"You must go on living in My love... love each other as I have loved you... go and bear fruit that will be lasting." John 15:10, 12, 16

March 1999 • VOL. 2, ISSUE 1

Editor: Susan Bailey
Submit articles and inquiries to:
milonoah@aol.com

Contemporary Catholic Artists Network
Website:
http://members.aol.com/milonoah/
SusanBailey/catholic.html
Decisions

Since the beginning of the new year, I have been involved in the recording of my first CD, and it has been an education, to put it mildly. Certainly the technical innovations are amazing, making my little four-track look so primitive (though it did the job). And if I thought self-producing a tape was hard work, I had no idea what hard work really was until now. Recording a quality project certainly takes a great deal of patience, endurance and good humor.

But navigating the practicalities is the easy part. Traveling the spiritual path is another matter. Never before have I needed the Lord's guidance as I do now. Never before have I needed good friends and family to be there for me, pray for me and hold me accountable for my actions. Never have I needed prayer so much. Never have I desired discernment and wisdom as much.

I never dreamed that the temptations of the music industry would be so intense. Satan indeed can be most deceptive, using even people I trust to try and lead me away from God. And at the same time, as my vision expands and my imagination soars, I have to decide: what constitutes obedience to God, and what constitutes seeking my own glory? If I write and compose songs that hint at God rather than speak of Him directly, are they courageous and innovative songs that encourage the unbeliever to seek out the Lord, or do they compromise the gospel in order to be more commercial and more accepted? Can a song and a performance be made more commercial in order to broaden the appeal, but still remain faithful to the call of God? How do music ministry and the music industry come together? Can they?

As I ponder these questions, I think about Jesus and His ministry. To whom did Jesus minister? Certainly He sought out His own people, for He was sent first for the Jews. But who among His own did He seek? The pious and religious? The learned and the wise? The bright and the beautiful? Those who understood and obeyed the Law to the best of their ability? No. He sought out sinners. The tax collector. The prostitute. The poor, the humble and the simple who understood nothing more than the basic needs of life. And as Jesus moved freely among sinners, He didn't hold back on the truth. He didn't remain within the safe confines of His family, friends and tradition, but boldly moved out into the world, armed with the truth, and most of all, armed with love. And Jesus sacrificed for that truth, in love. He sacrificed comfort, security, honor, popularity, prestige, and, His life. He went all the way, never holding back, never doubting what His mission was, and never lacking in love.

continued on page 12
Kathy Troccoli is a well-known artist who has had tremendous success in both secular and Christian markets. Her album, Stubborn Love (1982), had the distinction of being the fastest selling debut album by a female Christian artist. In 1991, Kathy achieved mainstream success with the album, Pure Attraction, which included the huge hit, “Everything Changes”. This led to her opening for Michael Bolton on a major tour. Her self-titled album in 1994 included several other hits on adult contemporary radio. Her latest, Sounds of Heaven, is her most spiritual in a while. It is an excellent album with the highlights being "I Will Choose Christ" and "Go Light Your World". These two songs happened to be associated with Life Teen (a national Catholic youth organization) and Prison Fellowship Ministries respectively. She has been the national spokesperson for Life Teen since 1993.

Kathy: I actually recently came back into the church. I left in 1978 really disillusioned. It has really been through the Life Teen program I'm involved in, when I got asked to sing for the kids. I went to a Life Teen Mass where the Lord revealed to me what He truly wants from the Catholic church and for the Mass. I was amazed at the life within this Mass. I had been very judgemental of Catholicism when I left, and the Lord spoke to me so strongly, "Kathy, you can't judge how I come to my people". Through that whole experience, I started reading again and started really coming to love the Mass. I believe that every Catholic needs to understand their faith more. Scott Hahn, an incredible teacher, said Catholics are Rockefellers but they don't know how rich they are. I want to encourage and enlighten Catholic people.

Kathy: I think that there is a bit of that. This isn’t just a problem in the CCM industry. It’s happened for hundreds of years. There's division, there's judgement, there's miscommunication. What I would like to do is to do what Jesus would have us do, and that is to focus on Him and His love.

Dave: Do you feel that the CCM industry, which is run predominantly by Evangelical Protestants, skirts around the fact that you have returned to the Catholic Church?

Kathy: Yes, I did. Rick Wake, who also produced Taylor Dayne and Mariah Carey, liked my voice and expressed interest in me. While we were recording the album, he said he had a Diane Warren song that Taylor Dayne didn't want to do. She gave it to me and I had a Top 5 hit with it. I think of my career really starting again from that point. God has done so much in these past 5 years.

Dave: Your next album was a self-titled album. This is usually reserved for a debut album. Did you do this because you felt you were starting over in some way?

Kathy: Not really. I was going a little further into this pop thing. There are a lot of beautiful love songs on that album. What I really wanted to do, though, was a gospel album. I have a very strong desire to minister. That's been a dilemma throughout my career. I really like to do a more sophisticated, ballady, vulnerable style which I did on Sounds of Heaven and which will be on my new album. I would really like to do a 40s Christmas record. Artists such as Judy Garland, Sarah Vaughn and Tony Bennett were big influences on me.

Dave: Could you tell us a little about your involvement with Life Teen?

Kathy: It was started by Father Dale Fushek. I dedicated continued on page 15
It took many years for me to realize that my God-given talents were not intended to be used for my own purposes, but rather His. This, and many other things, became very clear to me once I understood and accepted what God intended my relationship with Him to be. We all need to understand this, for it establishes the basis for every aspect of our lives, including our music ministries. We can turn to the Bible for insight and answers. Scripture tells us that we are very special to God - the people He has chosen - His possessions (1 Peter 2:9, Psalm 100:3). God loved us so much that He gave His Son, that we might believe in Him and have eternal life (John 3:16). His name is to be praised at all times (Psalm 113:3). We are His people - He is our God. If Christ is truly the center of our lives then everything we do reflects that relationship. This is where our purpose as Christian composers, musicians and artists must be rooted.

Giving praise to God and worshipping Him with music and singing are mentioned countless times in Scripture. Many think of praise and worship in the context of a Sunday morning church service, but praise and worship are actually connected to life itself. It is interesting that these two words are often used together, yet their meanings are quite different. To praise is to commend, applaud, approve, glorify, or magnify. To worship is to honor, adore, admire, revere, or venerate. Praise deals with a relationship to someone while worship deals with a relationship with someone. Anyone can be praised for things they have done or accomplished. We might be praised for our musical abilities or performance. God, of course, is praised for who He is and what He has done. Praise reflects a positional relationship.

