

A Coffee with Alessio



The Sacrament of Reconciliation during the Season of Lent

Spoiler alert: If you haven't seen the film *Lady Bird* and would like to, you may consider doing so (before reading my column), as I am going to mention the film in my column today.

In addition to prayer, penance and fasting, which are the three prongs of Lent, the Season of Lent is a time for Reconciliation with God and neighbour. Therefore, Lent is a perfect time for us to go to and receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The Sacrament can be received just with individual absolution or with the Second Rite of Reconciliation. I always think the Second Rite is best suited to the Seasons of Advent and Lent, to allow us as penitents to think about what we are actually doing, and so that God's grace can work more effectively in us after receiving the Sacrament. Sometimes, we are rushing to the Sacrament from everything else we are doing, and then we aren't thinking about what we are doing. We then go into the confessional and can't remember what we were going to say.

Anyhow, as you know I like to go to the movies amongst other activities. One must always make time for fun activities! So, I went to see *Lady Bird*. I am going to focus mainly on the daughter in the film- Christine who also goes by the name Lady Bird McPherson. played by Saoirse Ronan, and her mother Marion McPherson who is played by Laurie Metcalf.

For most of the film Christine and her mother are at each other's' throats, and nothing either person ever does is good enough for the other. At the end of the film Christine (after leaving for college) when she unpacks her suitcase, finds some letters from her mother (that her dad put in her suitcase) and her dad doesn't want her mother to know (he did that). Nonetheless Christine 'Lady Bird' has a positive response to reading these letters and rings and leaves a message of gratitude for both her parents (in particular her mother). She mentions there are things she wanted to tell her mother, but they weren't talking. The phone call ends with a whole lot of gratitude and she finishes by saying thank you. So, after a lot of bitterness and anger, as well as a lack

of communication between these two people, there were attempts between them to reconcile at the end of the film.

Now what has this film and reconciliation got to do with us as liturgical musicians? Well, just as there was healing in this film between Christine and Marion, Lent is a good time for us all to focus on how we can live our lives better and improve on how we do things. As I mentioned, Lent is wonderful time to celebrate this Sacrament. I feel if you are going to use the Second Rite of Reconciliation it should have some music in the ritual. The format I would follow for this Rite is as follows:

- Entrance Hymn (one that is already familiar to the congregation)
- Opening Prayer
- Responsorial Psalm (sung)
- Gospel Acclamation (sung)
- Gospel
- Homily
- Examination of conscience
- Hymn (optional)
- Individual Reconciliation

I wouldn't use new music for this ritual. Instead, stick to the music that speaks of forgiveness, healing and reconciliation that you already know.

So, on that note, keep up your great work as we continue the Season of Lent and enjoy your coffee!

Mr Alessio Loiacono
Music Field Officer

Friday 2 March 2018