|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| making the mass mine  Belmont Abbey 30 vi 17 | Abstract  Day conference on teaching the Mass through music  Euan Tait  [Course title] |

**Making the Mass Mine:**

*A training day on enabling our students to experience the Mass deeply and personally through music*

Belmont Abbey, 30th June 2017

*9.30am Arrival, registration, teas and coffees*

10am Welcome, Introduction to the day and Opening Prayers

**10.10am Experiencing the KYRIE,** *followed by short break*

* **DAY INTRODUCTION: Introduce** purpose & method. **“Making the Mass Mine”.** Formation, how teaching the Mass can be a series of short lunchtime/twilight talks -
* Today is OVERVIEW ONLY – time constraints - this day is compressed version to show you what is possible – not going through every line of Mass, or every activity, but opening doors to new approaches to use with your students.
* Approach as praying poet, musician-poet, retreat leader.
* Offer resources to you – activities and the power of music as a stimulus activity, stimulus to discussion, reflection, engagement and therefore deep learning…
* to enable students to “Make the Mass Mine” (not in secular, individualistic sense), to help them truly incorporate it into their inner life, make integral to their Christian lives, and as the summit of their journey – to create a language that makes sense to them.
* Note – our students teach us about their learning – each student becomes our teacher.
* **Resources:** thisdocument **on website. Wide range of resources – include art and imagery. Reason for classical** – outside normal listening experience, but very unfamiliarity can open for students - not underestimating young people’s ability to engage with **authentic emotion** in music (my love of rap!!)– part of holistic approach to resources. My approach as “praying poet.”
* **NOT music appreciation** with a bit of catechesis attached, but an opening up of the ways of the heart, enabling student to realise that the Mass is a shared experience, is “summit” of their **pilgrimage** during the week – reflects struggle of that week – and is itself in its various movements a pilgrimage. It is also a life pilgrimage, deeply linked emotionally and spiritually to our life journey. **Narrative of Mass** - Mass as pilgrimage.
* **Suggested structure of session with students:** 1. Discuss meaning of each “movement” of Mass in weekly sessions, i.e. Kyrie, then Gloria etc. Follow with **TALKS,** before playing piece of **music**, then series of **activities**, all intended to spark student’s own reflections on the personal meaning of mass for them - opening doors for students to lifelong engagements with collective worship.
* Issues of LATIN, of **language**. Need for familiarisation with Latin/Greek and reasons for use in pass Mass/extraordinary form (global common language). Allows for correction yet creative discussion.
* **KYRIE**: We are **called** not to fake piety, which is repellent to young people (“Are you for real?”), but to a real relationship with God (shouting at God in private prayer if we feel anger or pain for example) – what our students face in personal lives, sometimes very painful and challenging situations.
* We come to God as we are in all our pain, in our wrongdoing (challenging the narrative of **‘mistakes’** – taking ourselves seriously) – and we immediately realise **we do not have to pretend**.
* How music examples can stimulate understanding of how we respond to God: introduce with a talk/interpretation – music allows a way in, allows the music to speak for the depths of the heart…

**Music** *(as stimulus)***:**

* *Bach:* opening cry – then music of yearning – the incomplete relationship with God, maybe knowing things are broken or your response to the Gospel unfinished...
* Or sorrow/love – *Missa Criolla* (Sosa)
* *Mozart* Coronation (playful, humour) Mozart Mass in C minor, where it is song of love. Teasing God!
* It could be *Purcell*’s Hear My Prayer – what is your **unheard prayer**?
* You could pose questions for your students, once you’ve given your talk, but before you play the music - then play whole piece… “Lord, I know things are not right in my life, that I’m getting [this behaviour] wrong again and again, my heart is broken and I need to speak to you honestly, I don’t want to hide and pretend any more…” Context of MERCY…AND…
* But **context of Gloria and Sanctus – God’s delight in us, our delight in God,** that mutual praying that occurs.

