

LEAD ME, GUIDE ME

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FOREWORD

As I reread the preface and the introductory articles from the first edition of *Lead Me, Guide Me*, once again I could not help but reflect in profound admiration upon the generosity and the talents of so many of those who were engaged in that pioneer effort to bring the music and spiritual vitality of African-Americans into a closer relationship and usage within the Catholic Church. Many of those who participated in the publication of the first edition of *Lead Me, Guide Me* have since fallen asleep in Christ, but I now trust that their splendid contributions will also inspire this second edition and that they will smile on our humble efforts. Clarence and Thea, Jim Lyke and Bede Abrams, Joe Francis, Leon Roberts, and Booker Ashe were all so deeply and personally dedicated to making this project a success, and their efforts were richly rewarded as *Lead Me, Guide Me* has now served the Church in the United States well for more than twenty-four years.

African-American spiritual music is classified among the great cultural treasures of our nation, and we gladly and enthusiastically share it with all who have been and continue to be inspired by its contributions. *Lead Me, Guide Me* is a compilation of a generous selection of that music arranged for use within the celebration of the Roman Catholic liturgy. As we Catholics now prepare to receive the third edition of the *Roman Missal* for the English-speaking world, it is most appropriate for a new edition of *Lead Me, Guide Me* to be issued to accompany that new book of Catholic prayer. Those blessed original collaborators have today been joined by a new generation of very capable colleagues in preparing this new text. They build on a solid foundation of faith and now present a worthy successor to that first effort.

While *Lead Me, Guide Me* was specifically developed with the particular liturgical needs of the African-American Catholic community in mind, it was never envisioned to be used exclusively in those parish communities. Other Catholics throughout our nation and beyond have made very effective use of this liturgical resource, and we anticipate that they, too, will welcome this newest edition. Music has a unique capacity to transcend cultures and races and provide a bridge to understanding other people through the vehicle of its combined words and melodies. That bridge-building was also a welcome benefit of the first edition of *Lead Me, Guide Me*, and I have every expectation that the entire Catholic community will welcome this new edition and find it a bridge from which the entire Church might glimpse the beauty and the spiritual depth of the soul of the people who composed and continue to cherish these songs of faith.

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PREFACE

It all began on December 11, 2002, when the advisory committee gathered in Chicago under the leadership of Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory. It was an inspiring all-day session that identified the need for, and set the direction of, the revision of *Lead Me, Guide Me: The African American Catholic Hymnal* (1987).

The core committee was assembled, and soon the work began. This committee met for two- and three-day work sessions spread over the next seven years. It is a tribute to the dedication of the very busy people on the core committee to note that all members were present for every meeting—no exceptions. As word of the impending revision of the *Roman Missal* became known, it was clear that the hymnal could not be published until such revisions were in place, thus stretching the project out for as many years as it has ultimately taken.

Much was learned from the experience of using *Lead Me, Guide Me* (1987) in parish worship for twenty years, and all of this experience informed the work of the committee. A comparison of the two editions will make it readily apparent that the second edition is more liturgically complete, broader in scope—both in the sheer number of items included and in the breadth of the materials represented—and more sophisticated in its editing, thus better representing the musical performance practices of the African American church.

Each member of the core committee brought his or her unique gifts to the project: the chairman, Msgr. Raymond P. East, an extraordinary pastoral sense; Rev. J-Glenn Murray, SJ, liturgical scholarship; Sr. Joan Angela Edwards, SSM, a knowledge of the music of Caribbean immigrants; Dr. James Abbingon, an academic knowledge of African American church music; Marcia Berry, a lifetime of experience as a parish musician; Richard Cheri, liturgy and music workshop/conference organizer and parish musician; Dr. Norah Duncan IV, twenty-six years as cathedral music director with *Lead Me, Guide Me* in the pews; and Kenneth Louis, composer and arranger of music for the Black church, and parish musician.

The committee acknowledges the work done by the committee of the *African American Heritage Hymnal* (GIA 2001) and its music editor, Rev. Nolan E. Williams, Jr. Theirs was the pioneering effort to represent African American musical performance practices on the printed page.

We also acknowledge J-Glenn Murray, SJ, author of the introductions to the rites and seasons; Jeffry Mickus, production coordinator, editor, engraver, and book layout; Philip Roberts, engraver and book layout; Joshua Evanovich, book layout; Clarence Reiels, proofreader; Rev. Ronald F. Krisman, text editor and indexer; Michael Boschert, permissions editor; and last but not least, Kelly Dobbs-Mickus for her counsel at virtually every step in this journey

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