Worship, on the other hand, is very personal. It is a response to a more intimate relationship with someone. Worship is instinctive to our humanity since we naturally need and depend on those who are greater and more capable than ourselves --- like the dependent, loving relationship of children to their parents, or of one spouse to the other. The Christian artist who is a true worshipper will be a living testimony of God working in his or her life and be an encouragement to others that they may also become worshippers. God does not need our praise, but seeks worshippers who will worship the Father in spirit and truth (John 4:23).

There are many elements that can be categorized as things that create attitudes, direct expressions, or release expressions of worship. Of those that release expressions, music and singing are universal. Although the use of things that create attitudes for worship through atmosphere (architecture, stained glass, paintings, sculpture, vestments, candles, etc.) may not be accepted by every Christian church today, music with singing is most always included - and quite enthusiastically. Biblically, especially in the Old Testament, we find that worship may be expressed in various ways - through music, singing, shouting, raising our arms, clapping, kneeling, bowing our head, or other external behavior. Expressing ourselves in any way as a response to our love for God is an expression of worship.

Prayer is another element that is very much part of worship. Prayer is how we communicate with God and is essential to our relationship with Him. Many songs are actually prayers put to music. I recall a popular saying, “He who sings prays twice.” The expressive nature of music coupled with appropriate lyrics can be even more worshipful than either one alone.

Hopefully, at this point, we have established that we are chosen by God, who loves us very much and gave His Son, Jesus Christ, who we place at the center of our lives. And our praise and worship (through the various elements) is a response to the relationship we have to with Him.

In Part 2 of this series I will present some ideas on how the various elements of worship can be integrated into our musical programs and performances, and share some experiences and offer suggestions on how to structure a program that will provide an atmosphere to create attitudes of worship for our audience or congregation.

Mark Muretisch has been involved in contemporary worship for nearly 20 years as a member of St. Elizabeth of Hungary parish in Pittsburgh, PA. He currently serves as Worship Team Leader at Jefferson Hills Bible Church in Pittsburgh. Mark has been a member of different local Christian bands, is a singer, songwriter, and musician, and has self-produced 3 recordings of original music. For more information visit his website at http://www.telerama.com/~mwm/mark_m. For questions or comments send email to mwm@telerama.com.
Catholic radio is growing, slowly but steadily, beating the odds along the way. The bulk of Catholic radio programming focuses on talk, with programs on the teachings of the Church in obedience to the Magisterium. According to Jerry Usher, director of programming for Immaculate Heart Radio, Catholic radio mostly consists of teaching and preaching because of a strong sense of confusion in the American Catholic Church and the feeling amongst some that errors are being spread and taught. Catholic radio right now is mainly used for evangelical purposes, to spread the Truth. He added that Catholic music has not been played much in the past because the production quality of most recordings did not meet the standards necessary for broadcast on the radio. This however, is beginning to change as more Catholic artists begin to realize the need for quality recordings, and seek out and find the resources necessary to make these recordings.

Organizations such as the Catholic Association of Musicians are addressing this issue and assisting artists in their recording efforts. GrapeVine and the CCAN website are also available to assist artists by providing information and contacts.

This special report presents a comprehensive listing of Catholic radio stations accepting music and their criterium, plus a focus on individuals who have reached out in faith to serve in this unique ministry.

Please note: CDs are preferred over cassette tapes. Professional studio quality is required for airplay.

Before sending any recordings to any station, it is recommended that you write to the contact at the station requesting submission policy. Artists should be paid for usage of their recordings through affiliations with organizations such as ASCAP and BMI.

Special Focus: Catholic Radio

BY SUSAN BAILEY

K V T O A M 1 4 0 0

Alex Ouyoung, director of CROSS
(Chinese Radio of Spiritual Services)
San Francisco, CA • Fax (415) 566-4802
CROSS is a Chinese Catholic group producing a radio program about the Good News of God and targeting young people. The program will broadcast on Saturdays from 9-10pm and music will play an important role. Fax Alex Ouyoung for further information on the submission of music.

Catholic Radio, Brisbane, Australia
c/o David Redford
22 Diamond Crest Avenue
Deception Bay, Queensland 4508, Australia
David works for a secular station in Brisbane, Australia and is permitted to play 20% Christian music. He is always looking for good Catholic music.

K U C R
88.3 FM
University of California, Riverside, CA 92521 • Attention: Teri Seipel
Teri has a program on Saturday mornings featuring Christian music. She has been very supportive and will often play whole blocks off of CDs and tapes, and she will send you a tape of the broadcast.

W B V M / W L M S
P.O. Box 18081, Tampa, FL 33679-8081
(800) 223-WBVM; Fax (813) 282-3580
W BVM is in its twelfth year and has a new expression of its style and format - Spirit FM! They hope to reach a wider audience, to give glory to God, and to raise the spirits of listeners through more up-beat music. They honor Mary, share the peace of Christ and emphasize the Holy Spirit in all their programming.

K A N J 9 1 . 5 F M
1168 CR 235 or P.O. Box 933, Giddings, TX 78942
Attention Paul Jamar, General Manager • (409) 542-0405
KANJ has been on the air since December of 1997 and plays a wide variety of Christian music including many Catholic artists such as John Michael Talbot. They are always looking for new submissions.

continued on page 13
When the pope visited St. Louis last month, more than 20,000 attended the "Light of the World" Youth Gathering and celebration. High profile contemporary Christian artists there included dc Talk, Rebecca St. James and the Supertones. None is Catholic.

It's the kind of thing that troubles contemporary Catholic musicians. Mike Zabrocki, who has three albums and a record company contract (with HeartBeat Records, which bills itself as the “first recording company in the United States to bring contemporary Christian music to people within the Catholic faith”), said that the papal visit was a missed opportunity for the church to spotlight Catholic artists. "You don't need to sell tickets if the pope comes to town," he said. "You don't have to have the dancing bears and the best light show. The pope is coming, and 100,000 people will show up, regardless of the weather. What happened was friendly fire. You get shot by your own people by accident."

Being a Catholic artist today can be lonely, insiders say, especially if your music style falls outside of the realm of the sacred or liturgical. "We have killer liturgical musicians and musicians that work with choirs and orchestras," Zabrocki said. "We have plenty of that, but the church doesn't necessarily recognize us, the other side." It's also difficult to gain recognition in the general Christian marketplace. Doug Van Pelt, editor of HM (formerly Heaven's Metal) magazine, said that the contemporary Christian music scene is "open armed," and that "there's not a lot of people standing guard, saying, Catholics keep out."

Others disagree. Zabrocki says he was rejected by a major Christian record label because of his "deep affiliation with the church of Rome." Herb Busi, general manager of Icon Media Group, said it's not unusual in Nashville today to hear the Catholic church referred to as "the whore of Babylon."

Busi said, "Up until a few years ago, the only Catholic books you'd find in general market Christian book stores were in the occult section. To pull those out and put Catholic music on regular shelves is something that [book store owners] wrestle with daily.

