

CHOOSING MUSIC TO CELEBRATE YOUR WEDDING IN A CATHOLIC CHURCH

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First: Where music is placed in Catholic weddings

PRELUDE: The prelude is mood setting music that provides a gentle background while the guests are arriving. Fifteen to twenty minutes is ample. Usually the guests are very audibly visiting with each other and the music is kept to a comfortable background level, allowing the guests to greet one another. Links to examples are available, later see p.4.

PROCESSION of the WEDDING PARTY: Instrumental music (or hymn) while the Priest (or Deacon), servers, couples of Bridesmaids and Groomsmen process into the church for the wedding. Links to examples are available, later see p.2.

PROCESSION of Parents, GROOM and BRIDE: Instrumental music (or hymn) while the Groom and Bride process into the church for the wedding (possibly with Parents). Links to examples are available, later see p.3.

GLORY TO GOD: The sung prayer of the Mass, as on Sunday, sung by all. In Weddings outside of Mass a Gathering Hymn might be sung instead, by all, as the Gloria is not included in Weddings without Mass.

(1st reading)

PSALM: The Responsorial Psalm. Often the verses are read, and the refrain is sung by all. Later see Psalm texts p.7.

(2nd reading)

ALLELUIA: Sung by all before the Gospel reading, with a Gospel verse sung by the Cantor. Later see texts p.10.

(Gospel reading, Homily, and Wedding Rite. **Traditionally, following the exchange of the rings, the hymn "LOVE'S FOUNDATION" is sung by all.**)

----- *the following items are omitted in a wedding "outside of Mass"* -----

PREPARATION OF THE GIFTS: During which a congregational hymn may be sung by all, or instrumental music performed much like in the prelude, or a vocal solo can be performed. Links to examples of hymns, and vocal solos, are available, later see p.11 for hymns and p.6 for vocal solos.

EUCCHARISTIC ACCLAMATIONS: The Mass prayers a.) the HOLY, HOLY, b.) the MYSTERY OF FAITH, and c.) the AMEN, sung by all as on Sundays.

(The Lord's Prayer is recited at weddings, because the NUPTIAL BLESSING is prayed over the couple at the end of the Lord's Prayer, preventing the singing of the usual sung Doxology to the Lord's Prayer as on Sundays.)

LAMB OF GOD: The prayer of the Mass, as is sung on Sunday by all.

COMMUNION: During the reception of Communion, a hymn sung by all is preferred by the church. Links to examples of hymns are available, later see p.11. Instrumental music, much like in the prelude, or a vocal solo, can be performed.

----- *the following items are included in "all" weddings* -----

RECESSIONAL: Instrumental music for the entire Wedding Party to process out. Links to examples are available, p.4.

POSTLUDE: Music providing a gentle background for about 5 minutes while the guests continue to visit, instead of cutting to silence after the Recessional music ends. Similar musically to the Prelude, but possibly livelier. Postlude selections, like in the Prelude selections, are not typically listed in the program. Links to examples are available, see p.4.

Second: Links to MUSIC EXAMPLES – The YouTube links on the next several pages are examples of music, frequently chosen, **for all parts** of Catholic church weddings.

A good place to start in choosing music, is to select your two Processionals and your Recessional:

- a. the **Processional for the WEDDING PARTY to enter (Priest or Deacon, Servers, Couples of Bridesmaids and Groomsmen),**
- b. the **Processional for the Bride and Groom to enter, and**
- c. the **Recessional for the Bride, Groom and Wedding Party to exit.**

What to consider when choosing wedding processionals and recessionals:

