

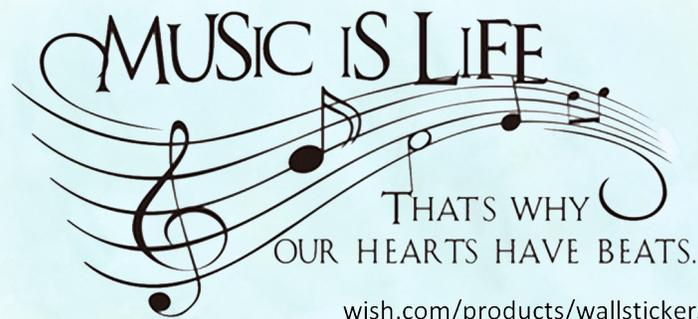
Heart ♥ to ♥ Heart



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*As we continue to explore St. Angela's **Creative Spirit**, our attention turns this month to a focus on the gift of **Music**. We are happy to have reflections from two musicians – an Ursuline Sister and a music teacher in an Ursuline school – on the relationship of music and prayer in their own lives and experience.*



From An Ursuline Musician

My parents met when they sang together in the church band. And my grandfather used to take me with him when he played the organ at Mass. Music was an integral part of our family: we sang and played in several choirs and orchestras; our parents taught us to sing even when we were in the car; there was singing at all family gatherings; and singing was also an important part of our prayer.

I love music very much. It is one of the ways for me to communicate with heaven. It is a kind of direct “telephone line” to God. I know God is online anytime. I intersperse my daily prayer with music - the type of music depends on the situation, the mood, the feast, etc. In recent years, the prayer of praise and the singing of praises have been very

important for me. Usually, it tunes me to sing in the Spirit and then I can speak with God much more easily. I notice that then I am more open, more ready to listen to God’s voice and inspirations. Sometimes I simply listen to music and sometimes I feel the need to play and sing to God myself...just to make God happy and to share my life with God. Even with music you can tell many of your stories....and God understands.

Thanks to music one can communicate well not only with God, but also with others. Yes, music is an important gift. We need to pray for musicians and singers to glorify God by their works.

—Marie Anna Linhartova, OSU,
Prague, Czech Republic

From An Ursuline Music Teacher

Music is the oldest form of communication and when we pray through music we communicate and listen to our heart's desires. We should also listen to the quiet ways God speaks to us through that music, but in the busyness of our days it is hard to take a moment to just listen.

So, I use music as prayer at the beginning of each class. Often it is a contemporary Christian song, or a song that we will be singing at Mass later in the week. Sometimes it is a piece of 'classical' music. Regardless of the genre, I tell my students to find a comfortable position, heads on desks if they want, eyes open or closed, and to open their hearts and minds. Maybe they have something they need to bring to God, or to ponder; maybe they have nothing and should listen for God's voice to speak to them through the music. It only takes a moment, but it can change the way one's day is going.

For me personally, there are certain pieces of music that I reach for depending on my mood. I also have my favorite hymns and psalms. I have been a song leader and cantor for many years and there are days when I

sing a psalm or hymn that I have sung many times and a certain line speaks to me, almost as if I have never seen it before. One such hymn is *Go Make of All Disciples*. I have sung this hymn for years, especially around Easter. I chose it as the closing hymn for our opening school Mass as I liked the idea of sending our students off for a new school year being empowered to be disciples: "We hear the call... Inspire our ways of Learning." As I was teaching it to the choir, I was struck by how much the third verse reminded me of St. Angela and the mission of Ursuline teachers around the world:

"'Go make of all disciples.' We at your feet would stay
Until each life's vocation shows forth your holy way.
We cultivate the nature God plants in every heart,
Revealing in our witness the Master Teacher's art."

Let us all take some time, like Angela, to sit at the feet of Jesus and maybe we will hear God's voice in the music we are listening to, and it will inspire us to cultivate the minds of the students entrusted to us.

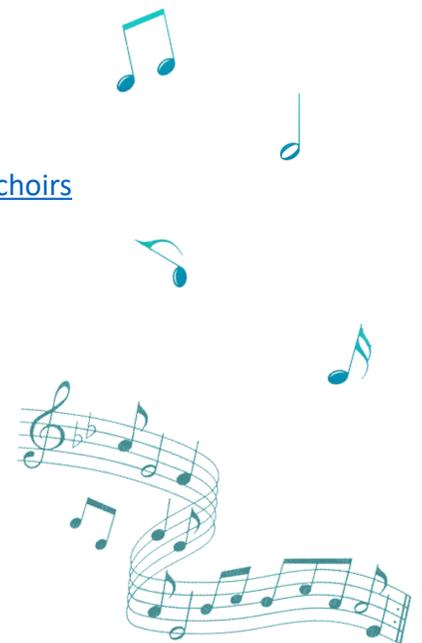
—Susan Glancy, Ursuline Academy,
Dedham, MA



Praying with Music

<https://www.teresathomasmusic.com/>

<https://www.ocp.org/en-us/blog/entry/prayers-for-choirs>



For Pondering

- How have you used, or might you use, music in your own prayer? Possibilities might be singing prayers, or using a song in prayer. Or perhaps using the lyrics of a song as prayer by reading the words aloud or writing as the words are sung.
- Music sparks creativity. Write, draw or create in your own way as a form of prayer while listening to music.
- Music as prayer figures prominently in the Bible. Pray with a musical Bible verse to deepen connection with your musical ancestors in prayer (*Ps. 57:7, Ps. 96:1, Ps. 150:1-5, 2 Chronicles 5:13. Colossians 3:16*).