



A Prayer for Ordinary Time

O Lord of seasons steady and still,
we praise You in the blessed ordinary,
Where quiet grace lingers
in the every day,
the bread, the wine, the oil, the water.

Let our liturgy lift hearts,
with faith, not fanfare.
In word and sacrament,
speak through the still and
quiet of our breath.

Bless the humble rhythm
of psalms and prayers,
And tune our lives to Your eternal melody.
May the choir's song echo
the calm of Your presence,
Each note a step on the path of daily holiness.
Through common days,
form us in uncommon love.

From the editor

Welcome to the APMN Newsletter for June, 2025. Our National Liturgy and Music Conference is taking place from 1-3 October in Adelaide and registrations are open at www.pilgrimsofhope.com.au. In this edition, we feature a report on Tony Alonso's tour of Australia and New Zealand; some resources and ideas about songwriting for liturgy; more info about our keynote speakers for the conference; information on scholarships for young people, age 14-35; and a report on the new Mass of the Ascension by Dr Maeve Heaney VDMF. Wishing you many blessings from the APMN executive.

Beth Doherty, Editor

FROM THE CHAIR – MICHAEL MANGAN



Dear friends and APMN members,

Registrations for the Pilgrims of Hope: Transformed through Sacrament and Song conference are continuing to roll in. Australia's premier national Liturgy and Music conference, jointly hosted by the APMN and the NLC will be held at the Hilton Hotel in Adelaide from 1 – 3 October, 2025.

This gathering is not-to-be-missed by anyone involved in liturgy or religious music in parishes, schools, diocesan offices and other Church agencies. The three featured speakers, composer and theologian Fr Ricky Manalo, liturgical theologian Rita Ferrone and Australia's own Fr Richard Leonard SJ will set the scene by engaging with the conference theme across five keynote presentations. They will be supported by six liturgy or music focussed mini-keynotes presented by Australian experts Gen Bryant, Fiona Dyball, Ann-Maree O'Beirne rsm, Clare Schwantes, Anthony Young and Elizabeth Young rsm. Over 50 breakout workshop options cover every topic imaginable from liturgy to music.

Don't miss this biennial opportunity to learn, network and share a mountain-top experience with others from throughout Australia and beyond. Take the opportunity to extend your stay and spend some time exploring the beautiful host city and its surrounding food and wine regions.

For full information and registration, go to:
www.pilgrimsofhope.com.au

See you in October!

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www.pilgrimsofhope.com.au

**National
Liturgy and Music
Conference**



**Pilgrims of
HOPE**
Transformed through Sacrament & Song

**1-3 October
2025
Adelaide**

www.pilgrimsofhope.com.au

Ignite Your Ministry: Applications Open for the APMN Scholarship 2025!

Scholarships for Young Pastoral Musicians Open

Applications close sharply on Friday, 27th June 2025, at 6 pm AEST.

For full details on the application process and to submit your materials, please visit:

<https://forms.gle/z4ZyVzZ2u6fT54fa6>

or visit the APMN website for more information.

Are you a passionate pastoral musician looking to elevate your skills and deepen your contribution to your faith community? Applications are now open for the APMN Scholarship 2025! The APMN is dedicated to nurturing the art of religious music in Australia, and we are offering two \$1,500 scholarships to empower emerging liturgical musicians like you.

This is a unique opportunity to invest in your musical and spiritual growth, with funding available for a wide range of developmental activities. Beyond financial support, successful scholarship recipients will also be invited to attend the APMN Conference and Dinner (October 1–3, 2025, in Adelaide), with registration costs covered by APMN. We're looking for enthusiastic pastoral musicians between the ages of 14 and 35. (Applicants under 18 will need permission from a legal guardian.)

Ready to apply?

Don't miss this incredible chance to enhance your gifts and make a lasting impact.

Applications close sharply on Friday, 27th June 2025, at 6 pm AEST.

For full details on the application process and to submit your materials, please visit: <https://forms.gle/z4ZyVzZ2u6fT54fa6>

We look forward to receiving your application and supporting the next generation of Australian pastoral musicians! For any enquiries, please contact: secretary@apmn.org.au

www.apmn.org.au



Dominic Schwantes, 2023 Scholarship Recipient Reflects



Dominic Schwantes is a Brisbane-based Organist and Pianist, and the 2023 recipient of the APMN scholarship. Here, he gives some feedback about his experiences.

