

25th June 2020

A very good morning to you all!

I hope you slept well. We had trouble finding sleep, it was so hot here.

That reminded me that when our daughter was younger, I would sit at her bedside in the evenings and sing her German songs to help her go to sleep (usually the same songs and in the same order). Many of them were the songs that my mum and dad used to sing to me and are a firm part of German folklore and culture. Sally does remember them very well and has therefore been able, I believe, to identify with at least some of German culture and feel part of our history.

Transmission in song - that surely must be one of the most ancient ways of passing on knowledge and stories.

Maybe it is because of my passion for music but I find that I remember everything much better if I can put it into a song.

While I was lying there last night waiting for sleep in the heat, I suddenly thought: I have never heard of the Bible stories being transmitted from one generation to another by song (apart from some obvious Junior Church and worship songs maybe). The only exception probably being the book of Psalms - and aren't we privileged to have the wonderful Anglican chant to go with them?

But we are well aware that other ancient texts were transmitted through singing accompanied or not by instruments - take the Odyssey for example, or the Germanic Nibelungenlied.

One of my favourite opening chapters of a book is the beginning of the Silmarillion by Tolkien, where the Ainur sing a majestic song according to the great plan of the deity Eru Ilúvatar. They sing in harmony and only Melkor, the strongest Ainur, tries to disrupt the great plan and harmony by singing loudly and out of tune, we might say. Eru Ilúvatar chastises him repeatedly for it but is generally very patient and just starts a new theme when Melkor goes off key again.

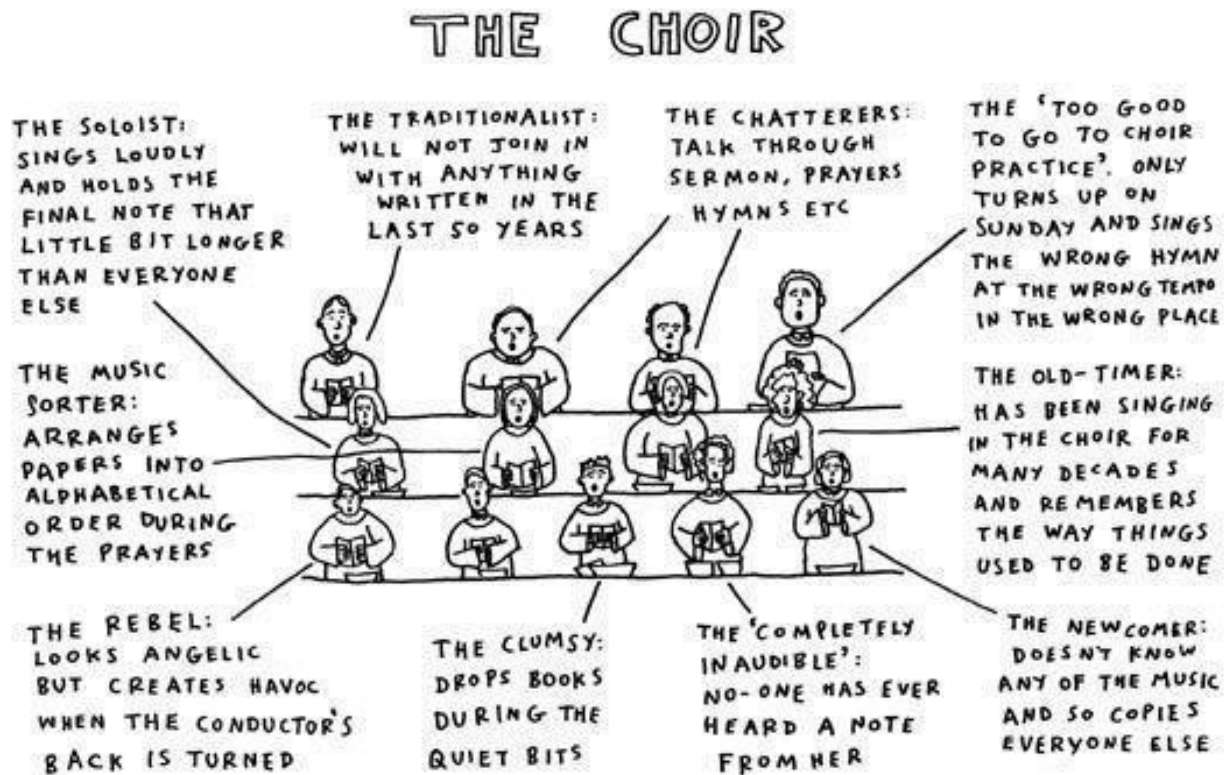
Isn't this a wonderful metaphor for our lives which are meant to be lived in harmony with one another and in a loving covenant with God? And how God takes a lot from us with loving patience simply changing the tune a little to help us start again if we are willing to follow?

Maybe a great project would be to set the Bible to music and to pass it on to our children and grand-children and great-grand-children this way? And thereby create a cosmic song that promotes that harmony and peace among humans and with God?

Or maybe I am hopelessly behind and this has already been done?

By the way, I hope this has not encouraged you to test Jessa's patience with loud, off-key and out-of-rhythm singing...

And so I leave you with some favourites from our choir wall:





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Wishing you a melodious and harmonic day,
Julia