1. Select **music for a.) the priest, or deacon, and the wedding party,** that is slightly **softer (quieter)** than **b.) the music you select for the Bride and Groom.**
2. Or, still in keeping with no.1 above, the **two entrance processionals** you choose, may **both** be more “louder” choices, or more “softer” choices; ... all combinations are popular, but vary in accord with different bride’s and groom’s tastes and expectations.
3. The **music chosen for the exit usually “has more energy”** (i.e. is louder, or up-tempo), **than the music chosen** for the **two entrance processions,** ... the general intensity builds as the celebration progresses.
4. **Several** of the music choices below **appear in more than one category.** How successfully a piece of music might work at one place in the wedding Mass or Ceremony, is related to what you choose at other places in the celebration – the choices need to work together (see again nos. 1 through 3 above).
5. The examples listed in the three categories below range from **softer choices at the top of each category - to louder choices as you go toward the bottom of each category.**
6. The music choices you hear on YouTube are *reasonable performances* of this music; ... BUT REMEMBER, **if the recording you hear is a string quartet or an orchestral trumpet, the same piece of music played on a pipe organ or piano ... will sound like a pipe organ or a piano, instead of a string ensemble, or other instruments.** Keep that in mind, and factor in the difference ... to visualize what you will hear at the wedding.
7. For your added convenience, **an asterisk * is placed in front of choices requested most often.**
8. We have **no control over commercials you encounter** on YouTube, ... sorry.

1st Processional - entrance of Priest or Deacon, servers and couples of Bridesmaids and Groomsmen. Click on links to examples and **pick one.**

*Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring - J. S. Bach (from Cantata no. 147)

a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UMNof7QZuGo&index=1&list=RDUMNof7QZuGo>

b. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BAA7_fSwxtQ

*Prelude no.1 in C - J. S. Bach (BWV 846)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PXMVvkQ70I88>

Wake, A Voice is Calling - J. S. Bach (from Cantata no. 140)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_Pml0vWMnk

Air - George Frederick Handel (from the Water Music Suite)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6ffucg114Q>

Sheep May Safely Graze - J. S. Bach (from Cantata no. 208)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_MtK9W_nok

*Canon in D - Johann Pachelbel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NlprozGcs80&list=RDUMNof7QZuGo&index=4>

*Trumpet Tune – Henry Purcell

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lyCJETwOb7U>

Trumpet Voluntary – Jeremiah Clarke ("the Prince of Denmark's March")

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D5j8jUa_M8l

2nd Processional – entrance of Groom and Bride, either together, or one after the other.
Click on links to examples and **pick one**.

*Canon in D - Johann Pachelbel

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NlprozGcs80&list=RDUMNof7QZuGo&index=4>

*Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring - J. S. Bach (from Cantata no. 147)

a. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UMNof7QZuGo&index=1&list=RDUMNof7QZuGo>

b. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BAA7_fSwxtQ

*Sinfonia - David N. Johnson

No YouTube link found

Trumpet Tune in D – David N. Johnson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LOsQv376qGQ>

*Trumpet Voluntary – Jeremiah Clarke ("the Prince of Denmark's March")

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D5j8jUa_M8l

*Trumpet Tune – Henry Purcell

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lyCJETwOb7U>

Rondeau – Jean Joseph Mouret

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84SAix2-Owc>

Rigaudon – André Campra

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0mIYn2EvnEE>

Te Deum Prelude – Charpentier

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-cVxzZqTFJw>

3rd Recessional – exit of the Bride and Groom, and the wedding party.

Click on links to examples and **pick one**.

Sheep May Safely Graze - J. S. Bach (from Cantata no. 208)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_MtK9W_nok

*Sinfonia - David N. Johnson

No YouTube link found.

Trumpet Tune in D – David N. Johnson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LOsQv376qGQ>

*Trumpet Voluntary – Jeremiah Clarke ("the Prince of Denmark's March")

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D5j8jUa_M8I

*Trumpet Voluntary – Stanley

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6wh7-c4CKAc>

Trumpet Tune – Henry Purcell

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lyCJETwOb7U>

*Rondeau – Jean Joseph Mouret

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=84SAix2-Owc>

Prelude in Classic Style – Gordon Young

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QGg5lqoLMXg>

*Rigaudon – André Campra

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0mIYn2EvnEE>

Te Deum Pelude – Charpentier

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-cVxzZqTFJw>

*Allegro Maestoso “Hornpipe” – George Frederick Handel (from the Water Music Suite)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0HUPhK8qmA&index=4&list=RDQb2CChm93dl>

The PRELUDE and the POSTLUDE – “before” and “after” mood-setting background music