Having applied for the scholarship, Dominic was able to procure specialised music instruction and continue in developing his proficiency. Dominic plays organ and piano for liturgies across the Archdiocese of Brisbane.

“Receiving the APMN scholarship has been transformative, enabling me to expand and elevate my work as an organist. Studying with Dominic Perissinotto enriched my technical ability and reignited my passion for the instrument, instilling greater confidence and purpose in my musical journey.

The financial support allowed me to focus fully on my studies, accelerating my progress and enabling me to engage in further learning of advanced techniques and diverse repertoires. This growth has greatly enhanced my ability to share the organ’s rich sound with parish communities, bringing greater depth and joy to worship.

My improved skills have inspired congregations to sing more confidently, creating a vibrant and uplifting atmosphere. This experience has deepened my appreciation for music’s unifying power in worship, and I am profoundly grateful for the opportunities this scholarship has provided to engage in further learning and thereby to serve God and others through liturgical music.”

“My improved skills have inspired congregations to sing more confidently, creating a vibrant and uplifting atmosphere. This experience has deepened my appreciation for music’s unifying power in worship”

***“I will lift my
eyes to the
mountains
From where
shall come
my help?
My help
shall come
from the
Lord!
So I’ll walk
in the light
of the path
set before
me
For I know
your love
will show me
the way.”***

***(Tony
Alonso, I will
lift my eyes)***



Tony Alonso delights Australian and NZ audiences

By Michael Mangan

24 days, 18 talks and workshops and four concerts. Liturgical composer and theologian Tony Alonso's whirlwind May tour of Australia and New Zealand had a profound impact. Facilitated by the APMN, Tony's tour saw him present events in Brisbane, Adelaide, Sydney and Ballarat along with Auckland and Whangarei in NZ.

In Brisbane and Sydney, he offered Liturgical Music Masterclasses for teachers and senior music students in Catholic schools. After an inspiring session on the purpose and place of music in liturgy, participants were given time to put some of their learnings into practice.

Tony's beautiful compositions were liberally sprinkled throughout the presentations as examples of the points he was making. The undoubted "hit" at all events was "I Will Lift My Eyes" where the final two choruses raised the roof on every occasion. The Brisbane concert featured a backing ensemble of drums, bass, guitar, cello and violin along with a 40 voice combined school and parish choir coordinated by Anthony Young.

The APMN hosted an intimate Liturgical Composers Masterclass in Sydney on Saturday 24 May. After outlining principles of composing music for liturgy Tony invited participants to present one of their compositions for helpful and encouraging feedback. All present were grateful for this collegial opportunity to receive helpful comments on their work.

In all workshops and masterclasses Tony continually emphasised that the untrained voice of the assembly is the primary musical instrument in liturgy. Those who compose, choose and lead music for liturgy must always remember that the full conscious and active musical participation of the assembly is the aim to be considered before all else.

All who engaged with Tony during his tour left inspired, uplifted and looking forward to future opportunities to connect with him.



Mass of the Ascension by Dr Maeve Heaney launched in Brisbane

Associate Professor Maeve Louise Heaney, a musician and member of the Verbum Dei Missionary Fraternity (VDMF) launched her recently composed Mass of the Ascension, at St Stephen's Cathedral in the heart of Brisbane's CBD on 29 May.

The launch event, titled Sing a New Song: How We Might Name God Into the Future, was a spiritually rich and musically vibrant evening of reflection and renewal.

Known for her theological depth and artistic creativity, Associate Professor Heaney brings a fresh voice to contemporary Catholic music. Mass of the Ascension is a new setting of the Eucharist that invites worshippers into deeper participation and contemplation through music.

Dr Heaney speaks candidly about the challenges of the modern world, and that prayer life is important, with music providing a unique opportunity.

"I think in our busy and device-filled worlds, it can be hard to make space for and experience God's presence, and that is essential to our faith lives I think music has a special capacity to help us experience the presence of God. That's why it's called the 'Mass of the Ascension', because Jesus' ascension is not him moving away from us, but actually bringing us into his Body, so the connection is deep music helps us feel that in embodied ways."

