

## Copyright

With more and more parishes and diocesan institutions printing worship aids, or including an “Order of Worship” for congregational use in their weekly parish bulletins, it seems timely to remind the reader of the Copyright Act of 1976. The copyright owner is the only person who has the privilege of reproducing their copyrighted material free of charge. If any other party wants to reproduce copyrighted material in some manner, permission must be obtained from the copyright owner in the form of a reprint permission license. Obviously, it is illegal, as well as unethical, to reproduce copyrighted choral octavos, solo works & hymn accompaniments. This article deals specifically with the issue of reproducing congregational music.

The rules are simple and straightforward. Congregational music may be reprinted by purchasing a reprint permission license from the appropriate copyright licensing agent. Licenses are typically categorized as annual, single-use, event, or practice-track licenses. Once the appropriate reprint permission license has been purchased, the parish has the right to reproduce the melody-line and/or words to congregational music in a worship aid for use in a religious service. No choir parts, cantor verses, harmony, chord designations, or accompaniment parts may be reproduced.

Use the following format for the citation of copyrighted works, either text alone or text and music notation:

Words: John Doe, © 1988 ABC Music Co.; Music: Jane Doe, © 1990 XYZ Publications. All rights reserved. Reprinted under LICENSE #123456789.

(If words and music are by the same composer, you may combine these lines.)

The usual location for the citation, including the reprint permission license number, is immediately below the music notation or hymn text, but other locations within the body of the worship aid or bulletin are permitted.

Reprint permission licenses must be purchased from an individual copyright licensing agent by an individual parish. There is no such vehicle as a diocesan reprint permission license for parish use. Every parish is responsible for the handling of copyrighted material that they elect to reprint.

Currently, the majority of the music used in parishes throughout the Catholic Diocese of Cleveland is copyrighted by one of four publishing companies: CCLI, GIA, OCP and WLP. Three of these companies are now represented by the same copyright licensing agent, [OneLicense](#). Much independent Christian pop music is represented by [Christian Copyright Licensing International \(CCLI\)](#). Both licensing agents have searchable databases of the song titles and composers they represent.

For assistance in matters of music copyright, please contact: Greg Heislman,  
Office for Worship / 216-696-6525 (ext 5510).

Music - Copyright Licenses

[Christian Copyright Licensing International \(CCLI\)](#)

[OneLicense \(GIA, OCP and WLP\)](#)