



**AMERICAN FEDERATION  
PUERI CANTORES**

*The Vatican-based official student choral  
organization of the Catholic Church.*



August 2022

**AFPC Newsletter**

Vol. 14, Issue 2

## **2023 Pueri Cantores Festival Season**

Dear Friends,

**The new school year is upon us! As you fill up your choir's schedule with meaningful events to engage your singers, we hope you will consider joining us at a Pueri Cantores Festival in 2023.**

**AFPC's primary mission is to evangelize the young people in our schools and churches by introducing them to the power and beauty of sacred music, thereby nurturing and enhancing their wellbeing, education, and relationship with God, and through them, enriching the lives and faith of their families, peers, and communities.**

**Singing in a choir with several hundred other voices, in a magnificent Cathedral building, directed by a nationally renowned conductor, accompanied by a masterful organist, and led prayer by the local Cardinal or Bishop - these are the experiences that excite young Catholics and open their eyes to the beauty of the liturgy and worship.**

**The profound and transformational festival/liturgical experience not only enhances educational and musical enrichment and choral excellence for students, but it also reinforces and reinvigorates religious life and encourages students to use their voices to give back to their community, share the Word of God with others, and become strong and virtuous leaders.**

**Give your singers a fun and faith-filled choral experience and join us at one of our 2023 Pueri Cantores Festivals! View the Festival Schedule below to find a festival near you- or make a Pueri Cantores Festival your next travel destination! Brochures with detailed information for each individual Festival are (or will soon be) posted at [www.pcchoirs.org](http://www.pcchoirs.org).**

**See you in 2023!**

**Paul French, President  
American Federation Pueri Cantores**



# 2023 Pueri Cantores Festival Schedule



**PHOENIX** Treble (grades 4-8)

Saturday, February 4th, 2023  
St. Mary's Basilica, Phoenix, AZ

**MILWAUKEE** Mixed Voice (grades 4-12)

Saturday, February 18th, 2023  
Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, Milwaukee, WI  
Bishop Jeffrey R. Haines, Celebrant

**CHICAGO** Mixed Voice (grades 4-12)

Saturday, February 25th, 2023  
Holy Name Cathedral, Chicago, IL  
Bishop Mark A. Bartosic, Celebrant

**SOUTH FLORIDA** Mixed Voice (grades 4-12)

Saturday, February 25th, 2023  
Ave Maria Church, Ave Maria, FL

**SALT LAKE CITY** High School (grades 9-12)

Thursday, March 2nd - Friday, March 3rd, 2023  
Cathedral of the Madeleine, Salt Lake City, UT

**HOUSTON** High School (grades 9-12)

Saturday, March 4th, 2023  
Cathedral of Our Lady of Walsingham,  
Houston, TX

**MID-ATLANTIC** Mixed Voice (grades 4-12)

Saturday, March 4th, 2023  
Cathedral of St. Matthew the Apostle,  
Washington, DC  
Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory, Celebrant

**NEW ENGLAND** Mixed Voice (grades 4-12)

Saturday, March 4th, 2023  
Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Boston, MA  
Cardinal Seán P. O'Malley, Celebrant

**NORTHERN CALIFORNIA** Mixed Voice (grades 4-12)

Saturday, March 4th, 2023  
Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption,  
San Francisco, CA  
Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone, Celebrant

**FORT WAYNE-SOUTH BEND** Mixed Voice (grades 4-12)

Tuesday, March 7, 2023 (closed registration)  
St. Charles Borromeo Church, Fort Wayne, IN  
Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, Celebrant

**NEW YORK** Treble (grades 4-8)

Saturday, March 18th, 2023  
St. John Nepomucene Church, New York, NY

**HOUSTON** Treble (grades 4-12)

Saturday, March 25th, 2023  
Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart, Houston, TX

**SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA** Treble (grades 4-12)

Date & Location TBD

**NEW YORK** High School (grades 9-12)

Date & Location TBD

**PITTSBURGH** Mixed Voice (grades 4-12)

Date & Location TBD

Professional Development Credits available for participating school conductors.

Visit [www.pccochoirs.org](http://www.pccochoirs.org) for individual Festival brochures, repertoires, and additional details.

## **2023 National Festival Repertoires**

Click [HERE](#) to download the repertoire for Treble Festivals  
(Grades 4-8 & Grades 4-12)

Click [HERE](#) to download the repertoire for Mixed Voice Festivals  
(Grades 4-12)

Click [HERE](#) to download the repertoire for High School Festivals  
(Grades 9-12)

**\*Please note: there may be slight variations in repertoire depending on the festival. Please refer to the individual festival brochures for correct repertoire lists.**

**AFPC President & Conductor Paul French presents:  
*A choir director's guide to participating in a Pueri Cantores Festival***



If you are new to Pueri Cantores or a seasoned member that just needs a refresher for the upcoming 2023 season, this video will give you an inside look at what it entails to participate in a Festival, along with many organizational tips to aid you in preparing your choir for the event. Click on the image above to watch the video.