Other artists tell similar stories. Tom Booth, the national director of music for LifeTeen and one of the few Catholic artists to perform for the St. Louis papal youth rally, told of a Protestant church that canceled a concert that was to have featured Christian artists Michael Card and [John Michael] Talbot.

"The tour was getting too much press and starting to look too Catholic," he said. Another Protestant church then opened its doors for the singers. More than 1,500 people attended. "There's just closed minds and open minds out there," Booth said.

While few Catholics have experienced widespread mainstream success in the contemporary Christian music industry, Catholic musicians seem optimistic about the future.

Susan Bailey is editor of GrapeVine, "the newsletter for Catholic Recording Artists" and a member of the Catholic Association of Musicians. She said, "My sense is that there's a burgeoning underground movement right now. I think we're going to find a new way. I don't think we're going to end up going the traditional route. Within the contemporary Christian market there's a lot of pitfalls. I'm very disturbed by the fact that a lot of the Christian companies have sold to larger secular groups that will have the final say over what the product is. There's a lot of danger that the message will be watered down so more money will be made."

Booth agrees. "I do feel it's an exciting time. There's a buzz in the air, a kind of grassroots movement. We're on the edge of something. We don't need stars, and I don't know that we need to imitate Nashville. ... We shouldn't seek after hip and put a Catholic face on the contemporary Christian music world, which is kind of putting a Christian face on the Secular world."

New developments in the Catholic music world include the "Table of Plenty" tour, which visited 52 cities beginning in late 1997. Booth, [John Michael] Talbot and Tony Melendez participated in the tour.

A spokesperson for Melendez told NCR, "I won't say it's a first, but it's new to Catholicism to have a tour come in on a bus, with production, lights and sound. It was probably one of the most successful Catholic tours ever, with Catholic artists being on the road and playing to Catholic parishes with contemporary Catholic music."

A second Catholic Association of Musicians tour, "Cast Your Nets," will include Melendez, Jean-Ann and Joe Hand, and Jim Cowan and will visit 20 cities beginning this February.
With this issue, GrapeVine introduces "The View from the Trenches," a compilation of comments and conversational threads about issues of interest expressed through email (and thanks to Jim Cosgrove for the suggestion!). The issue this time around concerns Pope John Paul II’s visit to St. Louis in January and the lack of Catholic musicians represented during his visit. We begin our discussion with excerpts from an article printed in the National Catholic Reporter on February 5, 1999 by Teresa Malcolm entitled “It's pope as pop star in youth rally” (excerpts reprinted with permission, National Catholic Reporter, Kansas City, Missouri. Subscriptions: 1-800-333-7373.). This article offered some provocative comments regarding the rally and the music presented there.

"It felt like a rock concert, with a day-long series of opening acts met with the customary polite indifference or mild interest, all but a prelude to the big moment when the star hits the stage. And when Pope John Paul II appeared at the entrance, he was greeted by 22,000 teenagers cheering, screaming and crying. … The youth rally … featured prayers, speeches and Christian rock artists, all driving home the messages to stay true to your faith and to stay chaste.… Inside the Kiel Center, many of the featured speakers were Catholic speakers, but the bigger-name Christian bands - the Supertones, Rebecca St. James and dc Talk - are all non-Catholic. Music dominated the day at the center. Emcee Steve Angrisano was joined by fellow Catholic singer Tom Booth in leading the crowd in sing-alongs, complete with hand gestures to dramatize the lyrics.

… The youth rally ... featured prayers, speeches and Christian rock artists, all driving home the messages to stay true to your faith and to stay chaste.... Inside the Kiel Center, many of the featured speakers were Catholic speakers, but the bigger-name Christian bands - the Supertones, Rebecca St. James and dc Talk - are all non-Catholic. Music dominated the day at the center. Emcee Steve Angrisano was joined by fellow Catholic singer Tom Booth in leading the crowd in sing-alongs, complete with hand gestures to dramatize the lyrics.

Booth, the director of music for the Life Teen movement, was commissioned to compose a theme song for the youth rally. His contribution, "Cry the Gospel," was sung numerous times throughout the day. ‘Say not that you are too young,’ Booth sang, answered by the 600-youth choir and gradually, more and more audience members: ‘We are holy, We are strong!’

Even teens who were not fans of Christian rock music were pleasantly surprised by the entertainment value of the rally. ‘I thought it was going to be boring until 6:00,’ says Colleen West, 18. She and two friends, Kristin Weyman and Frank O’Brien, from the parish of St. Gerard’s in the St. Louis archdiocese, had been listening to the music while playing cards in the hallway of the arena.

The bands, they said, were ‘real bands’ and better than most Christian music. ‘They’re religious, but not religious to the point of being corny,’ said O’Brien, 17. ‘It’s nothing like, ‘Oh my God, I have to run out and buy it,’ he added. ‘But it’s good for this,’ said West.

… For Oscar Negrete, a 31-year-old Columbian attending Conception Seminary College in Conception, Mo., the rally was ‘strange and different.’ He said he expected something more spiritual, ‘but this is very beautiful.’

I think the young people are happy with the program,” said his fellow seminarian, Gilberto Vallego, 34, of Mexico. ‘It is necessary because the pope won’t arrive until 6 p.m.’ But he admitted, ‘I don’t like the music. It’s too noisy.’ …

While the focus of this discussion revolves around the lack of Catholic representation in the music, it is also worthwhile to point out the reaction of the youth to the music in general. The comments by Frank O’Brien and Colleen West (‘It’s nothing like, ‘Oh my God, I have to run out and buy it,’ he added. ‘But it’s good for this,’ said West) were particularly revealing of the uphill battle that Catholic artists face in trying to engage Catholics in their music. Here are comments by Mike Zabrocki, Jim Cosgrove and Susan Bailey about the controversy surrounding the lack of Catholic artists at this event:

Mike Z.: I have a slight problem with this visit. I have news from a good source that the powers that be hired dc Talk and jars of Clay for a Youth Concert during this visit. Now don't get me wrong, they are great groups but ... this is the leader of the Catholic Church ... why don't we have Catholics providing the concert ministry?

Jim C.: I've got a problem with the "Them" and "Us" position. I'm down here fighting a battle to get my music heard,
Bernie Choiniere is a Catholic singer, songwriter and recording artist from Billerica, MA. He is a Life Teen music minister and has devoted his music ministry to spreading the Gospel to young people. He is also the official music minister for the Apostolate of a Silent Soul, Inc., the ministry of Little Audrey Santos, known as a victim soul. Bernie has recently released his third project, RSVP (see review on the next page). I had the pleasure of meeting Bernie at Little Audrey's anniversary mass at Holy Cross Stadium in Worcester, MA and conducted this interview shortly thereafter.

