

The role of church singing deserves special consideration. I want to draw attention only to the fact that music and singing unite people, positively influence the formation of character, the development of aesthetic taste, as well as abstract and logical thinking.

Seminarians of the Drohobych Seminary have every opportunity to develop their musical abilities. In the Singing Course are found such activities as: voice production, Church singing, listening to music.

The brothers have the opportunity to sing in the Seminary Choir "Oranta". This group was founded in 1998 at the initiative of the students, to accompany worship at the Seminary. It was then in the Cathedral of Drohobych that the Choir sang its first Holy Liturgy (to the music of Smerechanskyy).

The name of the choir came into existence in 2000 when the group took part in the anniversary concert dedicated to 2000 years of Christianity in the Palace of Culture "Ukraine" in Kyiv.

Together with the popular singer Nina Matvienko and other leading groups, they performed in the cantata-prayer "Come you also into this Cathedral" of the composer Havrilets, dedicated to the "Oranta" (The "Praying Virgin" image of Byzantine iconography). The choir members were so impressed by the study of the cantata, and by the joint rehearsals of this work, that they decided to name their group - "Oranta".

In pursuing the development of the musical abilities of the choir members, the crucial role of the teacher is important for voice production. It should be emphasized that in each different age of life, musical training has an effect on the individuality of each human voice. Therefore, the main form of training for voice performance is individual classes. Their contents, methods and techniques are subject to the task of the vocal and technical development of future priests.

The choir fundamentally performs four part music, mostly spiritual: Divine Liturgy, Vespers, concert works from different periods. They also sing secular music: works with the words of Ukrainian poets and Ukrainian folk songs. Today, the Choir is adding works of foreign classical music and modern composers to its repertoire.

The first audio recording was made in 2006 - Divine Liturgy by the Ternopil composer Smerechanskyy (Celebrating priest - Fr. Taras Koberynko. Sound - Vasyli' Pryriz). Also, the choir has a lot of material ready to make new recordings.

Choir class, where rehearsals take place is a creative workshop, where great works of art come alive. Here you can immerse yourself in the music of the 18th century (The choral concert in three parts, "Hospody, syloyu tvojeju (O Lord, by Thy power...)" by Bortnyanskyy), the choir attempts to reproduce the images of Zaporizhzhya Cossacks under the Turkish captivity ("Zakuvala Sylva Zozolja (Called the Gray Cuckoo)" - chorus number 5 of the "Vechornytsi (Evenings)" by Nischinskyy to the words of Taras Shevchenko) You can also hear the Ukrainian lyrical song or the funny "kolomyika". The Choir sings at solemn Liturgies, occasionally participates in various events held in the Church and in the social activities of the city.

In November 2009 at the invitation of the Ukrainian diaspora of Koszalin, the Choir made a concert tour of Ukrainian shrines in Poland. There are plans also to take part in choir festivals and competitions of sacred music.

It can be recalled that some time ago in Lviv at the Lviv Theological Academy a conference was convened for scholars of Church music and choral conductors. At this conference the question was discussed as to how to improve the development of Ukrainian Church music at the present moment. There were several approaches.

And one leading conductor of Lviv said: "The best way today to improve the development of choral Church music is to instill the love of the choir into the student while in the Seminary. And then when he comes as a priest to the parish, he will already appreciate the choir, and want to nurture, to educate, to develop it. In this way choral church culture will develop"... Therefore our work with the Choir is devoted to this end. It is good to hear at the Divine Liturgy a priest with correct well-formed diction, a steady sound, beautiful in tone and in harmony with the choir, the faithful and God. This is achieved through hard work.

We have hope in God and we hope that He will give our Seminary ringing youthful voices that freely, loudly and beautifully will praise His Holy Name.

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"I have known the Choir of the Drohobych Seminary, ever since my unforgettable work at the Lviv Holy Spirit Seminary, where in June 2000, there were held the first trials for a consolidated choir under my supervision to participate in the festive Liturgy to commemorate the 2000th anniversary of the Nativity of Our Lord in Zarvanytsia.

Also I often heard the Choir on separate occasions in Lviv, Drohobych, Ivano-Frankivsk and at other schools. I always felt that in this seminary the choir works systematically because of the caring support of the administration and their good, professional choir leaders.

From a musical point of view this group stands out for its good choral sonority, its ensemble formation, the purity of intonation, and by a subtle, convincing performance of spiritual works. Clearly this is a good school for the education of future priests, for the development of their musical, vocal, and auditory gifts. I also believe that the Choir should continue to constantly consolidate good vocal material, and place greater emphasis on the vocal education of young singers as future priests.

I wish the Choir and its leaders continuing fruitful work, for the spiritual progress of others in joy and in the praise of God. "

Oleh Tsyhylyk,

Artistic Director and Conductor of the Lviv Municipal Male Choir "Homin (Hum)" Honored Artist of Ukraine

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"Drohobych is one of the smaller cities in Ukraine, but with a great cultural heritage. Evidence of this is the fact that there is a Seminary in the city. It is headed by a man who along with his deep spiritual purpose is also a talented musician.

Regarding the Seminary Choir, which I was able to hear during my stay in Drohobych what then drew my attention was the intonation of the collective sound. Of course, there is always a lot of work to do. However, as a youthful choir, in their sound you can hear a "spring-water purity". And I still remember the very well organized sound of the harmony.

In my opinion, it is precisely through music, through art that high spiritual ideals enter the heart more deeply.

Given that Drohobych Seminary celebrates its anniversary, I would like to wish her, her

leadership of the Choir and many wonderful, creative years. "

Lesia Dychko,  
Secretary of the Composers' Union, winner of the Taras Shevchenko Prize, Professor of the  
National Music Academy of Ukraine

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"I have a special liking for the genre of the male choir as such, not any particular choir, but generally. For me personally, I prefer an equally mixed choir, but I do respect a male choir. Unfortunately, today in Ukraine there are few male choirs. What I heard in the performance of the male choir of the Seminary, "Oranta", has been pleasantly surprising. The first interesting thing is that this is a youth choir, it is fresh, and so to speak, has a young man's sound. Speaking in the long term of what the choir should do, the group should fully grow and develop, so to speak, in artistic terms, it certainly could have brighter first tenors and second basses, because in the male choir this is the atmosphere, and the first fiddle, so to speak, is the bass.

The first impression made on me was that here is an artistic level of a professional hue, a culture of sound, intonation, stability in the performance, etc. That is generally speaking, all the components of choral sonority that we can enumerate, know, understand, and this made a positive impression on me.

Hopefully, this group will often perform in our city and we will enjoy their art, that it will not only limit itself to devotional music, but develop its activities in a secular direction and will add to our artistic life".

Ihor Tsyklinsky,  
Artistic Director and Conductor, Drohobych Municipal Choir "Lehenda (Legend)" Honored Artist  
of Ukraine