

Children's Choir Guidelines
Revised August 16, 2017

Scheduling

Children's Choir members are scheduled for one mass and one rehearsal each week from Labor Day through Pentecost. Members sing at the 9:30am Sunday mass and rehearse Saturdays from 1:00pm-2:00pm or Sundays 8:30am-9:30am. An annual schedule is created and sent to parents via email by the Director of Music. Hard copies are also handed out during the first rehearsal.

Rehearsal Guidelines

- 1.) Arrive on time to all scheduled rehearsals and pick up pre-prepared folders from the Children's Choir cabinet.
- 2.) Be seated and ready to sing as soon as rehearsal begins.
- 3.) Rehearsal begins with a prayer, stretches and vocal warm ups. These activities are intended to prepare the mind, body, spirit and voice for rehearsal. Be present and engaged in these activities at all times.
- 4.) Review all music carefully during rehearsal. Children's Choir members must be confident and comfortable with all hymns and mass parts in order to effectively lead the congregation in song. If additional practice is necessary, work on the music outside of church. Recording of songs may be available upon request to the Director or Assistant Director.
- 5.) Choir members are responsible for engaging active participation from the congregation during the liturgy in addition to their own participation. In preparation for this, each rehearsal consists of the following:
 - a. Musical Learning: Choir members learn to express prayer with historical knowledge of the pieces sung; theoretical knowledge of the composition style; and technical knowledge to sing with quality.
 - b. Liturgical Learning: Through liturgical awareness choir members become participants in a communal action, not performers on a stage. Choir members are role models for knowledge of the liturgy and inspire worship through the senses of sound and sight.
 - c. Spiritual Growth: Choir members remain spiritually engaged to lift up their hearts and the hearts of the congregation to the Lord, with a full, active, and conscious participation.

By engaging all three aspects (musical, liturgical and spiritual) in every rehearsal, choir members prepare to enrich the celebration of liturgy.

Prior to Mass

- 1.) Call time for the 9:30am mass is 8:30am. Rehearsal takes place before mass in the chapel. Review *Rehearsal Guidelines* above for more detail.
- 2.) Dress appropriately for mass in clean, modest and presentable clothing. Please wear quiet shoes. The Children's Choir is a highly visible role and as such, clothing should not detract from the liturgy.
- 3.) After rehearsal exit the chapel quietly and be seated in the choir area.

During Mass

- 1.) Maintain a pleasant, professional demeanor at all times, even between hymns.
- 2.) When preparing to sing, stand together. Watch the Director or Assistant for cues.
- 3.) The choir leads congregational song. The choir may intone prior to congregational singing or sing with the congregation.
- 4.) The choir should inspire members of the congregation to conversion and spiritual growth through music.
- 5.) Constant awareness and familiarity with the liturgy is critical. Choir members must be familiar with the mass and flexible to changes in the liturgy.
- 6.) Music and liturgy should flow together seamlessly. Avoid any lag time during transitions. Song length should be appropriate to the action at the altar or ambo, (i.e. the communion meditation should end as the priest prepares to be seated). Remain in visual communication with the accompanist or director to start and end music appropriately.

After Mass

- 1.) Return choir folder to the choir room.
- 2.) Check in with the Director or Assistant Director of Music for any further tasks.
- 3.) Greet choir and congregation members as you leave.