# 2023-24 Pueri Cantores Rome Congress

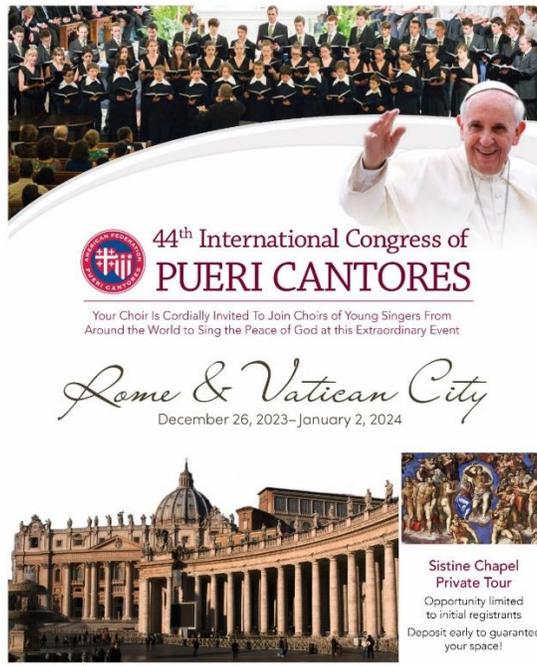
**Join us for the 44th Pueri Cantores International Congress in Rome December 26, 2023 - January 2, 2024!** This extraordinary week-long celebration is part pilgrimage and part choral festival that traditionally occurs every five years, bringing together Pueri Cantores choirs from around the world to participate in many thrilling liturgies and concerts. The Congress culminates with thousands of Pueri Cantores choristers singing for the Papal Mass at St. Peter's Basilica on January 1, 2024 (Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God), with the Holy Father, Pope Francis, presiding.

The current response from our American choirs has been tremendously gratifying! In 2015 (the last year of the International Congress) over 30 choirs traveled to the Eternal City, and currently two dozen choirs have committed for 2023-24. Please consider this as a personal invitation from the American Federation of Pueri Cantores to join us for this once-in-a-lifetime experience. The rewards for choir directors, choristers and their families are many, and we would be honored to share them with you.

**Please note that in order to be admitted to the 44th Pueri Cantores International Congress, all travelers must register with Corporate Travel, the exclusive travel provider for the American Federation of Pueri Cantores.** AFPC contracts a sole travel partner for each International Congress to ensure that:

- Participants have access to **all** Rome Congress events
- The latest Rome Congress information from the International Federation of Pueri Cantores is efficiently and swiftly communicated to participants
- The movements of the American participants happen in a unified and safe fashion
- Congress pricing for our singers and their families is as economical as possible

Click on the brochure below to learn more about the Congress and contact David O'Brien at Corporate Travel at [dobrien@ctscentral.net](mailto:dobrien@ctscentral.net) or 734-223-3348 to start planning for this once-in-a-lifetime experience!



44<sup>th</sup> International Congress of  
**PUERI CANTORES**

Your Choir is Cordially Invited To Join Choirs of Young Singers From  
Around the World to Sing the Peace of God at this Extraordinary Event

*Rome & Vatican City*  
December 26, 2023–January 2, 2024

Sistine Chapel  
Private Tour  
Opportunity limited  
to initial registrants  
Deposit early to guarantee  
your space!

## Meet the Singers



Sophia M.

Age: 11      Years in Choir: 3

Choir: St. Francis of Assisi Middle School  
Choir, Ann Arbor, MI

*What do you love about singing and being in choir?*

I love singing as it allows me to express myself and share my love of music with others. We often sing for our school Masses which keeps them fun & interesting!

*How has singing and being in choir strengthened your faith?*

Singing in choir has made me feel closer to God. I am using my talents that He gave me to make others happy.

*Why do you enjoy participating in Pueri Cantores Festivals and what are your favorite memories from your Festival?*

I had such a great time participating in the Pueri Cantores Festival in Chicago this year. We had a large choir attend- almost 40 students! Besides singing for the Bishop, it was so exciting to explore Chicago with my friends.

*How do you plan to involve music/choir in your future?*

My choir is planning on attending the Pueri Cantores Congress in Rome next year, and I can not wait! My family and I went there in March 2018, and I am excited to sing for the Pope!

*How do you plan to involve music/choir in your future?*

One of my favorite things to do is cantor during Mass with friends from my choir, even if my Mom always shows up and takes pictures ;).



Jericho R.