Prelude: The Prelude is background-level mood setting program of music, held beneath the talking of the guests, to set a sacred mood for the wedding. It is a **standard selection of light classical and other styles of appropriate sacred music, much like what is played by string ensembles at festive formal church occasions** – only here, on organ or piano. Usually **15 minutes of instrumental music before the wedding is ample** and the names of the music selections **are not typically printed in the worship aid** (program). Most brides and grooms want an appropriate music texture provided before and after the wedding – **but frequently are not as interested in choosing the specific music selections which the guests will be talking over**. But as well, the

couple or family may request a specific piece/s of music to be included in the prelude or postlude that has special meaning for them – **if the music qualifies as appropriately sacred** and is not popularly secular.

Postlude: After the Recessional, a brief selection of light background music continues the mood – much like the prelude. This **avoids cutting abruptly from a majestic recessional, to nothing but the guests' conversation. Thus, the postlude is much like the prelude.** Most brides and grooms want an appropriate music texture provided before and after the wedding – but frequently are not as interested in choosing the specific music selections which the guests will be talking over. But as well, the couple or family may request specific pieces of music to be included in the prelude or postlude that has special meaning for them – if the music qualifies as appropriate (see above). If a **back-ground selection has special importance, there is nothing wrong with having that special selection, and others, be used at more than one place in the celebration - as a re-occurring theme.** Titles of the selections in the Prelude and Postlude are not usually printed in the Wedding Worship Aid.

Prelude and Postlude Examples:

Air - J. S. Bach (from the Suite in D)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rrVDATvUitA&list=RDUMNof7QZuGo&index=2>

Air - George Frederick Handel (from the Water Music Suite)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6ffucg114Q>

Arioso - J. S. Bach (Sinfonia Cantata 156; 2nd mvmt. Harpsichord Concerto BWV 1056)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j9E3aB-nSVk>

*In addition to the 3 examples above ... **SEVERAL other items in the earlier examples also qualify as Prelude and Postlude selections if performed as back-ground.** As well, there are many other selections not listed here, of similar texture and mood, that also are appropriate.*

At a Mass, if hymns or vocal solos are not sung during the offertory or communion, light instrumental music of the same style may be played.

Note: **The two wedding marches, by Wagner and Mendelssohn, are viewed by the Church as not appropriate for Catholic weddings.** In light of the Bishops' statements ("Music in Catholic Worship" and "Sing to the Lord") these marches are not appropriate because of their origins and the popular public perception that they are secular music. The first march was composed as a prelude to the bedroom scene following the wedding - next a murder happens; the groom is forced to return to another realm and thus the bride drops dead from consummate grief. The second march is incidental music for a pagan comedy of gods and goddesses that ends up in adultery and infidelity. Thus, both marches fail as music able to reflect the sacred prayer being celebrated in the Sacrament of Marriage. Historically, both were "blacklisted" by the Catholic Church in U.S. in the early 1900's following the publishing of the Moto Propria of Pope Pius X

Some of the sacred vocal solos that are popularly requested for Catholic Weddings:

Vocal solos must have words that explicitly speak of Christian love or the Sacramental union occurring within your wedding, or be from Sacred Scripture or other Christian texts. Other vocal solos that fit these criteria would also be appropriate.

- * Ave Maria - Franz Schubert

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y-kROtvE4-Q>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?annotation_id=annotation_193052353&feature=iv&src_vid=fzXOaQioeyc&v=J2qP0QSOZtY

Ave Maria - J.S. Bach/Charles Gounod

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OopipwYpYlo>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fzXOaQioeyc>

- * Bridal Prayer - Roger Copeland

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mRLGIqKQx50>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIR_fTuM3DA

- * By My Side - Thomas Porter

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZN08iQscZU>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B7JeLrxWOpU&list=RDB7JeLrxWOpU>

How Beautiful - Twyla Paris

In This Very Room - Ron Harris

Jesu Joy of Man's Desiring - J. S. Bach

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPeVluRjUi4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S6OgZCCoXWc>

- * The Gift of Love - Hal Hopson

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jZza7fUXIP4&index=6&list=RDB7JeLrxWOpU>

The Prayer - Carole Bayer Sager/David Foster

When Love Is Found - Brian Wren

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2FdNAGoaD2Y>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YzmcogSQ7u8>

- * Wherever You Go (Come set me like a seal upon your heart..) - David Haas (GC 867)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAS1NRDrNA8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P20wwyPAPw>

“*” selections that seem to be favorite choices

Responsorial Psalms (the approved Grail translation) **from the Wedding Ritual** – some of these are contained in the Gather III hymnal. The “C” numbers are the Psalm numbers in your “Together for Life” wedding booklet, and the “G III” numbers are music numbers of the Refrains and Verses in the G III hymnal.