**Possible activities**:

* 1. Build your students’ confidence with a private activity that engages with the text of the Mass, e.g. your “secret Kyrie prayer” – after each Kyrie, add your personal Kyrie: “lord have mercy because…” Can be part of cumulative **prayer journal** (this hits other ESTYN/OFSTED requirements, e.g. building literacy)?
* 2. SCRIPTURE and RESPONSE: Choose “Kyrie passage, a character who is in trouble” – e.g. woman of Samaria, Syro-Phoenican woman, woman caught in adultery etc – imagine/improvise a conversation with Jesus and his response – she is being real, telling Jesus about her life – if she disagrees with Jesus. How does scripture passage make you feel – angry? If so, say to Him, clearly, honestly! In pairs? Peter’s reconciliation with Jesus (issues of betrayal). “Go, sell all you have…” how can I? I need to live, to be safe….e.g create dramas from Gospels using original lines created by members of group expressing feelings.
* 3**.** HOMEWORK: journaling, completed pieces, photography (images expressing personal/societal need for “kyrie”), find your own music and scripture. *Then get participants to present this as a reinforcement starter at the next session…*

**11am Experiencing the GLORIA,** *followed by short break*

**GLORIA**:

Song of liberation, of call to life, of possibility (what are we capable of, what is our potential in God –we are being constantly recreated) – after reconciliation (cp Anglican Eucharistic practise, Gloria AFTER communion). The Gloria music of Peter after the meeting with the Risen Christ on the shore – not empty praise, but the praise of renewed life that comes from penitence and reconciliation. It is the sudden flooding in of the Holy Spirit into our whole being, and our saying yes to this great creative power, this rushing mighty wind of the Holy Spirit. Celebration and anticipation of what makes our lives creative - what is released in us through penitence!

**Music** *(as stimulus)*: Using music will allow you as teachers to **explore different aspects of the Gloria’s meaning**, as different composers explore different aspects:

* ***Vivaldi*** – Vivaldi was a teacher of girls in Venice – his Gloria setting is like children playing, skipping. It sings of the condition we aspire to, paradoxically, that of becoming fully adult, free and independent, yet retaining a child-like vision (the dignity of, and respect for, created beings), an openness, an interdependence (*Traherne: “The corn was orient and immortal wheat, which never should be reaped, nor was ever sown. I thought it had stood from everlasting to everlasting. The dust and stones of the street were as precious as gold: the gates were at first the end of the world. The green trees when I saw them first through one of the gates transported and ravished me, their sweetness and unusual beauty made my heart to leap, and almost mad with ecstasy, they were such strange and wonderful things: The Men! O what venerable and reverend creatures did the aged seem! Immortal Cherubims! And young men glittering and sparkling Angels, and the maids strange seraphic pieces of life and beauty! Boys and girls tumbling in the street, and playing, were moving jewels. I knew not that they were born or should die; But all things abided eternally as they were in their proper places. Eternity was manifest in the Light of the Day, and something infinite behind everything appeared which talked with my expectation and moved my desire. The city seemed to stand in Eden, or to be built in Heaven. The streets were mine, the temple was mine, the people were mine, their clothes and gold and silver were mine, as much as their sparkling eyes, fair skins and ruddy faces. The skies were mine, and so were the sun and moon and stars, and all the World was mine; and I the only spectator and enjoyer of it. I knew no churlish proprieties, nor bounds, nor divisions: but all proprieties and divisions were mine: all treasures and the possessors of them. So that with much ado I was corrupted, and made to learn the dirty devices of this world. Which now I unlearn, and become, as it were, a little child again that I may enter into the Kingdom of God. (Third Century in Centuries of Meditations).*
* **Creating the vocabulary of our unique faith, e.g. Interdependence,** of my belonging to you, of your dignity and holiness of your humanity, was a very powerful message in the earliest stages of my Christian journey, part of my own private ethical framework – what I do, how I behave “happens” to you, to all of us.
* Another aspect of the Gloria’s vivid life is expressed in ***Beethoven***’s wild Gloria – sense of wildness of our humanity, the power and creativity of our lives as created by the Creator – this is a wild, ungoverned love for God, with “glorificamus” thrown out like ejections of spiritual fire from us?
* ***Bach***, Dance - joining with liturgy/dance of heaven [Barron], **becoming part** of whole of creation. Longing of “et in terra pax”
* In this sense, this music **reaffirms our identity** in God, the “service is perfect freedom”, a vision of becoming free through forgetting ourselves and delighting to be people of love. As a young person, I really struggled with the idea of obedience and submission – no way – perhaps joyful cooperation with the divine life (vs. Franciscan theology about being channels/vessel of the divine life – I said to myself at the time “I’m not a vessel”)! Young people struggle with **issues of identity**, and ABofC’s moving response to his own crisis. Discovering our inner dance, our daily **inner rejoicing** - Bach triple time dance (e.g my becoming a Catholic)!
* Call to life/Gloria as the music of our vocation – try non-Eucharistic music as way in, e.g. ***Bruckner*** 5th (those who experience the Mass as a constant, renewing, sometimes daily vocation, see also the opening of 3rd - the sense of being called again, given our vocation anew, each time we enter the Mass pilgrimage), with release of the **Holy Spirit’s energy**. Gloria as a Pentecost music - Renewed life – Bruckner’s 3rd Finale, the Pentecost symphony. ***Finzi*** Dies Natalis “Will you see the infancy…”

