

The Story Behind “Arise!”

Arise: Get up! Get going! Go with God!

Since the [2018 Synod on Young People](#), Pope Francis has spoken to the importance of the evangelization of young people. As a Catholic school jurisdiction, Greater St. Albert Catholic Schools has a unique opportunity to engage, encourage, and support the young people for whom we care in the development of a relationship with Jesus Christ. This opportunity extends, by way of our joint mission and collaborative partnership between school, home, and parish, to all members of our Catholic educational community...including families and staff.

In our Division’s three-year faith theme (2020-2023), which was approved in spring 2020, we seek to echo the Pope’s continued [summons for young people](#), and indeed all people, to listen, hear, and respond to the voice of God who calls us to “Arise!”

The three themes are connected by their invitation for all to “Arise!” and to respond to God’s voice through action. Each year’s scripture provides some insight to the overall theme.

Year 1 – Get Up!

“...I say to you, arise!” (Luke 7:14)

Arise...rise up and out of the slumber of sadness, death, darkness, apathy, sin, etc.

Year 2 – Get Going!

“Arise! I have appointed you as a witness of what you have seen.” (Acts 26:16)

Witness...our response to hearing Christ’s voice is to “get going” and to respond through action, becoming Christ for others.

Year 3- Go with God!

“Mary arose and went with haste.” (Luke 1:39)

Haste...the Good News of Jesus Christ inspires and ignites an excitement, and we are compelled to respond with immediacy, to “Go with God.” Like Mary after the annunciation, or the disciples who ran to the empty tomb, our joy animates us to “go” with haste to share the joy and love of the Gospels.

The Pope invites all of us to respond to Christ's voice and to arise out of our own situations of darkness and difficulty. This faith theme has direct implications for a vital component of how faith is lived in our school communities through works of social justice, charity, and mercy. “If you can feel God’s immense love for every living creature...then you will be able to...bring his life to those of your friends...who suffer or have lost faith and hope.”

How did the idea for “Arise!” arise?

After a meeting of the Board of Trustees at the end of August, Trustee Serena Shaw commented that there was not much music out there, if any, that could be linked directly to our faith theme. In a further conversation with Colin Loiselle, our Religious Education Consultant, he affirmed that

music for the faith theme was difficult to find. This got me to thinking: “Why don’t we write something?” In the weeks that followed, I found this idea coming back to me as I reflected on our three-year faith theme. One day, as I was driving home after visits with our parish priests in Morinville and Legal, I was feeling particularly inspired and had an idea for the words of the chorus rooted in the passage from Luke’s Gospel (7:14) and the three-year focus of our theme:

*Arise! Arise! I say to you, arise!
Arise! Get up, answer the call.
Arise! Arise! I say to you, arise!
Arise! Get going, go with God.*

When I got home, I excitedly picked up a guitar and worked out the chords and melody. Initially, I had thought that the song would be more of a slow, inspirational nature. However, as I played it through several times, I was not feeling that the song was achieving what I was hoping...to inspire people to “Arise! Get up, get going, and go with God!” The more that I played and sang the chorus, the more the song took on an upbeat character (a colleague who heard a preview of the final recorded version of the song commented that it reminded him of the theme song from the television show *Friends*).

Having settled on the chorus and verse chords and melody, albeit without lyrics for the verses, the song simmered for a week or two. One Saturday evening in late September, when my family settled in to watch a movie, I brought my computer to the couch, opened up our Religious Education Consultant’s memo regarding the Division’s three-year faith theme, and began to write the verses. By the time the closing credits were scrolling across the screen, I had written all three verses, one corresponding to each year of our theme:

Verse 1:

*Get up and rise out of the dark into the light.
Leave apathy behind and we will be alright.
The Lord is calling us, but do we hear His voice?
Let Christ into your hearts, all stand up and rejoice...in the Lord!*

Verse 2:

*We’re called to action, to be Christ to one and all.
With Jesus as our guide, we run before we crawl.
When we’re the hands of God and serve all those in need.
Put faith in motion, witness Christ with every deed...we serve the Lord!*

Verse 3:

*Good News of Jesus will inspire and excite.
Let’s walk with God so that our spirits can ignite.
The Holy Spirit, through our works, in us is burning.
Sharing His love and joy, we hasten on our journey...with the Lord!*

With the lyrics and chords in place, it was time to give the song structure and begin the recording process...to give life to the idea!

Bringing "Arise!" to Life

I began recording the various instrumental tracks for "Arise!" in my basement, starting with rough guitar and vocal tracks to serve as a guide. I felt that there was a need for something to bring the energy of the song down before picking up again to conclude the song, so the breakdown chorus with a build at the end of it was added. Trustee Shaw suggested a key change to give a further "lift" near the end of the song. I thought this was a great idea, and added the key change following the breakdown chorus. I appreciated the process of how the structure of the song evolved into what became the final arrangement. Now it was time to record the actual tracks.

Drums were the first thing that were recorded and the tracks were sent to a friend of mine, who also works in Catholic education, to be converted to a midi file so that the track could be easily edited and drum sounds individually selected and tweaked. Bass was next, followed by rhythm guitar. After that came the vocals, with me recording the lead vocals first, followed by a harmony line. Once that was done, it was time to come up with an instrumental interlude, which I envisioned as a guitar solo. It needed to be melodic and smooth, so complimentary harmony lines were written for this section. The keyboard is meant to sound a bit like a church organ and the volume swell at the beginning was designed to give a "rising" effect. They keyboards are featured at the beginning and the ending, as well as included subtly in the choruses in order to add another musical dimension.

Once all basic tracks were recorded, they were again sent to my friend for editing and mixing. After things were "tuned up" to a level where we were both comfortable, we arranged two further harmony lines which would be sung by Trustee Serena Shaw, who is a wonderful singer and very involved with liturgical music at her parish. I met with Trustee Shaw and recorded her parts at St. Albert Catholic Parish, a wonderfully inspirational location. Trustee Shaw's vocal tracks turned out beautifully and were sent for inclusion in the recording, adding sparkle and shine in all the right places.

Subsequently, the song was mixed to a level where it was believed the instruments were well represented, the vocals were clear, and it had the sound and energy that was envisioned. Near the end of the process, while we were working on the final mix, I thought that it might be interesting to include an emphatic call to action at the end of the song by adding the group vocals of "Arise!" and "Get up!" before the final two lines of the song, respectfully. As it turned out, those vocal parts were just what was needed to bring the message of the song home and to call us all to action as we arise, get up, and serve as Christ to one another on our journey together with the Lord.

Working on this joyful project in my spare time in evenings and on weekends, and at my personal financial cost, has truly been a labour of love. I humbly offer it to our community as a source of joy, energy, and inspiration. It is my hope that you all enjoy this song as we celebrate our faith theme over the next three years and that it calls all of us to "Arise: Get up, get going, and go with God!"

Blessings,

Dr. Clint Moroziuk
Superintendent of Schools