

2012 Church Music Survey: *Church Music Parish Practices*

This year, we sought information about the church music practices in the parishes. Many of these questions were prompted by the concerns and desires of our Holy Synod during the National Forum's meeting with them in March 2011. The National Forum and the Metropolis Church Music Federations will be able to use these results to assist parishes in their presentation of church music. In all, 300 individuals responded, ranging from 24 to 49 from each of the Metropolises. Metropolis results are also available.

1. **Types of Respondents:** Respondents were asked to select the one role that best described them. The majority of respondents were choir directors (45%):

Role	Count	Percent
Choir Director	135	45%
Director/Organist	6	2%
Choir Member	60	20%
Chanter	31	10%
Organist	16	5%
Priest/Other Clergy	26	9%
Youth Music Teacher	7	2%
Composer/Arranger	3	1%
Parish Administrator	4	1%
Other	12	4%

2. **How often do the following occur in your parish?** The survey results show that less than 50% of chanters, choir directors, and choirs seek the blessing of their priest before services. Similarly, less than 50% of choir directors, priests, and clergy confer with each other before services.

	Yes	No	Occasionally	Don't know	Responses
Before services, the chanter seeks the priest's blessing.	38% 107	18% 49	6% 16	38% 107	279
Before services, the choir director seeks the priest's blessing.	21% 58	55% 151	10% 26	14% 39	274
Before services, the choir seeks the priest's blessing.	10% 26	77% 206	5% 14	8% 20	266
The director and the priest confer over the day's services.	44% 123	14% 40	33% 94	9% 25	282
The director confers with the priest over the order of service.	45% 127	15% 42	32% 89	8% 23	281
The director confers with the chanter over the order of service.	39% 104	23% 62	26% 69	12% 33	268

3. **Education of Choir Members:** A majority of directors explain the order of services and feast day changes to their choir, though fewer expand that education to explain the meaning of the hymns. Less than 20% of priests attend rehearsals and explain hymns to the choir.

	Yes	No	Occasionally	Don't know	Responses
The director explains the meaning of hymns to the choir.	30% 82	27% 73	38% 104	5% 14	273
The director explains the feast day changes to the choir.	58% 157	18% 48	20% 55	4% 12	272
The director explains the order of services to the choir.	69% 189	13% 35	15% 42	3% 9	275
The priest attends some of the choir's rehearsals.	21% 58	42% 115	33% 90	4% 11	274
The priest explains hymns and/or feast day services to the choir.	16% 44	49% 132	31% 83	4% 11	270

4. **Use of organ accompaniment:** Nearly 65% of the respondents said that they used organ accompaniment in their parish.

Value	Count	Percent
Yes	191	65%
No	77	26%
Occasionally	27	9%

For those that used organ accompaniment, the following practices were noted. Only slightly more than a third reported that members depend on the organ for their pitch. Almost all reported that the organ does not overpower the singers. 67% of the organists play during communion, while fewer (53%) play as the people are exiting the service.

	Yes	No	Occasionally	Don't Know	Total #
Can members get their pitches without organ help?	36% 77	28% 60	33% 70	2% 5	212
Can choir members be heard over the organ?	93% 196	2% 4	5% 10	0% 0	210
Does the organist play during communion?	69% 144	20% 41	12% 25	0% 0	210
Does the organist play at the end of the service as the people are receiving antiphon?	53% 58	38% 42	9% 10	0% 0	110

5. **Church music practices as the people are receiving communion:** The most prevalent practice (45%) is that the choir sings hymns, followed by choir and chanter sharing the presentation of hymns. The organ alone is used infrequently (5%) and it is unlikely that this time is used for the children to sing hymns.

Activity	Count	Percent
Choir sings hymns	131	45%
Chanter chants hymns.	25	9%
Choir and chanter share singing/chanting.	91	31%
Only the organ is played.	15	5%
Children sing or read during communion.	5	2%
Other:	25	9%

6. **Resources:** Respondents report that choir leaders and chanters use the Liturgical Guidebook to a great extent (87%). Good percentages use the Forum's Hierarchical Guidelines, the Verses to the Antiphons book, and the Patriarchal Imerolghion (about a third each). Hardly used are resources for older voices and youth programs.