Look over the Psalm texts and select the one that speaks to you. In addition to singing the refrain, if you want the cantor to sing the verses too (instead of reading them), pick either C2 Psalm 34 or C5 Psalm 128. Only the text of the Refrain is printed in the Worship Aid (Program). The texts below are the actual words spoken or sung in the wedding celebration – not the words in the current edition Together for Life booklet.

C-1: Psalm 33 GIII 1048 – Refrain: “The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord”

¹²Blessed the nation whose God is the LORD,
the people he has chosen as his heritage.
¹⁸Yes, the LORD’s eyes are on those who fear him,
who hope in his merciful love.

²⁰Our soul is waiting for the LORD.
He is our help and our shield.
²¹In him do our hearts find joy.
We trust in his holy name.

²²May your merciful love be upon us,
as we hope in you, O LORD.

C-2: Psalm 34 G III 1147 – Refrain 2: “Taste and see the goodness of the Lord” (***the verses in the hymnal contain the complete Grail text and could also be sung***). Refrain 1: “I will bless the Lord at all times.” is not in the GIII hymnal and would have to come from an alternate source to be sung.
<https://www.giamusic.com/store/resource/guimont-psalms-recording-cd445>

²I will bless the LORD at all times;
praise of him is always in my mouth.
³In the LORD my soul shall make its boast;
the humble shall hear and be glad.

⁴Glorify the LORD with me;
together let us praise his name.
⁵I sought the LORD, and he answered me;
from all my terrors he set me free.

⁶Look toward him and be radiant;
let your faces not be abashed.
⁷This lowly one called; the LORD heard,
and rescued him from all his distress.

⁸The angel of the LORD is encamped
around those who fear him, to rescue them.
⁹Taste and see that the LORD is good.
Blessed the man who seeks refuge in him.

C-3: Psalm 103 G III 1110 – Refrain 1: “The Lord Is kind and merciful; the Lord is kind and merciful.”
G III 1092 – Refrain 2: “The Lord’s kindness is everlasting to those who fear him.”
<https://www.giamusic.com/store/resource/guimont-psalms-recording-cd445>

¹Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and all within me, his holy name.
²Bless the LORD, O my soul,
and never forget all his benefits.

⁸The LORD is compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger and rich in mercy.
¹³As a father has compassion on his children,
the LORD’s compassion is on those who fear him.

¹⁷But the mercy of the LORD is everlasting
upon those who hold him in fear,
upon children’s children his justice,
¹⁸for those who keep his covenant.

(C-4: Psalm 112 – Refrain 1: “Blessed the man who greatly delights in the Lord’s commands.” is not in the
G III hymnal and would have to come from an alternate source to be sung. Refrain 2: “Alleluia”
may also be used – many music settings of Alleluia exist.)

Blessed the man who fears the LORD,
who takes great delight in his commandments.
²His descendants shall be powerful on earth;
the generation of the upright will be blest.

³Riches and wealth are in his house;
his justice stands firm forever.
⁴A light rises in the darkness for the upright;
he is generous, merciful, and just.

⁵It goes well for the man who deals generously and lends,
who conducts his affairs with justice.
⁶He will never be moved;
forever shall the just be remembered.
⁷He has no fear of evil news;

With a firm heart, he trusts in the LORD.

⁸With a steadfast heart he will not fear;
he will see the downfall of his foes.

⁹Openhanded, he gives to the poor;
his justice stands firm forever.
His might shall be exalted in glory.

