

Singing at Mass

It would have been customary in Jewish festivals and feasts, including the Passover Supper, to have singing and song. In keeping with this, on the night of the Last Supper, Jesus and the Apostles also sang:

> "I tell you, from now on I shall not drink this fruit of the vine until the day when I drink it with you new in the kingdom of my Father." Then, after singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives [the Garden of Gethsemane]. (Matthew 26:29-30).

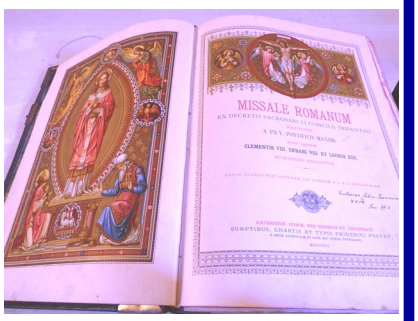
The Church has put music in the liturgy for a reason:

It is important, music elevates the Liturgy in a way that little else has the ability. The congregation is invited to join in this important aspect of worship.

At Mass, God is acting and his action has great power. The clergy and people must cooperate and move with the heart and mind of the Church, then the signs and symbols will be more effective in making God's action clearly seen.

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy:

Although it is not always necessary (e.g., in weekday Masses) to sing all the texts that are of themselves meant to be sung, every care should be taken that singing by the ministers and the people is not absent in celebrations that occur on Sundays and on holy days of obligation. (40)



The Church instructs the faithful to participate in the Mass:

We are instructed to "not refuse to serve the People of God in gladness whenever they are asked to perform some particular service or function in the celebration" (*General Instruction of the Roman Missal*). Participation in the Mass is both internal and external—If called upon to sing, you ought to sing.

"Mother Church earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that fully conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy," the Church declares in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*.
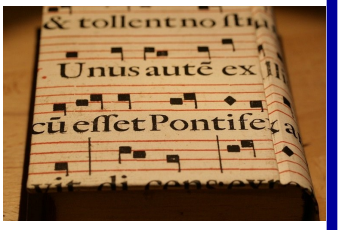
The choir is meant to lead the faithful in song, not sing for them. As the Church instructs in *Musicam Sacram*:

"[The Choir's] duty is... to encourage the active participation of the faithful in the singing." The choir and the congregation are not separate entities, together they are charged with the laity's duty to participate in the Mass.

Singing also helps foster parochial unity as the parish community comes together to worship and lift their voices together as one to the Lord.

Singing helps us express our joy and love to the Lord: "Singing is the sign of the heart's joy," the Church declares in the *General Instruction of the Roman Missal*. "Thus Saint Augustine says rightly, 'Singing is for one who loves'.

And, just a bit of humor: Remember, your bad voice isn't an excuse not to sing even though some may feel self-conscious about singing if they not gifted with a beautiful voice. However, your voice is the one God designed for you.
Matt Maher, an accomplished Catholic singer and musician, was once heard encouraging people at his concert to sing loudly even if they did not have a good singing voice. "If you don't have a beautiful singing voice, sing out anyway," he said. "It'll serve God right for giving it to you."



Adapted from: https://catholic-link.org/why-do-we-sing-at-mass/ https://epicpew.com/singing-mass-important/