**Possible activities**:

1. **Group activity:** Life in abundance - what is that for you? Simple group listing of what makes life good for you and why – e.g. laughter!
2. **“Private” journaling**, supported by tutor and introduced by scripture, on **identifying what is good in us**, what glorifies God in our humanity (important spiritual exercise), e.g.: **Scripture**: Unless you become like a little child, you cannot enter the kingdom of God. I played round his feet (proverb). How does who I am glorify God? Context is taking the narrow road after Kyrie, Peter and Jesus reconciled...Qus for students could include– how do I glorify You? What gifts do I have to offer You? **Less confident students** – think of what the shepherds offered – perhaps to them not much, but to God, infinitely precious – using this music to build self-image in God, to take part from the heart in the joy of heaven, to feel worthy to do so. Get students **to recognise calls to life** in their own lives – so we are getting students to recognise movement of the HS in their lives – and how to respond.
3. Taking sections of the setting and taking the emotion of a particular setting to look at key aspects of its meaning. For example, look at Bach’s setting of “et in terra pax” – the way he sets it, it is full of longing for peace, so that the listener has sense that we are both longing for freedom from war, and for personal peace. Then set question: “How am I a person of peace or war in my own life? How can I become a person of peace?” This could then be used for journaling – a more general version of this – “how can people be persons of peace…” can then be used for follow-up group discussion.
4. **Stretch and challenge**: can be to get able students to sing sections of a Mass setting – in harmony - by ear! Without sheet music…
5. **Exploring scripture and the Mass**: “Unless you become like a little child…” i.e. As before, get students to identify – Google – what scriptures can go with this part of the Mass.
6. HOMEWORK: journaling, completed pieces, photography, music.

**12pm-12.40 Experiencing the CREDO**

**CREDO**:

* The Credo is our song of love to the **Trinity,** to God creator who created for no better reason than He delighted to do so (that sense of **God’s delight in us** so important to emphasise, to Christ who goes into the depths of human humiliation and suffering and who bears in His person the full penalty of our brokenness, presents us, approaching a communion with Love, with the key songs of our heart – that we believe in one God in the persons of Creator, of Saviour, of Holy Spirit whose rushing mighty wind of creative energy tears into our lives with sometimes terrifying power. So how do we get our students to be able to **sing and not recite** the Credo (i.e from our “inner singing” –i.e. the way we live as people of God, as people of love in how we act – this is a joining with the action of the Kingdom/Holy Spirit), to experience **Christ singing back** to their hearts (we sing/pray to the Divine; the Divine sings/prays back) when they say – You were made flesh in utter vulnerability, You were made nothing in your trial, scourging and death, You were **resurrected** (as we will be - what does that mean to a person living, for instance, with crippling pain), ascended – and glorified (what does this mean for us - Corinthians)? What does it mean **to my heart,** to my sense of my living reality? How can we enable them to pray about this communally as part of the Faithful and yet pray authentically as a unique Catholic Christian? Again, one way is through music, but we can **differentiate** as we like – for example, by looking at visual approaches in a complementary way.

**Music** *(as stimulus)*: Here you have two **very different ways** of opening up the heart, through music, to what it means to live in belief.

