

Dónal P. Noonan

Curriculum Vitae

Music and Liturgy • Higher Education • Arts and Nonprofit Leadership

donal@donalnoonan.com

Professional Profile

Music educator, choral director, liturgical consultant, and nonprofit founder with more than two decades of experience serving communities in the United States and performing internationally. Career spans university ministry, parish and archdiocesan music leadership, community arts, and professional formation. Founder of the Atlanta Homeward Choir, with national leadership service supporting musical opportunities for people experiencing vulnerability and homelessness.

Combines ensemble direction with program development, public engagement, and an emphasis on belonging. Experience includes university liturgical celebrations, large parish-based choral collaborations, European performance tours as director and guest performer, conference presentations, original composition, and published writing for pastoral musicians.

Education

Master of Arts in Music and Music Education

Teachers College, Columbia University, New York | 2022

Bachelor of Arts in Educational Studies

Western Governors University | 2018

Higher Education Appointments

Liturgical Consultant

Mount Saint Mary's University, Los Angeles | April 2025–October 2026

- Handled university liturgical celebrations, bringing musical and liturgical expertise to the university's communal worship.
- Composed the Alumni Alma Mater for the university's alumni community.

Campus Minister for Music and Liturgy

Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles | Appointed 2025

- Served the university community through music, liturgy, and campus ministry within Mission and Ministry.
- Contributed to the university's musical and spiritual life, supporting communal prayer and occasions of celebration and remembrance.
- Served on the Advisory Council for LMU's Irish Studies Program.

Music Ministry and Professional Appointments

Director of Music Ministries

Catholic Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Atlanta | Appointed 2012

- Directed music ministry in a historic downtown Catholic community, linking worship, ensemble music, and outreach.
- Led joint performances involving the Shrine Music Ministry, Atlanta Homeward Choir, soloists, and guest instrumentalists.
- Developed daily online musical reflections during the 2020 suspension of in-person worship, combining song history, listening, and spiritual reflection.
- Sustained choir connection remotely and explored repertoire including spirituals, Gregorian chant, Broadway, and songs associated with social justice.

Archdiocesan Choir Director

Catholic Archdiocese of Atlanta | Appointed 2021

- Founded and directed the Archdiocesan Choir, extending musical collaboration across parish communities.
- Coordinated the 107-member choir drawn from 30 parishes for the 25th Eucharistic Congress in 2022, with rehearsals hosted at different parishes.
- Prepared music for the Congress's opening Mass, healing service, and closing Mass, aligning selections with the theme "Come to Me."

Director of Music Ministries

Parish ministry within the Diocese of St. Petersburg, Florida | | Appointed 2003–2012

- Undertook nine years of music ministry in the Tampa Bay area before relocating to Atlanta.

Earlier educational experience includes Catholic school teaching, preceding the founding of the Atlanta Homeward Choir.

Nonprofit Leadership and Administration

Founder and Executive Director

Atlanta Homeward Choir | Founded 2013

- Established a community choral initiative with participants from Central Night Shelter, creating opportunities for people experiencing homelessness to sing, rehearse, and perform together.
- Developed the ensemble from a small initial group into a choir of nearly 20 members during its early years.
- Combined artistic direction with organizational leadership and public advocacy, connecting the choir's musical work with its mission of community inclusion.
- Led the choir's 2015 White House visit, supported by a community fundraising effort that exceeded its \$25,000 goal.

Leadership and Professional Service

Board President and Founding Board Member

National Alliance for Music in Vulnerable Communities

- Served on the alliance's inaugural board and as national president, contributing to a network promoting music-making with vulnerable communities.
- Participated through the Atlanta Homeward Choir in the alliance's development, including meetings in Dallas and Los Angeles.
- The Atlanta Homeward Choir became a charter member of the alliance, incorporated in 2019, and hosted its third annual conference in Atlanta in January 2020.

National Council Member and Region 14 Representative

National Association of Pastoral Musicians

- Represented the region encompassing North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida; NPM lists a first term ending in 2027.
- Contributed to professional formation through conference programming and publication in Pastoral Music.

Community Engagement

Music and homelessness outreach

Atlanta Homeward Choir and Central Night Shelter

- Built a participatory musical community connected to the shelter jointly supported by the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception and Central Presbyterian Church.
- Used shared rehearsal and public performance to support relationships, confidence, and a sense of belonging among singers facing housing insecurity.
- Expanded the work beyond its original men's ensemble to include a choir associated with a women's shelter.

University and community musical exchange

Georgia State University Singers and Atlanta Homeward Choir

Directed the Homeward Choir in an exchange with Georgia State University Singers, documented in Choral Journal in May 2016. The ensembles performed for one another, learned music together, and shared a meal supplied by university singers and the student ACDA chapter.

Music and public dialogue

Impact Atlanta Concert and WABE City Lights | 2019

Joined Angelica Hairston of Challenge the Stats in a City Lights interview with Lois Reitzes about the Homeward Choir's work and the forthcoming Impact Atlanta Concert. The concert program connected performance with public discussion of homelessness.

