who have experienced domestic abuse. After the work was finished, I really felt like I made a difference in someone’s life. It was amazing to think that only giving up a few hours of my day, could really make a change.

We all had the opportunity to attend morning prayer every day with the monks and were provided much time for spiritual growth. One night, at about ten o’clock, we headed over to the abbey where our counselors had set up candles all over the place, and we had Eucharistic Adoration. It happened to be thunderstorming at that time. It was a truly haunting, yet comforting experience to be sitting there in the dark and silence with thunder booming and lightning flashing. I have never felt closer to God than at that moment. I can honestly say that I didn’t want to leave the church that night. I could have sat there and prayed all throughout the night. It was awesome to really experience what it was like to live

Work and Play

Scenes from the 2012 National Catholic Youth Choir, Collegeville, MN.

Left

The choir performs in concert at St. Richard Parish, Minneapolis, MN.

Right

Choristers skip to rehearsal.



on campus at St. John's. The two weeks that we spent at St. John's will be something I will remember for a lifetime. Our camp leaders were simply amazing. Our director, Dr. Theimer, taught us so much, not only about music and singing, but about life. Fr. Anthony was so much fun and taught us a lot about our faith.

I hope that other teenagers from my parish and diocese take the opportunity to attend the National Catholic Youth Choir. Thank you again for your support! I wouldn't have been able to achieve this opportunity without your assistance.

Sincere thanks,
Marissa Ellison

To view pictures taken during this year's choir experience, you can view them online at www.catholicyouthchoir.com.

Click on "Camp 2012 Daily Photos."

ALMA Scholarships Promoting our future

By Sheri Masiakowski

Part of our mission in the liturgical life of the parish is to foster and encourage youth involvement. The Annual ALMA Summer Program & Lesson Assistance Scholarship began in 2010 to give financial assistance to students of high school age who would like to attend summer programs such as Music Ministry Alive (www.musicministryalive.com), the NPM convention (<http://www.npm.org/EducationEvents/convention/index.htm>), the National Catholic Youth Choir (www.CatholicYouthChoir.org) or other church ministry-based music camps to improve their skills. High School students need apply for the Summer Program Scholarship by April 1st (one \$300 award, check written to the applicable Camp/Institution).

In 2012 we added a second scholarship category, lesson assistance. ALMA will offer two \$300 awards for lesson assistance. The application deadline for the Lesson Assistance is August 1st. A recent email provides detailed information on requirements and a complete application. Incoming freshmen through incoming seniors are encouraged to apply.

For more information and to apply, visit

<http://alma-npm.org/Scholarships.htm>



"What's in your folder?"

This month: David Bonofiglio, St. Matthias Parish

Favorite New Acquisition

"I Lift My Eyes" (Taylor Davis)
MorningStar 50-2560 | SATB, Piano

Commissioned in honor of a church rebuilding after Hurricane Katrina, this is a gorgeous anthem that builds from an ominous pulse in the piano and dissonant choral clusters to a layered but accessible statement of faith "The Lord will keep your life from this time forth, forever more. Amen." The minor seconds in the opening statement provide some unusual intervals for your singers to try out and your accompanist will love feel of the unusual harmonic progression in their hands.

Newly Discovered Gem

"Day By Day" (arr. Robert Leaf)
Augsburg Choral Library | SATB, Organ

This 1992 publication was a complete surprise. Unfamiliar with it, I grabbed it from our library to fill a post-communion meditation slot in fall. It looked simple to learn in one rehearsal and offered a simple reassurance of God's abiding presence. After Mass, half a dozen parishioners approached me to tell me how much they enjoyed this setting of the Swedish hymn. Same reaction at a recent concert at Sacred Heart School of Theology. Try this one - your congregation will love it!



Lord, source of eternal life and truth, give to Your shepherd, the Pope, a spirit of courage and right judgement, a spirit of knowledge and love.

By governing with fidelity those entrusted to his care may he, as successor to the apostle Peter and vicar of Christ, build Your church into a sacrament of unity, love, and peace for all the world.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



Save the Date!



ALMA will celebrate its thirtieth anniversary this fall with a banquet at Country Springs Event Center in Pewaukee on **Friday, September 27, 2013**. More details to follow but for now, put the date on your calendar and plan to join us to celebrate thirty years of ministry to God's people in the Archdiocese of Milwaukee.