C-5: Psalm 128 G III 1188 – Refrain 1: “Blessed are those who fear the Lord.” (*the verses contain the complete Grail text and could also be sung*). Refrain 2: “See how the Lord blesses those who fear him” is not in the GIII hymnal and would have to come from an alternate source to be sung.

¹Blessed are all who fear the LORD,
and walk in his ways!
²By the labor of your hands you shall eat.
You will be blessed and prosper.

³Your wife like a fruitful vine
in the heart of your house;
your children like shoots of the olive
around your table.

⁴Indeed thus shall be blessed
the man who fears the LORD.
⁵May the LORD bless you from Sion.
all the days of your life!
⁶May you see your children’s children.

(C-6: Psalm 145 – Refrain: “How good is the Lord to all.” is not in the G III hymnal and would have to come from another source to be sung.)

⁸The LORD is kind and full of compassion,
slow to anger, abounding in mercy.
⁹How good is the LORD to all,
compassionate to all his creatures.

¹⁰All your works shall thank you, O LORD,
and all your faithful ones bless you.
¹⁵The eyes of all look to you,
and you give them their food in due season.

¹⁷The LORD is just in all his ways,
and holy in all his deeds.
¹⁸The LORD is close to all who call him,
who call on him in truth.

(C-7: Psalm 148 – Refrain: “Let all praise the name of the Lord” is not in the GIII hymnal and would have to come from an alternate source to be sung. Refrain 2: “Alleluia” may also be used – many music settings of Alleluia exist.)

Praise the LORD from the heavens;
praise him in the heights.

²Praise him, all his angels;
praise him, all his hosts.

³Praise him, sun and moon;
praise him, all shining stars.

⁴Praise him, highest heavens,
and the waters above the heavens.

⁹Mountains and all hills,
fruit trees and all cedars,

¹⁰beasts, both wild and tame,
reptiles and birds on the wing;

¹¹Kings of the earth and all peoples,
princes and all judges of the earth,

¹²young men and maidens as well,
the old and the young together.

¹³Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for his name alone is exalted.

his splendor above heaven and earth.

¹⁴He exalts the strength of his people.

ALLELUIA VERSE – sung as part of the Alleluia before the Gospel reading – pick one that speaks to you, it will be sung by the Cantor during the Alleluia before the Gospel.

- E 1** “Everyone / who loves
is begotten of God \ and knows God.”
- E2** “God is love. Let us love one / another,
as God \ has loved us.”
- E3** “If we love one another, God remains / in us
And his love is brought to perfec \ tion in us.”
- E4** “Whoever remains / in love,
Remains in God and \ God in him.”

HYMNS – songs from the hymnal sung by all the people in the congregation – possibly two hymns are sung during the Preparation of the Gifts and during Communion.

966 When Love Is Found (marriage words set to a familiar folk melody)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YzmcogSQ7u8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2FdNAGoaD2Y>

967 Love Is the Sunlight (Morning Has Broken melody - with wedding words)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XU0TtFO30ps> (recording poor)

968 Wherever You Go (combination of text from the book of Ruth and the Song of Song from the Bible)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QAS1NRDrNA8>

969 Love Has Brought Us Here Together

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wfP4W2og_jl

970 God, In the Planning (Irish melody with wedding text about the wedding miracle at Cana)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkRoOiDqntM>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YC2FDd2eZZ8>

971 A Nuptial Blessing (for Cantor with congregational refrain for all)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epYRRpoLIVQ>

... other hymns in the hymnal are suitable for wedding masses, as well as other well know hymns not in the marriage section ... case in point are the selections below:

932 One Bread, One Body (Communion – “one in the Lord”)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6xldDYiA9A>

588 I Have Loved You (Michael Joncas – speaks of Christ’s love for us as a prefiguring of Christ and his church in a nuptial joining)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=60rpo8kxs6c>

751 Will You Let Me Be Your Servant

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=32jWTAIHxgE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MYpH3y4608E>

Love’s Foundation

Msgr. Bill’s hymn sung to All Creatures of Our God and King used in Msgr. Bill’s wedding Masses. The text of this special hymn reflects the topics Msgr. Bill includes in his wedding homily - sung to praise God for what has just taken place between the now husband and wife.

NOTES (items to remember - questions to ask):