GrapeVine: Tell me about your background. What led you to become a musician?

Bernie: Music has always been a big part of my life. Growing up with the French Canadian tradition, music was always the highlight of our household. Music was something we lived by and was always a priority in the home. Any sense of rhythm that I have I attribute to my father's natural abilities as a musician. My singing comes from my mom. She sang a lot as a young girl and entertained her relatives for years. I started playing the drums in the first grade and the piano when I was in the fifth grade. In junior high and high school I was always part of the band (stage band as a keyboard player, marching band, etc.) and the chorus (chamber singers, the jazz singers and the barbershop quartet). But theater was one of the highlights of my high school years. I was always very intrigued with the whole idea of creating characters and being part of a whole imaginary world. On top of all this I played in a couple of rock bands with a few guys I knew and we liked to play a lot of top 40. We really weren’t any good but it was fun just the same.

GrapeVine: When did you decide to include your faith in your songs? Did you go through a conversion experience and if so, please describe it.

After receiving a degree from the Boston Conservatory of music I joined a rock band. The band would rehearse 2-3 days a week and gig on the weekends. 1990 was a huge searching period for me. I drank a lot and smoked pot. I was living a pretty dark lifestyle. I really wasn’t happy except when I was high. One day my cousin came to visit me at work and began to educate me about Mary, the Virgin Mother of God and all the conversions people were experiencing around the world. She told me about the visionaries and the manifestations that were happening and how miracles were getting people’s attention and that their lives were being changed. My first thought was “What are you smoking?” I had been away from the church for some time at this point and my faith really wasn’t important to me. Prayer was the furthest thing from my mind and I didn’t even know in my heart if God was real or a fraud. She challenged me to pray and seek God. She especially encouraged the rosary. I began to pray it, one decade a day for 3 months. The Lord revealed to my heart through the rosary that He indeed was the living God and never to doubt Him again. It wasn’t until I began to seek Christ that I remembered a story my mother used to tell me when I was growing up. I remember her telling me that Mary appeared to her and her 2 sisters silently for 3 nights when they were little girls. This happened shortly after her mother had died and given birth to their new baby brother. For some time growing up I never put two and two together. It never hit me until I discovered and realized the true power of the rosary and the great work that Mary is doing for the church/her children. I really do believe that prayer and closeness to Christ is what our Blessed Mother is trying to convey and that we should be ready to meet our Creator at anytime because we don’t know when we will meet. My mission is closely related to Mary’s in the sense that many do not know of Jesus and the sacraments He left us.

When my rosary changed to a gold color one decade a day for a week only three months after I received it from my cousin, I gave my life to Christ. It was kind of freaky but in all the excitement there was a peace that I could not describe. It felt as if Jesus was giving me a very big hug the whole time. I’ve been praying it ever since. Music for the glory of God has been one of my passions. I’m very honored that the Lord has chosen me to be a part of His team.

GrapeVine: What would you say if the main message of your music? Do you have a particular group that you are aiming your music at?

The main thrust for my tunes is relationship with the Lord. When I go to speak to people, particularly teens, I challenge them to engage into a heart to heart with God. There are so
many teens out there who still have hang ups about prayer and how to pray. Because it is such a difficult time for them with their peers, hormones, boyfriends and girl friends, school in general, parents, etc., I try to bring out the positives, like their gifts, the beauty of being alive, and how they can change things if they really want to. I love teenagers. They own the world in so many ways and they really can change things. They just need someone to tell them it's OK to be different and it is OK to take risks. Like saying “I'm proud to be Catholic” for starters.

BERNIE CHOINIERE

continued from page 9

BERNIE CHOINIERE

What kinds of trials have you faced as a Catholic musician? When did you feel certain that God was calling you to this unique ministry and how has He helped you to deal with these trials? What has this done for your spiritual life?

As a Catholic musician I definitely have had my challenges. In the beginning I used to go to a lot of different parishes just to witness about the urgency for prayer and what a great gift it is to be Catholic focusing on the Sacraments, a personal relationship with God, etc. I'll never forget the girl who came up to me and literally laughed in my face for about 5 minutes. That was weird! I prayed for her a lot. I also won't forget the girl who wrote me a letter and said that she believed in God after hearing me speak and that I had helped to save her life. She mentioned that she was suicidal and that if she hadn't heard me speak that night she may have very well taken her life that night. I'll never forget that for as long as I live. To think that God used me to help save a life! I cried a lot the day I received that letter. I guess you never know how the Lord is going to use you. After that night I knew that God was sending me out and that His message had to be heard. I changed a lot after that night and it has been a learning experience ever since. Every time I go out to witness and perform for young people I always give it to God and pray that His healing love will touch those who are seeking him and that they will have ears to hear.

What is your involvement in parish life? Do you feel supported by your parish community? If so, how have they supported you? If not, who has been supporting you and how?

I have had magnificent support throughout the whole Archdiocese of Boston. I am the LifeTeen music director for St. Mary’s parish in Dedham, MA. Just recently I opened up for Tom Booth there. It was a beautiful and spirit-filled evening. Steve Angrisano was also present. The night was packed full of retirees. Like saying “I'm proud to be Catholic” for starters.

BERNIE CHOINIERE

continued from page 15

BERNIE CHOINIERE

Review

RSVP

RSVP is Bernie Choiniere's third release, and it shows just how much he has grown as an artist. This album is confident, upbeat and joyous with catchy melodies that will linger and beckon you back for more. Choiniere blends many styles into his songs, most notably a heavy rhythm and blues influence coupled with a little jazz and some reggae. The production has a “live” feel to it, a spontaneity throughout, and tremendous energy. The album opens with a strong guitar riff similar to the Michael Jackson song “Black and White” and leads into an equally strong song, “We Are the Church,” setting off the tone for this album. Choiniere's tenor often times sounds like a raspy Michael W. Smith, and this is where he excels. Other songs of note include “Radical Love,” “Three Little Birds” and “Peaceful” which has a wonderful soprano sax solo that definitely sets up the mood.

The artwork on this CD was some of the best that this reviewer has seen on a Catholic project. It was smart and hip, with great photos, wonderful imagery and terrific flow. Lyrics are included on all songs, although Choiniere sings very clearly so that all the words can be heard.

On an otherwise very strong project, there were a few weaknesses. Some of the lyrics were a bit obscure, although tough and honest. There was a sense throughout that Choiniere needed to relax, that he was trying too hard to make it work. Some of the mood seemed a bit forced. However, all in all, it appeared that the whole ensemble had a lot of fun recording this project, and that joy will be felt by the listener.