Age: 15      Years in Choir: 2

Choir: God Faith Choir,  
Carson, CA

*What do you love about singing and being in choir?*

I love serving through singing and playing music, making friends, learning more about my faith and God, and developing my music skills.

*Why do you enjoy participating in Pueri Cantores Festivals and what are your favorite memories from your Festival?*

I attended my first Pueri Cantores Festival in Southern California this past March. I had a great experience. I had so much fun working with other choir members and the conductor. Christ Cathedral was very beautiful, and I can't wait to participate again and visit other churches.

*How do you plan to involve music/choir in your future?*

I will continue being a member of the God Faith Choir and further my vocal and instrumental skills. I want to attend more AFPC events in the future, and I especially hope to go to the Vatican next year for the Rome Congress!

*My choir and I at the Festival!*



[\*Click here to sign up your child to be featured in a future AFPC newsletter.\*](#)

## **Choir Organizational Tip**

### **Forming Character and Virtue through Children's Choir**

I provide each of my youth schola members a syllabus in the front of their binders that we review together at the beginning of the choir season. (Teenage and adult choristers receive something similar, adjusted for their age). The syllabus includes practical and logistical information, but also the following. During rehearsals, we

often turn to our list of **virtues to know and practice**, especially when I observe behavior to be improved upon.

### **30 Virtues to Know and Practice**

1. Charity: Showing my love for God and others by my thoughts, words, and actions.
  2. Confidence (Trust, Faith): Believing that God keeps his promises and that he gives me his strength.
  3. Courage (Fortitude): Being brave. Standing up for what is right, even if it's hard.
  4. Docility: Willingness to be taught, to learn, and to grow. (Latin docere = to teach; doctor, doctrine.)
  5. Forgiveness: Letting go of grudges when we are angry or upset.
  6. Generosity: Making sacrifices for God and others with a joyful spirit.
  7. Gentleness: Having a compassionate & tender response to people, especially when they are struggling.
  8. Gratitude: Having a thankful disposition of mind and heart.
  9. Thoughtfulness: Being of service to others, noticing and assisting their needs.
  10. Honesty: Always telling the truth, no matter what.
  11. Hope: Desiring the kingdom of Heaven, eternal life, and happiness with God forever.
  12. Humility: Remembering that I am not more important or special than others.
  13. Industriousness: Being diligent and working energetically and whole-heartedly.
  14. Joy: Showing a cheerful and thankful attitude.
  15. Justice: Giving to others what they are rightly due.
  16. Kindness: Showing respect and care to others.
  17. Leadership: Being a good example and building up the team with my gifts.
  18. Loyalty: Taking my commitments seriously.
  19. Modesty: Purity of heart in action, especially with dress and speech.
  20. Obedience: Paying attention to and cooperating with my teachers and parents.
  21. Orderliness: To be neat and organized with my time and possessions.
  22. Patience: Being kind even when people or situations are annoying.
  23. Peacefulness: Finding calm by keeping our eyes on Jesus.
  24. Perseverance: Staying on track even when I am tired or feel discouraged.
  25. Prayerfulness: Connecting with God often in my mind and heart.
  26. Purposefulness: Being focused and putting our full energies toward a goal.
  27. Respect: Recognizing the worth and dignity of every single person.
  28. Responsibility: Giving my best cooperation to my duties and assignments.
  29. Self-Control: Managing & directing our desires and wants to the good (the right thing at the right time).
  30. Wisdom: Paying attention to and learning from the word of God and the experiences of each day.
- Bonus: Moderation: Finding the wise and healthy amount of something good or neutral.

I also leave a few blank lines under the list so when another virtue comes up in class, we can write it in.

[Click here to continue reading the article and to view previous Choir Organizational Tips.](#)

*Choir Organizational Tip brought to you by Claire Halbur  
Director of Sacred Music, St. Mary Magdalene Church, Gilbert, AZ*

## Pueri Cantores Alumni Spotlight



Looking back on my journey as a musician, Pueri Cantores was one of the first gatherings that inspired me to pursue music. I participated in my first Pueri Cantores Regional Festival in 2007. A few years later in 2010, I had the honor to sing for Pope Benedict XVI at the 36th International Pueri Cantores Congress in Rome.

My first festival was the 2007 Northern California Festival at the Cathedral of Saint Mary of the Assumption in San Francisco, and I was eight years old. I remember being astounded as I heard the sound of the first piece we sang as an ensemble. There was so much energy and joy present in the rehearsal room that day. In the months leading up to the festival, our choir director Sister Barbara Ann Long O.P. had worked so hard to teach our Holy Cross Youth Choir all the music thoroughly, especially focusing on the chant style singing, which was new to me. From that day onward, I knew that these music festivals were something I wanted to be a part of. I participated in these festivals until my High School Graduation in 2016, then volunteered in the years following as a chaperone for the Holy Cross Youth Choir.