Selected Conducting and Performance Projects

European performance tours

Italy, Austria, France, Ireland, and Czechia

Participated in European performance tours as director and guest performer with Peters Way Tours, Inc. NY.

Archdiocesan Choir visit to Ireland

St. Coca's Church, Kilcock | October 6, 2024

Named with the Archdiocesan Choir of Atlanta in the parish's program announcement for a concert with local parish choirs supporting the new parish centre.

25th Eucharistic Congress

Archdiocese of Atlanta, College Park, Georgia | June 17–18, 2022

Choir coordinator and director for a large ensemble representing parishes across the archdiocese. Preparation brought singers together through a distributed rehearsal schedule and a shared program of music for the Congress liturgies.

Harmony Hope and Healing collaboration

Chicago, Illinois | 2019

Traveled with the Atlanta Homeward Choir to sing with sister organization Harmony Hope and Healing, extending exchange among community music organizations.

Guest conducting in Ireland

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish Choir, Scottsdale, Arizona | June 2018

Named as conductor for the choir's visit to Kildysart Parish, Ireland, for the June 24 parish Mass.

White House holiday performance and Washington visit

Atlanta Homeward Choir | December 21, 2015

Directed the choir's White House debut during its third season. The visit also included singing on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial and visiting the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial.

The Easter Story

Catholic Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Atlanta | March 2015

Music director for a joint presentation featuring the Atlanta Homeward Men's Choir, Shrine Music Ministry, soloists, and guest orchestra.

Global Impact Celebration

Peachtree City United Methodist Church | February 2015

Named as director of the Atlanta Homeward Choir for the opening celebration of the church's second annual mission-focused gathering.

Teaching and Professional Formation

Teaching practice encompasses ensemble learning, music ministry formation, community singing, and public interpretation of repertoire. Work connects musical participation with welcome and mutual support, including singers with differing levels of prior training.

Creating a Welcoming Home for All Who Gather to Sing

Chorus America Conference | June 8, 2024

Presented a session drawing on the Atlanta Homeward Choir's approach to bringing people from different backgrounds and beliefs into a shared musical community. Explored singing, storytelling, and practices of unconditional welcome and support.

Fostering Unconditional Welcome in Our Ministry

NPM On the Road, Atlanta | July 7–8, 2025

Workshop presenter listed in the National Association of Pastoral Musicians' Atlanta program.

Conference speaking and facilitation

Presbyterian Association of Musicians

Presented within the association's professional programming.

Symposium on Research in Choral Singing

American Choral Directors Association | 2020

The Atlanta Homeward Choir appeared by video in the symposium program, with Noonan identified as executive director in the published conference report.

Public music education through digital reflections

Catholic Shrine of the Immaculate Conception | 2020

Created brief daily reflections introducing songs and their histories, connecting repertoire with the liturgical calendar and contemporary community concerns. Used online delivery to maintain musical engagement during pandemic restrictions.

Original Music and Creative Work

Alumni Alma Mater

Mount Saint Mary's University, Los Angeles | 2025–2026 consultancy

Composer of the university's Alumni Alma Mater.

Opening song for the closing liturgy | *A Home for All*

70th Religious Education Congress, Anaheim | 2026

Composed a song used to open the Sunday closing liturgy. The work expressed welcome and God's unconditional love.

Publications and Writing

Take a Nap Do It for the Job

Pastoral Music, volume 49, number 1 | January 2025, pages 20–25

Authored a professional reflection on sustaining a life in music ministry through rest, continuing education, spiritual renewal, and interests beyond work.

From Choir Loft To

Personal essay series on Substack | 2026

Writes reflective essays connecting personal experience, belonging, faith, and human relationships. The series includes “from choir loft to... airports” (July 20, 2026), an essay on migration, encouragement, and life transitions.

Read the published essay on Substack

Awards and Recognition

- Braves Country Community Hero Award, Atlanta Braves and Chick-fil-A, June 2016.
- 11 Who Care Community Service Award, 11Alive News, January 2016.
- City of Atlanta proclamation recognizing the homelessness outreach of the Catholic Shrine and Atlanta Homeward Choir, December 18, 2013. Organizational recognition.

Selected Media Coverage and Interviews

Coverage of professional work and the Atlanta Homeward Choir includes the following features and interviews.

WABE City Lights — Impact Atlanta Concert interview, February 20, 2019

National Catholic Reporter — At an Atlanta shelter, homeless guests offer the refuge of music, November 22, 2018

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution — Homeless but not hopeless, March 27, 2015

Others: RTE News, Ireland. BBC Radio, NBC Nightly News, Today Show.

Relevant Skills

- Music and liturgy: choral conducting; ensemble preparation; sacred repertoire programming; university liturgical celebrations; musical reflection; composition.
- Leadership and administration: nonprofit program creation; board service; professional association representation; community partnerships; coordination of multi-parish musical projects.
- Education and engagement: workshop facilitation; participatory music-making; community outreach; public speaking; reflective writing; digital musical programming.
- International work: European touring as director and guest performer; cross-cultural musical collaboration; engagement with Irish cultural traditions.