Currently this CD is being distributed by Alpha Omega at www.alphaomegaacity.com. Or, you can contact Bernie Choiniere directly by email to order copies - his email address is bejcmusic@aol.com.
Sal Solo has been touring extensively throughout Europe and the United States over the past few months and has been experiencing great success. Throughout 1999, leading up to the millennium, he will promote his latest work, Anno Domini - Mass for the Millennium throughout Europe and the United States. You can obtain promotional video copies of the work through Paul Bauer (palice7@juno.com) and Aad Vermeyden (blueprint_na@compuserve.com) for $10 a piece.

Romans’ new CD, Come to Life, is now available! There are several area locations carrying the project, or you can order directly by emailing them at MHings@msn.com. The CD will also be carried in Heartbeat Records’ catalog. Romans also participated in and was very well received at Catholic Musicfest ‘98, sponsored by Heartbeat Records. Dana and David Patrick Bryan also participated. On March 20th, the band will perform at Answer the Call V, the Cincinnati Catholic Men’s Conference.

Crispin recently performed in Hamilton, Bermuda on Feb 7. Many people from all denominations attended which is significant for Bermuda where there has been much tension between Catholics and Protestants. Crispin’s tour continued with a performance in San Francisco, CA on Feb 28, and a future performance in Temple, TX on May 2. Crispin bass player Father Stan Fortuna recently spoke at the Holy Father’s Youth Rally in St. Louis.

Nancy Krebs, from the Baltimore-Washington area, has just recently released her first album entitled, The Journey. The album consists of 14 original songs and is a meditational walk through the liturgical year. It has received very favorable response, and currently Nancy has several concerts scheduled throughout the Spring. She currently is dividing her time sharing her ministry at the Church of the Ascension, The Good Shepherd Center, and the chapel of the Oblate Sisters of Providence. She also is singing in several non-denominational churches throughout the state of Maryland. Her website is: http://www.arch-angel.net/artists/Nancy_Krebs

Emmaus, after a long successful tour, are working on a new CD. There are many new songs to record that their fans have waited a long time for. They are also celebrating ten years as a community and hope to release on CD at some future date, their very popular praise and worship songs.

Joseph Moorman will be traveling to New Zealand this year to do sing at a Eucharistic convention. A New Zealander had apparently purchased Joe’s CD through the CatholiCity website, and through a series of emails, the invitation was issued to sing at this conference.

Critical Mass has garnered several honorable mentions at the Canadian Gospel Music Association’s 1998 Covenant Awards. These were all in the Selection Awards category where the judging is done by an panel of judges as opposed to record sales. The song “Body and Blood” was second runner-up in the Inspirational Song Of The Year category, “Wisdom” was second runner-up in the Rock Song Of The Year category and the album “Faith Looks Up” was first runner-up for Rock Album of the Year. Critical Mass is also pleased to announce an entirely revamped web site at http://www.stmaxmedia.com/cm/ There are Real Audio samples, secure online shopping as well as a chat line. Perhaps this chat line can be used more by all of us Catholic musicians! There is a link to the Catholic musicians website as well. Critical Mass is also shooting two more music videos to go into a Teen Catechism video slated for release in Fall 1999. The tape will be discussing topics such as the sacraments, the Eucharist, Apostolic succession and chastity mixed in with testimonies and three very cool, very Catholic music videos.

Congratulations to Darlene Mills and her husband, who have successfully adopted a baby girl, Christa Marie. She continues to make local appearances, touching people and evangelizing with her music.

continued on page 16
Artist Spotlight

Roberto Bignoli sings about hope

Roberto Bignoli has had a passion for music since he was a kid. His musical career started at sixteen. He has performed successfully as a vocalist and guitarist in open-air music events in Italy and abroad. He has also accompanied several leading singers. In 1984 a religious experience strongly affected his life, so he worked towards professional musicianship with religious and social leanings. Since then he has toured Italy and all over Europe and the Americas, performing in Christian and secular venues. A follower of the electric-folk-rock style and a singer about hope, he still performs in the traditional show business circuit, as well as in church schools, in prisons and in communities for drug addiction treatment.

Q. Why don't you begin by telling us something about yourself; such as who you are, how old you are, your childhood, and your interests and hobbies.

A. I sing and write Christian music. I am 40 years old, and was born in Novara, Italy. My family was very poor; when I was one I got polio and because my parents weren't able to afford the medical expenses, or to take care of me, I was put in a home; and I went from one home to another one till I was 15. I suffered a lot because my only desire was to be surrounded by the love of a family, to be with friends of my own age, and to be amongst the people.

Q. Roberto, how did you spend your youth?

A. My youth was very troubled and unhappy. During my years spent in the homes I acquired a distorted vision of the world. I joined the “beat generation” in search of freedom, hence I totally refused society and all its institutions. I lost nearly all contact with my family, even though deep down in my heart I wanted to go back home. I spent a brief period in prison for use of drugs. During a period of personal crisis I rediscovered my love for music. I began doing concerts with small and big musicians, and writing songs, mostly love songs. But one day I fell into a deep depression, and it was in this dark peaceless period that I met some young people who told me: “Jesus loves you.” They spoke to me of a place called Medjugorje where apparitions were supposedly happening. As they were telling me I was aware of an urgent need growing within me to go there. It was August 1984 when I went with three friends. I immediately felt at home and I felt a great need to ask for the conversion of my heart so that my life could become simple and humble like the surroundings of Medjugorje. Back home I felt that something was changing in me and I began to pray the Rosary every day and to go to daily Mass. It was through doing this that I began to understand the importance of the gift of singing and I wrote my first song entitled, “Canzone per Maria” (Song for Mary). In the beginning I was frightened by what my friends would think but in the end I felt the urge to speak of the faith and Mary's love to whomever I met.

Q. How was your relationship with your family and how is it now?

A. In the beginning it was fairly difficult because I was convinced to have been abandoned, but when I discovered the faith I learnt to love and respect them for having given me life.

Q. Tell us about your sickness. How does it affect you?

A. In itself it really isn't a problem, but it became one because of the looks and the comments of the people who met me. However, with Mary’s help my handicap became God’s gift, because through the suffering caused by it I discovered the value of the cross. But then, after all, everyone has a handicap, whether it be visible or invisible; and each person needs to learn to accept himself as he is.

Q. What do you think is your vocation?

A. I think that I am called to be a husband, a father and a Christian songwriter and singer.

Q. Why did you choose to sing? What does it mean for you, and what do you want to transmit to others with it?

A. I sing because I am a musician. Singing is how I express myself. My songs are born as a means to help others find God, with their words of hope, faith and love for those who suffer and for those seeking God. Singing for me has become a mission to say that God exists.

Q. Your voice is very popular, thanks in particular to your “Ballata per Maria.” What is that moves your heart when you sing for Mary?