* ***Beethoven*** - his Credo needs to be understood as that of someone who had suffered the worst wounding a musician could suffer – the loss of his hearing, which by the time he wrote this was almost total. **Heiligenstadt** testament. So, defiant quality in his music, but also ferocious, angry outcry. Credo opens with flash of light, call from Chorus – as what do you believe, but call of “I believe” seems to release this ferocious joyous energy… mystery of His being – *invisibilium…* then renews call and energy – Credo becomes a series of outcries to God – *Deum de deo* – so Credo as a series of pleas and pilgrim seeking not just affirmation – *qui proper nos homines* – song of our/God’s tenderness, shared singing with God, not just to God – *descendit* – *et incarnatus est* – mystery of love – action of the Holy Spirit represented by the dove of the flute, again extraordinary tenderness. Tenor’s great cry of “*Et homo factus est*” – **great cry of the royalty of our humanity** – Christ making our humanity divine – then *Crucifixus*, its struggle and pain – struggle of the **Fidelio Prisoners** in *“passus”* – here music descends to the depths of the prison, and the soloists become like wailing prisoners. *Et resurrexit* becomes explosion of light, **their light** that they are about to acclaim in Sanctus – *judicare* becomes call, not condemnation, that releases energy not suppresses it – renewed call of Credo – so what do you believe now? – becomes cries of longing, so messages to our students is it is okay to struggle – end extract at approx. 13 mins).
* The **Missa Criola**’s Credo is, in contrast, a relaxed conversation with Love about what gives the soul life – it is the soul entering into a dance with God rather than a struggle – and is a series of joyful calls to God (2 mins extract).

**Possible activities**:

1. *Individual activity*: First of all, start off with a journaling approach - What is your Credo at the moment – THEN *Group activity*: build a “response Credo” together as response to each aspect of this section. That is, rewrite each section in your own words, almost as your personal commentary, then work out how you can synthesize each statement from each person (this anticipates employment skills). Kind of questions you can ask: Why do you believe this?
2. What words do you associate with belief? What personal, political, community and church association have they for you?
3. **Exploring scripture and the Mass**: As before, get students to identify – Google – what scriptures can go with this part of the Mass?
4. HOMEWORK: journaling, completed pieces, photography, music, own scripture not chosen yet.

12.45 Midday Prayer, Abbey church

*1pm Lunch break*

**1.50 pm Experiencing the SANCTUS and BENEDICTUS,** *followed by short break*

* **Afternoon introduction:** We’ve been examining fresh ways of presenting the Mass to young people, who they can find ways in, ways of owning it - and how using music can be part of meeting that challenge.
* We aim to help people access a faith that sustains them throughout their lives, so that they open up their beings to the rich variety of vocations when we listen to the Holy Spirit – as parents etc
* One of the key challenges in teaching what Evelyn Waugh called “an ancient but newly learned form of words” (*Brideshead Revisited*) is to help young people access/create their own private **“emotional imagery,”** their own vocabulary of faith, enlarging the vocabulary of their hearts, so that they develop their own “Language for God”, their own way of understanding their relationship with God, of speaking about God, of speaking to Him on a way that is authentic to them, of moment by moment awareness of God.
* Why would we aim for this? Because we want them to be able to approach the Mass with truly open and engaged hearts, hearts engaged from the depths – praying the Mass through its natural language of music is another way of doing this.
* Music is as absolutely natural to us as breath; our lives, our interactions, song; our acts of praise and prayer, song, and drawn from the daily song of our lives.

**Sanctus & Benedictus – Music** *(as stimulus):*

**Singers**

We are singers; we do not cease to sing.