Published by Willow Publishing, the Mass of the Ascension can be purchased at

www.willowpublishing.com.au.

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Liturgical conference to bring together ‘the three Rs’

Rita, Ricky and Richard – It wasn’t intentional, but the Pilgrims of Hope: Transformed through Sacrament and Song conference will bring together three keynote speakers who will likely resonate with their rigorous revelations about rites, ritual and rhythm.

Too much? Well, forgive us if we reiterate: We’re on a rhythmic roll of the “Rs”!

This October 1 to 3, Adelaide will host a remarkable gathering of liturgical leaders, musicians, and educators with keynote speakers Rita Ferrone, Fr Ricky Manalo CSP, and Fr Richard Leonard SJ, and we cannot resist telling you all about these renowned leaders in liturgy, music and theology.

Rita Ferrone, award-winning liturgical theologian, underscores this theme: “Our pilgrimage of hope reconnects us to the gift of the liturgy. It’s not just ritual – it’s how we rediscover God’s presence in our communities”

Fr Ricky Manalo CSP, a Filipino-American composer and theologian, shares how his roots in devotional music and intercultural ministry reinforce the universal call to praise.


Fr Richard Leonard SJ, bestselling author and pastor, focuses on liturgy’s radical potential to evangelise.

The conference, at Adelaide’s Hilton Hotel, will be a rare opportunity to reconnect with 500+ liturgists, educators, and artists from Australia and New Zealand.

Details and registrations: pilgrimsofhope.com.au.

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***Details and
registrations:
[pilgrimsofhope.co
m.au](http://pilgrimsofhope.com.au)***



*“Composers,
filled with the
Christian
spirit, should
feel that their
vocation is to
cultivate
sacred music
and increase
its store of
treasures.”*

**Sacrosanctum
Concilium 121**

Composing music for the liturgy: key documents and principles

By Fiona Dyball

[All links and this article in its entirety can be accessed here on the APMN website.](#)

Composing music for the liturgy has some differences to writing music for personal prayer, popular piety and devotions, and catechetics. There can be some crossover, for example, selections from the music of Taizé can be used across formats, but there are also some helpful guidelines for those who want to offer their prayer in music specifically for the Mass.

APMN 2019 Conference presenter and theologian/musician Tony Alonso has just been in Australia and New Zealand offering workshops on composing for the church at prayer, and these were very well received.

Here are some recommended resources (documents, papers, websites, YouTubes and podcasts) from the APMN and Tony to help people develop and deepen their understanding of composing for the liturgy.

<https://apmn.org.au/blog/announcements/composing-music-for-the-liturgy-key-documents>



Fr Tony Doran appointed to National Liturgy Role

Fr Anthony (Tony) Doran has been appointed Executive Secretary for Liturgy by the ACBC, a unique and important role in the Australian Church.

Archbishop Patrick O'Regan, chair of the Bishops Commission for Liturgy, welcomed the appointment, praising Fr Tony's deep faith, liturgical knowledge, and pastoral experience.

Fr Tony, speaking to the Melbourne Catholic said that the new role offers a unique opportunity to bring together a lifelong interest in the liturgical life of the Church.

"With my experience as a priest, leader and educator to support the work of the Church across Australia, I will support the Bishops Commission for Liturgy and its three advisory councils: the National Liturgical Council, the National Liturgical Music Council, and the National Liturgical Architecture and Art Council."

Fr Tony is also working with the APMN and NLC on the Pilgrims of Hope Conference as a member of the organising committee.

Before entering the seminary, he worked as a secondary school teacher in Victoria. Since his ordination in 2003, he has served in both suburban and rural parishes.

He has also pursued advanced liturgical studies and has written extensively for Australian liturgical journals. A former president of the Australian Academy of Liturgy, he is a member of the international group *Societas Liturgica*.

One of his key responsibilities will be contributing to the development of a new Lectionary for Mass, a collaborative effort with bishops' conferences in Ireland and New Zealand.

www.apmn.org.au



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Fr Tony Doran