

# Jasmine Riel

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The following statement details my personal beliefs and philosophies on the ministry of Cantorship for Catholic liturgies.

Ephesians 5:18-20 instructs children of God to “be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns and songs of the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

**Cantors are servants to God and the Church.** To answer the call to cantorship is to say “Here am I, Lord; I come to do your will” (Psalm 40). A cantor serves not because of what this ministry does for them, but because of what their ministry does for the church and God’s people.

**Cantors possess an understanding and awareness of liturgy, and how their role supports liturgy.** Cantors are not only good musicians, but proclaimers of the Word. They are devoted to doing their part to ensure that the liturgy flows smoothly and beautifully, understanding how the music connects to scripture and prayers throughout the liturgy.

**Cantors are committed to improving their craft to ensure that they are fulfilling their responsibilities to the Church.** Cantoring requires an equal balance of musicianship, talent, liturgical awareness, and presence. Methods for improving a Cantor’s ministry include, but are not limited to, rehearsing music outside of the church, enrolling in vocal lessons or musicianship classes, studying and dwelling on the Word of God for guidance, and pursuing a Cantor certificate.

**Cantors are an equal and unique component to the entirety of the music ministry.** The music ministry may be composed of multiple parts including cantors, pianists and organists, other instrumentalists, choir members, and the congregation as a whole. The Cantor is never more important, as we are all equal in God’s eyes, but just as every person—religious or layman—has a duty to the church, the cantor has theirs.

**Cantors perform their responsibilities skillfully, confidently, and spiritually.** A Cantor is fully present in the liturgy and totally aware of how the music fits into the liturgy as a whole. They sing their parts well, accurately, and with intention.

**Cantors are shepherds in their parish community.** Cantors assist in guiding the congregation to full and active participation in the liturgy. Cantors set an example for God’s people on how to praise and glorify the Lord whole-heartedly and with love. They make all feel welcome in the church and encourage all to come as they are.