

Thomas Woods
Director of Music Ministry
Mary Immaculate Church
mimusicministry@gmail.com



Where did you come from?

I was born and raised in Fort Worth. I went to St. Andrew's Catholic School and Nolan Catholic High School for a total of (13) years of catholic education. While at Nolan, I started going to Texas Wesleyan University during my off period, and playing with their jazz band on a daily basis. Since I had already spent (2) years of my high school career involved at Wesleyan, it was an easy decision for me on where to get my degree. I graduated from Texas Wesleyan with a B.A. in Music Performance.

How long have you been at Mary Immaculate parish as the Director of Music Ministry?

I began at Mary Immaculate in 2000 as a substitute pianist at the 12 noon Mass. I was already music ministering at St. Rita's Catholic Church in Fort Worth in the mornings, so I'd play at the two morning masses there and come to Mary Immaculate after that. The one mass here at Mary Immaculate turned into two, which turned into three, until I found myself accompanying the majority of the masses. In 2003, I accepted the position of Director of Music and have loved every minute of it.

What has been a highlight event or moment for you in your ministry at Mary Immaculate?

There have been so many great moments here at Mary Immaculate it's hard to pinpoint just one. The dedication of the new church with the bishop was the first thing that came to mind, partially because preparing a dedication liturgy is something that not a lot of people get to do. The Christmas concerts are always great because I get to see people from the entire parish coming together for one night for something very special to the music ministry. And lastly, I know that Fr. John's first mass here at Mary Immaculate is going to be incredible!

What song or songs are in the top (5) most requested here at Mary Immaculate?

I would say that On Eagles Wings gets asked for more than any other song.

What kind of music do you listen to when you are not inspiring parishioners with the religious music?

This is one the most frequently asked questions to me, and people are always shocked when I say I don't listen to music most of the time. I'm always doing song arrangements for people or bands, so I'll spend some time listening to whatever the pick of the week it. Sometimes it's an old Sinatra tune, or the next week it could be a Randy Rogers or a Black Eyed Peas song, who knows...I try to give my ears a break when I can. I guess I listen to a little bit of everything though when I'm not on my phone in my mobile office.

What are your hobbies?

My hobbies are always changing. I try to get out on the golf course a few times a month when I can. I try to stay as active as I can by running or making it up to the gym. I also got my first dog a few months ago, so making sure she doesn't chew ALL the carpet up is a job in itself. I like to bowl and shoot pool, and I like to think I'm a decent chef sometimes. I'm a big sports guy, so if there's a game on, I'm usually watching it or attending it.

What is your vision for the future of music ministry at Mary Immaculate?

My vision is continued growth and participation from the parish. There are so many talented people with the gift of music out there, and each and every one of them would add to the ministry.

What positions are there within the music ministry, and what are the skill requirements of each?

There are several volunteer opportunities within the music ministry. If you would like to sing, no musical background is required. I'll ask you to match pitch and assign you on a vocal part based on your range and sound of your voice. Everything else just falls into place. If you'd like to be an instrumentalist, some mastery of your instrument is required. Any and all instruments are welcome at any mass. We are always in need of people to help with our bake sales, which are the major fundraiser for the music ministry. These bake sales are what help fund the Christmas Concert and equipment purchases that we make throughout the year.