

Singing as a Spiritual Practice

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“No charge will be made against anybody for the way he sings, whether he be old or young, hoarse, or even lacking rhythm. What is required here is an uplifted soul, a watchful mind, a contrite heart, a powerful reasoning, and a purified conscience. If you enter the holy choir of God possessing these, you will be able to stand next to David.” -St. John Chrysostom, 4th century

Qualities to develop for singing as a spiritual discipline:

1. An uplifted soul - JOY
2. A watchful mind - ATTENTION
3. A contrite heart - HUMILITY
4. A powerful reasoning - REFLECTION
5. A purified conscience - GRACE/FORGIVENESS

There are several communities who have written easy chants for use in worship or personal devotions, including:

The Taize Community

You can view sheet music and hear recordings for most Taize chants on their website at:
http://www.taize.fr/en_article10308.html

Songs of Presence

Many of the contemplative chants in this repertoire are available as free downloads at:
<http://theooow.com/resources/contemplative-chants>

Iona Community

Several short chants by John Bell and the Wild Goose Community in Scotland are available on the album *Come All You People*, which you can preview here:
https://www.giamusic.com/search_details.cfm?title_id=8220

Music That Makes Community

This is an ecumenical group of composers based in New York City who are constantly developing new chants for group worship and personal prayer. There is a large database of songs here:
<http://www.musicthatmakescommunity.org/resources>

Don't let yourself forget that God's grace rewards not only those who never slip, but also those who bend and fall. So sing! The song of rejoicing softens hard hearts. It makes tears of godly sorrow flow from them. Singing summons the Holy Spirit. Happy praises offered in simplicity and love lead the faithful to complete harmony, without discord. Don't stop singing.

-Hildegard of Bingen