A. “Ballata per Maria” (Ballad for Mary) is a token of love and acknowledgement for what the Blessed Virgin has done in my life. She is the universal mother who not only captured my heart, but captures the hearts of many youth. She is an infinite fount of grace and an example of humbleness and love, for which every person should bow his head in gratitude. “Ballata per Maria” became an international compilation which allowed other Christian song writers/singers to express their love for Mary by assigning all the proceeds from its sale to the children of Bosnia.

continued on page 12
How does this translate into music ministry? I am slowly beginning to find out. Perhaps I need to venture forth beyond the comfort and security of serving at mass each week and playing to friends in prayer groups. Perhaps I need to be willing to travel. Perhaps I need to sacrifice my well-ordered, quiet life where I feel rested, safe, and free from hassle. Perhaps I need to give up the security of my day job which I love so and devote myself full time to music. Perhaps I will need to spend time away from my family (although that is a vocation too, with its own special needs).

I may need to consider making use of the industry that I distrust and fear so much. Jesus asks us to be as wise as serpents as well as gentle as doves. I need to use all the tools He places at my disposal, while at the same time avoid buying into the system that provides those tools. And I need to cling to Him so that those tools do not lead to my corruption.

Maybe I need to consider digging deeper into myself when I compose. Tackle some of those sensitive issues and explore them in a faith-filled context that will inspire and stimulate the listener: Take the scripture and, rather than just put music to the words, apply it more to life.

This is certainly not to say that writing and performing music for liturgy and prayer groups is wrong, or that no new praise and worship music is needed. Believers need to be encouraged and I would never abandon that call, nor would I ask anyone else to. All Catholic artists should seek to encourage believers, as members of the Body of Christ. And God should be continuously glorified through song. But if God is calling me to venture forth, and I use the safety and comfort of encouraging the believer as an excuse for my lack of courage and faith, then I am not in obedience to His call, and this is the bottom line. To obey God’s call is to be like Jesus, totally, with every fiber of my being, leaving no stone unturned.

As an artist then, it is my responsibility to be creative, resourceful and innovative, and to call upon God’s wisdom for those qualities. To be anything less would limit God. But I know I must be prepared to “take the heat” as Jesus did, for there will be some who will not approve of my decisions, and most likely, they will be the people I love the most. Perhaps I will be faced with a Judas or a Peter. There will be times when I am alone. But Jesus will always be with me and as long as I have Him, what more do I really need?

I truly believe that as Catholic artists, we need to forge a new way to get the music out that God has given us. We need to be pioneers. God provides us with many methods and opportunities and it is up to us to figure out how to use them. As Catholic artists, we have a unique opportunity to spread the love of Jesus, and we also have a uniquely difficult road to travel. We are all traveling this road together. As we strive to respond to God’s call in our lives, let us remember each other in prayer, and pray that God’s will be fulfilled through each and every one of us. Let us pray for greater love, understanding and strength, for each other and for the world in general, and let us pray that we will be as creative, innovative and resourceful as God means for us to be.

My soul searching on this topic is just beginning and I would be interested in your feedback. Please feel free to email me at milonoah@aol.com and I will compile the letters and print them in the next issue.

Susan Bailey, Editor
CATHOLIC RADIO  continued from page 5

KIHM-AM 1590 / KSMH-AM
Steve Moffitt, Director of Operations/Station Manager
3550 Chinee Way, Suite 3-B, Reno, Nevada 89511
Steve, along with Jerry Usher, is developing a two hour morning program that will likely air on a number of stations. As a regular feature, they are planning to do a Catholic music segment. They are looking for professionally produced product, and will not consider anything that is sloppy or poorly done (recorded, mixed, engineered, etc.).

WVOA 105.1 FM
The Carol Fisher Network
7095 Myers Road, East Syracuse, NY 13057
Business Phone: (315) 656-2231;
Studio Phone (315) 656-2231
Carol Fisher Productions
P.O. Box 121, Fulton, NY 13069
Phone: 1-888-249-8503

The Carol Fisher Network is broadcast over WVOA 105.1 FM, a 42,000 watt station that covers Syracuse and Central New York. Carol Fisher Productions started with a one hour program five evenings a week from 7-8pm consisting of music and interviews. This past year, an overnight broadcast from midnight to 5:30am and a 30 minute broadcast from 9:30am were added. The overnight broadcast primarily consists of music from various Catholic recording artists as well as the music of Carol Fisher. (see accompanying article).

SONG SEEKERS
Mark Jones, contact
(314) 991-8649

SongSeekers is a syndicated show based out of St. Louis and is played on a wide variety of stations. They play all kinds of Christian music.

WEWN / EWTN Radio
Thom Price
EW TN Radio
1500 High Road, Vandiver, AL 35176

W E W N is run by Mother Angelica’s network, E W TN, and provides 24-hour syndicated programming to radio stations across the country. W E W N has a shortwave frequency which can be found on the EW TN website, and can also be heard online on the EW TN website. Music submissions should be directed to Thom Price, Director of Programming, EW TN Global Catholic Radio.

KBVM 88.9 FM
P.O. Box 5888, Portland, OR 97228
Attention: Ron

KBVM’s format is INSP/AC, nothing too "rocky" but it must have a contemporary sound to it. Recording and production standards for music need to be major studio quality. 

Excerpts from Broadcasting God's Message by Connie Cissell Meaney, The Catholic Sun Newspaper, April 15, 1998

The Carol Fisher Network [now] broadcasts at three positions on the FM dial and at WZZZ 1300 AM out of Fulton. The network offers Fisher’s talk show and music by other Catholic artists Monday through Saturday, 1 a.m. to 5:30 a.m. on 105.1, 103.9 and 96.5 FM out of Syracuse. The Fulton station goes off the air at sunset, but Fisher’s show can be heard at 5 p.m.

Rather than just another talk show, Fisher’s one-hour segment features a daily Gospel reading, some of her own Christian Catholic music and guests that range from psychiatrists to local professionals to local church leaders. Bishop James Moynihan’s first appearance on the show addressed the topic “The Seamless Garment of Truth.” He has also delivered his lenten and Christmas Message over the airwaves. But Fisher believes that one of the best parts of his guest appearance occurred when he introduced himself to the listeners and explained how becoming bishop of the Syracuse Diocese came about for him.

“I was just so pleased to bring the bishop to everybody in Central New York,” Fisher said.

In a day and age when most news and information passed along the airwaves includes crime and other “bad news,” Fisher said that she feels what she is bringing to the people is a positive alternative. She interviews people that are inspirational, like Father Albert Shamon, who is based outside of Rochester. Father Shamon has been involved in radio programming for many years, Fisher said, and she is glad to offer his insight over the Carol Fisher Network. She also talks with people who have struggled with everyday issues and problems that affect us all – cancer survivors, the disabled and others whose stories have something to teach the listeners.

