

Christian rock music can be appropriate and effective

by **Father Bill LeGrand**
 "Praise him with trumpet sound; praise him with lute and harp! Praise him with timbrel and dance; praise him with strings and pipe! Praise him with sounding cymbals; praise him with loud clashing cymbals! Let everything that breathes

praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!" (Psalm 150; 3-6 R.S.V.)

Can we visualize how the ancient Hebrews praised the Lord? By Biblical Exegesis (analysis and study) and History, we know increasingly that the Jewish people frequently sang the Psalms with gusto.

How strange it would seem if devout Jews of antiquity could hear us reading the Psalms or chanting them in a dirge-like fashion!

Perhaps no area of worship is as controversial as hymns and praise music. As Christians, especially in the so-called mainline churches, we've become grounded in anthems and proper liturgical music, sometimes to the detriment of sacred music as a form of congregational praise.

It's not that glorious liturgical music is inappropriate, for the Body of Christ appreciates such classics as "A Mighty Fortress is Our God", "Faith of Our Fathers", "Gloria In Excelsis", "Te Lucis Ante Terminum", "The Magnificat" and "Immortal Invisible, God Only Wise".

However, the sombre, exact forms of classical hymns, anthems and chants are only one aspect of our repertoire of Christian music. Somehow we have lost sight that the Lord Jesus can be praised as powerfully with fiddle, steel guitar and ghetto blaster, as with trumpets and organ.

Two years ago I was having lunch with two fellow clergy in our area — Duane Peters (Lutheran)

and Barry Fellingner (Pentecostal). Duane and I, coming from the more sedate Anglican and Lutheran traditions, were taken aback by Barry's comment, "You know, guys, your church music can sometimes be stifling, when only liturgical stuff is used."

Duane's remarks matched my own sentiments when he replied "Good grief, Barry, you're dismissing hundreds of years of glorious hymns."

Nonetheless, upon reflection, Duane and I realized Barry had a point. How often we had visited our Churches in cities, where choirs sang glorious anthems for people. Somehow, the atmosphere was one of coldness and indifference... Christians sitting respectfully and honouring Jesus Christ, as one who must — by our image — be a musicologist.

As Barry expressed it, "Sure guys, liturgical music honours God, but does it always praise Him and move the heart to joyful beating? Isn't it a bit sterile and unapproachable?"

My answer to Barry had to be an honest, "Yes, it can be... if our people sit like spectators on a log, unmoved and unmoving."

In all fairness to our mainline churches, we do need the glorious music of our rich, liturgical traditions. But, there are times when guitars are powerful instruments of praise and witness.

Last fall, Barry's words came back to me as I attended a Coffee House at St.

Peter's United/Anglican church in Red Rock. A rock band, Victory, was playing and witnessing to Christians of many denominations in a packed house. I had arrived in dark suit and collar as a priest, determined to prove how negatively Christian Rock undermined genuine Christian praise.

Being a lifelong fan of country music, I could appreciate how its rustic plainness could speak to the heart... but rock? UGH! Secular rock was fairly dreadful stuff, heard with cotton wool in one's painful ears!

For perhaps the second time in my life, music and lyrics spoke to my heart. A placid man, I tried valiantly to hold back tears... especially from rock musicians. The words echoed in my mind, "Christ is the Rock of my salvation." I had heard this message in country music for years, yet it took a female rock singer's voice to make me feel the impact of this Biblical message.

David Wilerson, an American Evangelist, has defended Christian Rock, as a medium to bring young people to Jesus. In Red Rock, this band touched the hearts of grandmothers as well as teenagers. Christian music — liturgical, country, rock and folk — must touch us deeply to be effective.

To condemn Christian Rock, without having the wisdom to study its lyrics and the experience of hearing its sounds, is unfair. Certainly, we have a right to enjoy our favourite form of music, but can we denounce that which we don't understand for others?

At a Deanery Camp last summer, Ray Gauthier and his band played for our Eucharist with teenagers. Seeing young people pray spontaneously and clap their hands to folk/rock sounds, touched me. It was the closest experience I have ever known about a celebration of Communion.

Many of these teens from Thunder Bay had drifted from their parishes, where music and prayers were stifled, formal and rigid. Some shared with one that this Eucharist,

with the Proclamation of the Word and Sacrament was meaningful for the first time in their lives.