There is no one who does not sing, or who

can stop song in themselves, for our blood

is song, our breath notes of each life,

shared. In our greetings, our welcome,

our bird-twitter by the kettle, we sing,

and deepen the chords we have already,

years ago, even at our birth, begun…

* SANCTUS: We have lifted up our hearts in the Sarsum Corda; now, in singing (singing in the widest sense) the Sanctus, in acclaiming God’s holiness, very often we discover the energy of our holiness; God tenderly engages with the potential of our holiness and dignity as we sing, so it is no surprise that we find music that **releases the dance in us, our wildness**…
* *Mozart/Sussmajer* (Released energy of acclamation, how a real relationship with God releases powerful energies of creativity and joy…and Hosanna dance); *Verdi* Requiem (wildness – soul on fire); *Missa Luba* (a haunting dance); *Taverner* Protecting Veil (for composer, singing of holiness is to join with the eternal song of love to God). Communal songs – *Nkosi sikeli Africa* – stimulus questions - what is sacred in society? Why, what values does this embody/reinforce. As young person, *Nkosi sikeli Africa* became written on my heart as a song of personal liberation– I even learned the original Xhosa words!
* The BENEDICTUS is the acclamation of welcoming Christ into the Holy City, Jerusalem, as well as into the city, the Jerusalem of our beings, of our hearts – that is a hugely exciting action - it is the glory and hope of welcome. We use the words used by the Crowd to welcome Jesus as he rides in on a donkey in the week that is to end with his Crucifixion.
* *Karl Jenkins* Benedictus (Welsh aspect: – Karl Jenkins and other Welsh Masses…) *Beethoven* (solo violin as intimate dialogue with soul by HS; see also *Sibelius* 5 finale, excited joy of welcoming Christ and life infused by the Holy Spirit). *Bach* – intimate dance, flute and tenor solo.

**Activities**: *Questions and presentations* (link to OFSTED/ESTYN: developing gifts and employment skills, e.g. confidence in presenting ideas – you are using questions as stimulus for their own interpretation, while helping them develop skills in presenting their faith, perhaps in church context - and this is linked to employment skills):

* **1.** A development activity across the Mass training sessions. Set questions for small groups – they then create informal presentations as feedback (could use art materials to express these, or design PPT – perhaps an illustration of what the “Holy City of the heart” looks like – what are its key “landmarks” – for example, pictures and explanations of holy acts such as the seven works of mercy in a 21st century context etc)? SANCTUS: Idea is to develop real understanding of what holiness is. Get students to identify when they have been “holy” and why these are acts of praise to a Holy God. Identify hopes for a “holy”/loving life in the future. In group, students to develop answers to a series of questions and then present their answers: What is holy to you and why, what words or actions do you associate with holiness, what make societies holy? What makes a person holy? Can churches be holy? How? Identify Gospel links and quote on your PowerPoint. Create GROUP presentation.
* **2.** BENEDICTUS: How do we welcome Christ into our hearts? How do we make Christ welcome? How do we ensure Christ continues to be welcome there? Is it possible to drive Christ out? If Jesus came into our city/school/college today – perhaps in a battered small car, what sort of welcome would He receive? Create drama and characters reacting to the arrival of Christ – can include feelings of doubt. How did disciples feel, knowing what Jesus had said about his coming Passion? A Last Supper drama – or MONOLOGUES – choose disciple you most identify with and create and perform reaction to the last week of Christ’s earthly life, from Entry into Jerusalem to, say, fear of consequences when Jesus turning out money changers from Temple, perhaps wishing Jesus would keep quiet and not expose them – or joy that an old oppressive custom has been ended.
* **3.**  What are the *Scriptures* of holiness? Google, and present as to your interpretations of meaning: Ps. 130/150, the Passion reading (stimulus texts) e.g. get students to identify – Google – what scriptures can go with this part of the Mass.

**FEEDBACK SHEETS & OWN QUESTIONS.**

**2.40pm Understanding the AGNUS DEI.**

**Agnus Dei**:

* As we approach the most sacred moment of receiving communion, the Agnus Dei becomes our final love song to the Crucified Christ – we say who we think Christ is - the Lamb wounded, the Innocent One bearing our sing and going with us into the depths of our brokenness. Final pleading, final admission of one’s “poverty”, need for God (link to Barron DVD: this is ourselves orientating ourselves towards God – a process of stripping as Jesus was stripped on His Via Dolorosa). Sins of the world become our sins – interdependence – “sunder/sünder…” ….in the process of praying this – mercy reaches/prays back.
* Repeated nature of phrases (“O Lamb of God, o Lamb of God…”) gives it a “processional” feel. The heart on a journey.