Fisher began at the radio station selling advertising. Then it occurred to her that she could purchase her own air time. In the course of finding financial support for the radio station, she was in a good position to find support for herself. Now, Carol and her husband, David, are working together to build the Carol Fisher Network, hoping to expand and broaden the demographics covered by their "good news" message.

Looking at the future of her enterprise, Fisher said "Wouldn't it be great if we listened to inspiring people every day? It could make a difference. There is great joy in faith. There are so many people doing great things for Christ in all types of ways."
and you are familiar enough with my music to know that (besides the mass) none of my music screams Catholic. It's enough for radio stations to know that I'm Catholic to treat me like a leper, without even listening to the music.

I don't have a problem with these groups playing at Catholic events - it shows just how popular they are ACROSS denominational lines. And there's the market, which has obviously dictated that there are no Catholic groups that compare for the purpose the event coordinators had in mind for them to accomplish. Looks like a goal for us to strive for - not to assimilate into mainstream Christian culture so much that we lose our identity as Catholic Christians, but to view ourselves as just that: We are Christians first; then we're Catholic. We have a message to proclaim as Christians to the world, and to make more Christians. We share and celebrate this with our Protestant brothers.

The attitude that I get from station managers, other choir directors, and owners of music stores makes me wonder what these people are taught about Catholics ... What do they think we do in church, bite the heads off of chickens? I used to think that there was really no separation in attitudes, but the longer I've been Catholic, the more I realize that there is a great misunderstanding out there of who we are and what we believe that is the SAME as the rest of the Christian world.

I celebrate these Christian groups playing at Christian events, no matter who's in town.

Mike Z.: Good points. My key concern is witnessing. I really believe we as Catholics are failing to edify each other, especially the youth. I also know how they got the "gig" and the breakdown fell on the Catholic Church. We need to show our Catholic Youth - Catholic leaders for several valid reasons - not the least of which is vocations! Several Catholic artists got canceled because of a deal. The hierarchy of our Church is our strength on matters of faith - but unless that hierarchy gets built up by younger religious, the Church as we know it will be dead and out of touch with current crises and current ways of blessing/edifying/evangelizing/etc.

But we both know Who is on the Throne and Who's holy will cannot be stopped by mistakes of man! I did read the last chapter of the Book and known who wins! So I am concerned about certain things but resting in the fact that God is Good! When I hear of these things I feel so weak and helpless, and then God promises me that when I am weak, He is strong. I would not necessarily discourage anyone from attending - dc Talk, Jars of Clay, cool guys and real strong in their walk. Everyone present will be blessed. But I am slightly different (certainly not better than anyone - probably worse than most) because of my calling as a contemporary Catholic musician and it is very discouraging. Why should I continue to call myself a Catholic Recording Artist - why not just downplay the Catholic part like I have been asked to do many times - and say I am Christian. Because I would move many units, play festivals, make a ton of cash, then I would miss my kids growing up while on tour, not sleep at night, ya da ya da ya da.

Susan B.: I think the frustrating thing is that it being the Pope and all, that it is a strange witness to Catholic youth that there are no legitimate Catholic bands that can play at this thing, but the organizers had to "import" so to speak, other Christian bands. It doesn't necessarily inspire Catholic youth to stay within their church and serve - rather it encourages them to go out. It does not speak well for the future of the Catholic church, since the future lies in our youth.

I agree totally that the differences are there but greatly exaggerated. There are a lot of lies being told to Protestants by other Protestants about Catholics. It is really sad. There are many who believe that the Catholic church is the whore of Babylon, isn't that sad? And then we face all this prejudice. No wonder Catholic musicians can't make it in the marketplace without compromising their message. I think Mike's frustration is the fact that he has been asked many times to do that in order to achieve greater "success" and after much soul searching has decided not to do that. I have faced that too but not so much because I have always felt that my calling was to minister inside the Catholic church, to exhort and encourage Catholics to see the fullness of the faith. It's a tough issue to be sure. It certainly deserves our prayers.

Jim C.: I talked to my wife when I got home from work today about this, and she shares Mike's view completely. I guess my final position on the issue is that, although I totally agree with you and Mike that the promoters really screwed up by not hiring similar-sounding Catholic talent, I still hold with my original thoughts that it gives us (as the writers and performers of music) a real wake-up call. While I may have been too quick to condemn Mike's frustration, I still prefer to maintain a peacemaker role.

I'm probably as guilty as the organizers of the rallies. I listen to Christian radio all day long, and I'm not even familiar with any band that produces the style of music that these guys do. If it's out there, you (who are "connected") should know about it.

And what are your thoughts on this matter? Send GrapeVine an email at milonoah@aol.com and we'll wrap up this discussion in the next issue. Let your voice be heard. GrapeVine also holds periodic chat rooms on the Critical Mass website at http://www.stmaxmedia.com/cm/ Announcements of future chats will be sent to all those on the GrapeVine email mailing list. If you wish to be included on this list, email Susan at milonoah@aol.com and you will be added.
KATHY TROCCOLI continued from page 3

Sounds of Heaven to him. I got asked to do this Life Teen Mass. My manager said that there would be a thousand kids there. I said there was no way there would be a thousand kids there. Not only did a thousand kids show up but so did their parents. The Lord spoke to me through my judgement. Father Dale ended up calling me two weeks later and asked me to be a part of Life Teen. It is now in about 400 parishes. Not only is it reaching teenagers for Christ and helping them to understand their faith, but it is allowing their parents to come back in, too. They are seeing that, although the liturgy is unchanged, the music is what people like and the homily is directed in a more contemporary way. It is really having a major impact.

For more information on getting Life Teen into your parish, call 1-602-820-7001 or write to Catholic Life Productions, 1730 West Guadalupe Rd, Mesa, Arizona 85202 or see http://www.lifeteen.org/.

BERNIE CHOINIERE continued from page 9

with music, laughter, prayer and dancing. The teens were so much on fire for Christ. The day after, I helped to lead the music with my East Coast Band for the “Our Father-Were To Say” Youth Convention at Boston College High School, along with Tom and Steve. I’ve been very blessed with the work I get in Boston. The Office For Youth Ministry for the Archdiocese of Boston has supported me the whole way. I thank God for them and I salute the great work they have accomplished through the years in training youth ministers and offering opportunities for our young to be fed spiritually through great ministry experiences.

GrapeVine: What advice would you give aspiring music ministers who wish to perform outside of the norm of liturgical music for their parishes?

