



January 2020

American Federation Pueri Cantores

VOICES

Pueri Cantores - the Official Student Choral Organization of the Catholic Church

Jubilate Deo Choir has been a life changing experience for me. Every minute of my time spent in our choir room, singing and praising the Lord, is always cherished. Traveling to Houston for the Pueri Cantores Festival is without a doubt my favorite part of being in choir. In my opinion, the church we sing in, The Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, is the most beautiful church I have ever visited and when all the choirs sing the Mass songs together the sound becomes so powerful. Being able to go is such an honor and a privilege because when I participate, I am not only bonding more with Christ, but with my friends.



Abby Miller with choir director
Dr. Alfred Calabrese

Almost everything I know about music has been taught to me by the most amazing choir director ever, Dr. Alfred Calabrese. The songs that he chooses for our choir are truly blessings. Every note we sing brings us closer to God through praise and worship. Without Dr. Al, singing wouldn't be a huge part of my life as it is right now. I will never stop praising God through my gift of song, and I will always love Jubilate Deo Choir.

- Abby Miller, Grade 7, Jubilate Deo Choir, St. Rita Catholic Church, Dallas, TX

Back in 2015 we re-started our youth choir program and created a graded system with two choirs, grades 2-4 and grades 5-8. I conducted and rehearsed the upper choir, called Jubilate Deo. Looking for a capstone experience for our year, I came upon American Federation Pueri Cantores, and saw that they had a festival in Houston. Just what I was looking for! Close enough to do in one (long!) day, but far enough away to make it a real experience. I immediately signed us up and ever since then it's become an annual tradition.

Since those early choral beginnings our choral program has grown. This is in no small part to the excitement that the Pueri Cantores Festival generated for us. We have expanded to include three choirs spanning grades K-8, with parish and public school, homeschool, and non-parish students involved. Further growth occurred this year when we began the St. Rita Choral Academy, based on the principles of the English choir school tradition. We offer lessons in voice, piano and music theory to choristers who wish to explore music making more deeply.

The benefits of the Pueri Cantores festival have been enormous to us. First, it's great fun for our students and parents to travel by bus from Dallas to Houston, go to dinner together after Mass, and then arrive home tired but happy later that

evening. Second, it's a great chance for our choir to sing with hundreds of other students in the acoustical wonder of the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart. Our choir sings next to students their own age doing exactly what they're doing. This is probably the greatest benefit to us. It lets our students know that they are not alone. I'm also glad to have my students sing for other directors, to experience different approaches to music making, to try new warm-ups, and to hear basic concepts iterated in new ways.

I am honored to have been chosen this year to lead two other Pueri Cantores festivals: the mixed voice choral festivals in Chicago and the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend. If you are in those areas, I look forward to seeing you there!

-Dr. Alfred Calabrese, Director of Music Ministry & Parish Liturgy, St. Rita Catholic Church, Dallas, TX



Dr. Alfred Calabrese with the Jubilate Deo Choir, Dallas, TX.

Support Pueri Cantores today, and you can make a difference in the lives of the youth of Our Church tomorrow!

Encounters with sacred music can have a profound, transformational and lasting impact on the lives of young people. By bringing Catholic youth together to sing beautiful music from the Church's rich historical repertoire, the American Federation Pueri Cantores provides a unique opportunity to educate and engage these young singers in their faith and in the arts. In addition, Pueri Cantores offers resources and educational opportunities to conductors to assist with their knowledge and training. Through its work, Pueri Cantores seeks to bring the peace of Christ to our cities, our nation, and our world.

Make a Gift Here