*Two aspects* of its meaning that can be explored with students:

* Jesus spoken to with utter tenderness, admitting without pretending who we are –“interdependence” of my sinful actions or loving actions” - that Jesus is the innocent lamb of the Passover. Sense of comforting Christ – how do we do so in reality?
* **Intercessory**, interdependent nature of our Eucharistic pilgrimage – not just a personal journey but one shared in interdependence with our suffering fellow human beings and world. In this “processional”, we carry the people you love to the altar in your heart – and the living water, the bread for the life of the world touches it. Insights accessing young people’s “righteous (right relationship with God, fierce, fiery, the anger of love), creative” anger, the anger that makes them a force for change and compassion – in this sense, what longing do you bring to the altar, how do you want to be a person of pace and healing? Dom S-K “vision”?

**Music** *(as stimulus)*:

* *Part:* Frates – again if you as teacher are looking for a **non- verbal “way in”** to the hidden meaning of the heart in the Agnus Dei, then this piece sings powerfully. Starts with solo violin arpeggiated outburst of emotion, then series of repeated chorus which sound like “Agnus Dei” chant, over which the soul, processing to the altar, calls.
* *Bach* Agnus Dei Mass in Bm: instrumental song with its frequent key changes, has a questing quality – Bach’s final prayer seems to ask – and what am I Lord? Am I part of the sin of the world? *Cantus firmus* quality of soloist’s entry
* *Barber*: Agnus Dei: developed from the troubled String Quartet written in his early thirties. As set here it feels like the aftermath of a long struggle, an awed prayer after judgement and freedom, as if the soul looks back on its journey with sadness and shock – but the music rises to a great longing cry, as if the journey is always unfinished
* *Britten* War Requiem, setting “At a Calvary near the Ancre” by Wilfred Owen. This is an angry poem about the failings of Christians to respond in truth to the soldiers, the young people, who are fighting on behalf on their societies. Repeated phrase in lower strings have a sense of elegiac seeking, of people praying over and over again about war, almost about a societal guilt that cannot be assuaged. Tenor almost crying, as if about a friend, as so many soldiers did. Repeated phrase becomes setting of “Agnus Dei”. Almost another act of penitence in Britten’s hand. Final melisma, “dona nobs pacem” - final plea.

|  |
| --- |
| **At a Calvary near the Ancre**  One ever hangs where shelled roads part. In this war He too lost a limb, But His disciples hide apart; And now the Soldiers bear with Him. |
| **Chorus** Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona eis requiem. | **Chorus** Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, grant them rest. |
|  |  |
|  |  |
| **Tenor** The scribes on all the people shove and bawl allegiance to the state, |  |
| **Chorus** Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi... | **Chorus** Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world... |
| **Tenor** But they who love the greater love Lay down their life; they do not hate. |  |
| **Chorus** ...Dona eis requiem. | **Chorus** ...Grant them rest. |
| **Tenor** Dona nobis pacem. |  |

**Activities**:

* 1. Initial **starter/stimulus activity** for small group discussion: Google images re compassion/compassion for others and get to explain (e.g. Francisco de Zurbarán’s image of Lamb -) what would you bring to the altar?
* 2. Scriptures: As before, get students to identify – Google – what scriptures can go with this part of the Mass. e.g. Stripping of Jesus, John final dialogues – and get students to present answers to questions such as how and why, in your opinion, does this Scripture go with the Agnus Dei.
* 3. Create own **personal version of Agnus Dei,** i.e. new prayer after each stage of the Agnus Dei journey. 1st “Agnus – your personal Agnus, e.g.: “Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world, heal my angry heart, so that I may bring peace and healing to others.” 2nd Agnus “Lamb of God, that…..heal our city, so that…” 3rd Agnus: “Lamb of God…give us peace” – “give us your peace, the peace that wakens our hearts in compassion, hearts willing to share the journey with others…
* 4. Create, on paper, a **“Mass journey” artwork**, that summarises each stage of the Mass journey, perhaps using fragments of music, of Latin and English, photographs representing each stage, examples of everybody’s prayers and any journaling students extracts might feel comfortable to share…

3.30pm Mass (Abbey church or Oratory)

4pm Closing Prayer and depart