Barry's music within his tradition would not always be appropriate for Anglicans or others in the mainline churches, because we tend to have a more reflective and sombre tradition. Yet, Barry's music has its place in Christ's body. As we

Anglicans noted recently at St. John's, having Christian country and rock sounds occasionally, help us to experience a new dimension in praise.


When we have the opportunity, perhaps it's time that we start "Rocking with Jesus." At least, the ancient Hebrews, if they could be with us, would appreciate this form of spontaneous praise.

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 in honour of
Lucy Costa
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BOURKE

Our sincerest Thank You to our friends and relatives for the help and support given to us following the death of our father, Larry. Special thanks to Father Peter, The Pallbearers, The Legion Members, The Knights of Columbus and The Ladies of the CWL gave such a lovely luncheon following the funeral mass. Your thoughtfulness will always be remembered.
Lorne, Sherrie, Cassandra, Mary, Mark, Erin and John




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At its April 23 meeting held in Marathon, the Lake Superior Board of Education approved its 1986 budget, which calls for an average increase to the local mill rate within the Board's area of jurisdiction of approximately six per cent.

A Board news release from Board Director Marg Twomey noted that "the effect on the individual home owner's taxes cannot be specified at this time, pending a meeting of the municipal clerks to determine the exact sharing ratios."

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John & Maria Cebrario are happy to announce the birth of their son
Johnathon Rudy
 a little brother for **Danielle** and a cousin for **Matthew**.



Johnathon was born at 1:15 p.m. January 19, 1986 at the McCausland Hospital. Proud grandparents are **Cosimo and Rosetta Diano and Giovanni and Marcella Cebrario**. Special thanks to Dr. St. Rose, Dr. Bailey and all the Nurses Staff at the McCausland Hospital. Thank you for all your time and help it was greatly appreciated.

CARD OF THANKS

We, the family of the late Ed Wawia, express our heartfelt thanks, and deep appreciation, for the expressions of comfort and sympathy shown to us during the recent loss of our dear husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather.

Thank you to relatives, friends, neighbours, co-workers and business associates, from near and far, who offered comfort and support. A very special thanks to the Most Rev. Bishop O'Mara, Father E.T. Kennedy, Father Wm. Maurice, and Father Bernard Campbell for celebrating the Requiem Mass. Thanks to the altar servers, organist and choir members.

To all of you who sent floral donations, mass cards and cards of sympathy, those who came to the house and attended the mass, or thought and prayed for us, thank you.

To those who prepared food and brought sandwiches and baking to our home, we thank all of you. There were so many of you that gave, that we cannot thank you all individually.

Thank you to the members of the C.W.L. of Nipigon for the lovely luncheon which they provided following the funeral services.

To all of you who provided us with songs and music of joy and peace during the wake services, thank you. A very special thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Peter Elliott of Elliott's Funeral Home for attending to all the funeral arrangements. A very special thanks to Bob and Carrol Marks, who started C.P.R. immediately at the Vimy Arena in Winnipeg. Thank you to Father Vince Herner, of St. Paul the Apostle R.C. Church in Winnipeg for his words of comfort and solace. Thank you to the Doctors and Nurses of Grace Hospital, in Winnipeg and also to the Paramedics for their immediate response.


Thank you to the players, coaches and managers of the Elks 82's 11 year old rep. hockey team. Thank you to the St. James Lions Hockey Association for their expressions of sympathy.

Thank you to honorary pall bearers; Jimmy Blanchette, foreman at Camp 75; William Carmody, rafting foreman; George Chaboyer, cousin; and Andrew Hardy, a lifelong friend.

Thank you to Stanley Bouchie, Greg John, Conrad Borg, Gerald Bouchard, Allan Odawa, and Milton Wawia for serving as active pall bearers, who our beloved husband and father held close to his heart.

May God Bless and walk with each and everyone of you, your kindness and thoughtfulness will never be forgotten.

Marie and family.



action realty

Action Realty is pleased to announce that Lynn Hodder has joined the team. Lynn and her family reside in Terrace Bay and she recently passed the Ontario Real Estate exams with honors. Lynn is now fully qualified and is eager to assist everyone in the Terrace Bay and Schreiber area with all their real estate needs. Lynn may be reached at her home by phoning 825-9077.



Lynn Hodder

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