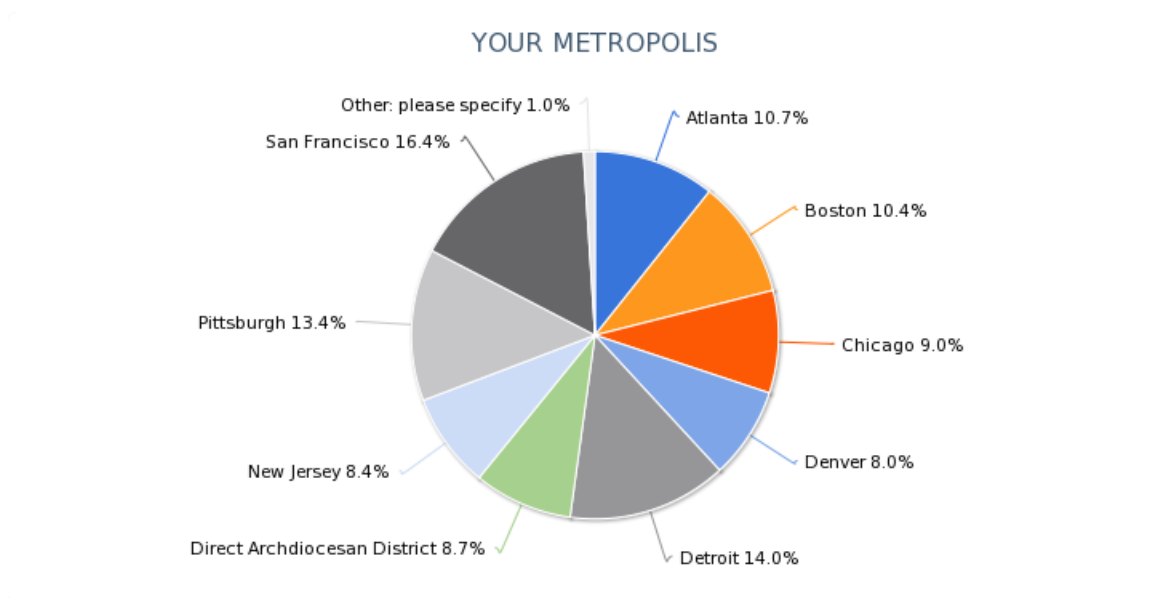
Resources	Yes	No	Occasionally	Don't know	Total #
National Forum Liturgical Guidebook?	87% 254	3% 10	.7% 2	9% 27	293
National Forum Hierarchical Guidelines?	46% 114	20% 51	10% 24	24% 61	250
National Forum's Antiphonal Verses book?	38% 94	31% 77	7% 18	24% 61	250
Patriarchal Imerolghion?	32% 79	30% 74	10% 24	29% 73	250
Other Imerolghion?	9% 22	48% 112	7% 17	36% 83	234
National Forum's Working with Senior Voices handbook?	2% 5	70% 169	5% 13	22% 53	240
National Forum's Starting a Youth Music Program handbook?	10% 23	59% 141	9% 22	22% 53	239

7. **Comfort with liturgical language and choir requirements:** High percentages report being extremely comfortable with all, though respondents reported being least comfortable with knowing the reason for the hymn changes.

	1 Not at all comfortable	2	3	4	5	6	7 Extremely comfortable	Not applicable	Total #
Knowing liturgical terms like apolitikion, kontakion?	4% 13	1% 4	4% 12	4% 12	8% 24	15% 44	62% 180	0% 0	289
Knowing and following the order of services?	2.8% 8	.7% 2	2% 6	2% 6	8% 23	15% 42	70% 203	0% 0	290

Knowing reasons for the feast day changes?	4% 11	3% 9	3% 9	6% 18	9% 27	16% 47	58% 166	0% 0	287
Getting to church on time for services?	3% 10	0% 0	.7% 2	1% 4	2% 6	12% 35	80% 232	.3% 1	290
Paying attention during services?	3% 9	.3% 1	1% 3	1% 4	4% 10	13% 36	78% 224	.7% 2	289
Attending rehearsals?	4% 10	1% 3	3% 7	1% 4	5% 13	9% 25	65% 184	13% 39	285

8. Metropolises represented in the survey:



Value	Count	Percent
Atlanta	32	11%
Boston	31	10%
Chicago	27	9%
Denver	24	8%
Detroit	42	14%
Direct Archdiocesan District	26	9%
New Jersey	25	8%
Pittsburgh	40	13%
San Francisco	49	16%
Other Jurisdiction	0	0%
Other	3	1%