What I would suggest to Catholic artists who wish to share their gifts with the church and the world is prayer and discernment. I started out playing for churches but I also wrote on the side and performed outside of liturgy. My music and witness stemmed from a burning desire to evangelize God’s people, but only after God had touched me in a very beautiful and profound way. I felt like this was what I was supposed to do! It just felt right. My songs are not entirely my own. Of course I feel that the Holy Spirit’s hand is alive in my ministry and I am just trying to do my part. If God wants you there, you will be there. I thank God every day for His blessings and the many gifts he has bestowed on my family; my wife Loretta and my childrenangan and Rachelle are my life. I couldn’t do what I do without their prayers and their understanding. They also keep me in check. Knowing that they are there is very comforting and before I make any major decisions involving my music, along with prayer, they are next in line as my soundboards. My first responsibility is as a husband and father. If I can’t do that well, then I have no business doing the other.

GrapeVine March 1999

BY SUSAN BAILEY
Review

NANCY KREBS ▲ The Journey

Nancy Krebs describes her first effort, The Journey, in this fashion: “Fourteen rich, original songs celebrate tradition, even as they offer a modern woman’s insight as she cherishes and explores her faith.” That’s exactly what this album is. Krebs captures the mystery, the depth, and the treasures of the Catholic faith in her meditational walk through the Liturgical Year. The tasteful yet simple arranging, the uncluttered production, and the clarity and quality of the instrumentation perfectly complement the expressive, convicted and tender vocals demonstrated throughout these fourteen songs. This project is not one that should be listened to casually; for the beauty will surely be missed. The best way to listen is quietly, through a good set of headphones, so that you can drink in every moment. The title cut which opens the album will play over and over in your head long after you hear it. For a unique reminder of the true meaning of Christmas and the purpose of Advent, listen to “Waiting for the Christ Child.” But by far the best track was “Feather on the Breath of God,” a luscious painting of words describing a usually difficult, sometimes bitter reality of the need to obey God’s will.

Nancy Krebs is an accomplished vocalist, but she is also a very capable instrumentalist, contributing acoustic guitar, percussion, synthesizer and violin on the songs. Her arranging techniques add just the right touch here and there, accenting the important points of the songs. While her voice tends to be a bit heavy, she has a unique talent for expressing a wide variety of emotions quite effortlessly, pulling the listener right in. It is too bad there wasn’t more vocal harmony from Michael Salacuse, who also played lead acoustic guitar, because the blend and combination of voices was exquisite.

The cover art for this CD was lovely, encompassing all the various colors of the Liturgical Year. This work could be easily overlooked because of its quiet nature, but it should become a staple in parishes, in order to introduce Catholics to the treasures of their faith which they so often miss. The Journey is a listening experience you will want to relive again and again. You can order The Journey by emailing Nancy Krebs at NKrebsBj@aol.com.

GrapeVine March 1999
Crossed Hearts has been hard at work on their new CD and it will be ready for release on April 1st. A portion of the sales from the CD are going to support the Pro-life ministry "Priests For Life", headed by Father Frank Pavone.

Mark Muretisch recently announced that one of his songs ("Special Children") will appear on the Pittsburgh CCM '99 compilation CD whose proceeds benefit Light Of Life Ministries (a homeless mission with related ministries and resources). Mark also celebrated his second anniversary as Praise & Worship Team Leader at Jefferson Hills Bible Church in January, 1999.

David Patrick Bryan made an appearance on Dana’s program, “We Are One Body,” aired on ETW N. He sang “In the Name of the Father,” composed by Jim Cosgrove, off of his latest CD, distributed by Heartbeat Records. “We Are One Body” is broadcast during the following times: Mondays 10:30 AM, Tuesdays 1:30 AM, and Thursdays 9:00 PM, EST.

Tony Melendez along with Joe and Jean-Ann Hand and Jim Cowan are currently appearing in concert around the country to present their "Cast Your Nets Tour". One of the stops was in the Cincinnati area at Immaculate Heart of Mary parish on Beechmont Avenue in Anderson, Ohio on April 16, 1999 at 7:30 PM. This performance was sponsored by the Embrace the Children mission, run by Father Frank Pavone.

Mary Scarlata is keeping a busy schedule, having run a benefit in Hopkinton, MA for the Cultural Arts Alliance on Feb. 20th with 6 cabaret singers, and working on a few more shows as well as an all new parish appreciation show for her parish. Through her efforts, she is hoping to blend a bit of the spiritual with the Broadway.

Jim Cosgrove reports that his next project will be a suite of children's choral music that he'll have his children's choir record this summer.

Lynn Cooper has a full slate of concerts planned for 1999 including performances for the RBTE Trade Show Heartbeat Music Showcase and the Catholic Charismatic Conference at Notre Dame University in South Bend, IN, both in June.

Another Catholic music ministry site has been found on the web, and it is run by Vince Nims. The idea was born in December at the National Catholic Conference on Youth Ministry in Cincinnati. David Haas, David Kauffman, Rory Cooney, Bob Fisher, OCP, GIA, Tony & Jose Melendez, Steve Angrisano and many others were present. A recurring idea was use of the web to promote music ministries. Vince and Jesse Manibusan had been talking about developing a site regionally for about a year in the West. After the Conference Vince decided to go for it nationally. The Catholic Music Ministry website will be like a yellow pages of Catholic Music ministries. "Our mission is to provide a directory where people can reach the actual musicians, not really to make websites for musicians. The page each musician gets is simply the format we've chosen because it makes sense. The idea is for people to reach the musicians. Their links are on their page. In fact, everyone gets two: an email link and a website link of their choice," says Vince. The website address is http://www.catholicmusicministry.com. The CCAN and Catholic Music Ministry websites are currently linked to each other.

Another new site on the web is the Magnificat Association’s Christian Artists Europe site at http://www.geocities.com/BourbonStreet/7695. Currently the site is in Italian but an English site will be coming out shortly.

The Catholic Association of Musicians has issued its first international directory of Catholic Musicians. This fine directory contains short bios on 38 CAM members. The directory was put together by Donna Lee, a long standing member of CAM and a veteran Catholic performer. Donna was pleased to report that she received her first royalty check from BMI for music played on the radio. She has recorded six albums of original and cover songs.

We are sad to report that Leon C. Roberts, a world renowned composer of African American Catholic liturgical music, died of advanced stomach cancer on January 22 in Washington, DC. He was 48. Mr. Roberts was director of Liturgical Music at St. Augustine Catholic Church in Washington, DC. He cofounded the Conference on Black Catholic Liturgy, known as Rejoice! and was the major initiator of and contributor to the historic Lead Me, Guide Me, the first African American Catholic hymnal. Mr. Roberts leaves behind a large body of recorded work that includes The Mass of Saint Augustine, “Deliver the Word,” of St. Martin de Porres, various works with David Haas and a soon-to-be-released concert recording Come Bless the Lord (source - Jonathan Bush, from the OCP website).