Growing up under the mentorship of Sister Barbara, I was able to sing choral music from chant to contemporary compositions. Throughout the years I participated in the Holy Cross Youth Choir as a singer and handbell player, the Contemporary Choir, the Diocesan Choir of Monterey, and served as a founding member of the Holy Cross High School and College Choir *Cantate Jubilate*, which reunites each year to sing major feasts. I began cantoring solo masses at the age of 12 and found working with Sister Barbara was teaching me not only how to be a Catholic music minister, but how to be a choral director. I knew that Catholic music was something I wanted to continue and make a part of my music career and I love how it allows me to connect and build community while praising God through song.

Along with studying classical and jazz voice, I am a violist and violinist who has participated in many orchestras and jazz ensembles. I am currently pursuing my Bachelor of Music degree in Music Education at San José State University, where I will be graduating this upcoming fall. I previously attended Cabrillo College where I graduated with my Associates degree in Music. I am the current Music Director and Cantor for the Shrine of Saint Joseph in Santa Cruz, in addition to serving as a cantor and choral member at Holy Cross Church in Santa Cruz. I look forward to the day I am able to bring my own youth choir to a Pueri Cantores festival, where they can experience the joy of singing with other Catholic choristers and making joyful music in service to God.



-Alyssa Beltran, Music Director, Shrine of Saint Joseph, Santa Cruz, CA  
& Pueri Cantores Alumnus Singer 2007-2016

Are you a Pueri Cantores Alumnus Singer? Email [info@pcchoirs.org](mailto:info@pcchoirs.org) to let us know what you are up to and to join our alumni network!

## Join our Monthly Sustainers Program!



AFPC's mission is to **educate and evangelize young Catholics across the U.S through sacred music**, thereby cultivating their passion for the arts, nurturing their personal and spiritual wellbeing, and developing a relationship with God and the Church that they will carry all their lives.

AFPC's work is made possible through the support of individuals like you who see the value in this apostolate and are committed to seeing it continue. **Please prayerfully consider becoming a Monthly Sustainer** to help us enrich the lives of thousands of children and families for years to come.

[Click here to become a Monthly Sustainer](#)

***Or make a one-time donation here***

## Featured Choir

**Golden Gate Boys Choir and Bellringers, Hayward, CA**

We had the honor and privilege of having the Golden Gate Boys Choir and Bellringers, under the direction of Director Steven Meyer, represent Pueri Cantores

at the Napa Institute's 12th Annual Summer Conference last month. 18 boys and young men from the GGBC, both current and alumni singers and bellringers, lent their strong voices and superb musicianship to the Saturday morning Mass with Celebrant Bishop Michael Barber.

The Golden Gate Boys Choir and Bellringers, established in 1988, is a regional Catholic Boys Choir in the San Francisco Bay Area and is comprised of boys ranging from 6 years old to 18 years old. With music as the vehicle, their mission is to build bridges of understanding for children and youth. Through extensive instruction in vocal skills and choral performance and knowledge of music theory and repertoire, the GGBC makes a tremendous impact in the education of boys and young men in the Bay Area. The choir produces several concerts a year and travels locally, nationally, and internationally. Learn more about GGBC HERE, and watch a snippet of their singing HERE and a handbell performance HERE.

Napa Institute seeks to unite people to deepen their faith and their relationship with Jesus Christ. The annual summer conference brings together hundreds of some of the world's most prominent Catholic and Christian thinkers to engage, encourage, and inspire participants to build community, share ideas, and grow in friendship.



*The Golden Gate Boys Choir & Bellringers at the Napa Institute Conference, July 2022*

# Pueri Cantores in the Media



**National Catholic  
Community Foundation**

*"Faith working  
through philanthropy"*

## ADVANCING THE KINGDOM The din of pandemonium

John Milton coined the phrase 'pandemonium' in "Paradise Lost" in 1667 to identify a specific location in Hell. As its etymology implies it refers to the widespread presence of evil spirits.

The ongoing turmoil in Eastern Europe is an overwhelming manifestation of pandemonium, one which indelibly impresses on us different images. Who will forget the celloist performing Bach's Suite No. 5 in the bombed-out square of Kharkiv, or the pianist wearing fingerless gloves playing Schumann for fleeing refugees on a portable piano at the snowy Polish border, or the witness of violinists around the world performing in virtual orchestration the Ukrainian national anthem? These are the bold responses of a peaceful David against a bellicose Goliath, the confident sound of civilization against the bombastic roar of barbarism. With irrepressible spontaneity these voices calm and settle the hearts of those disrupted by the pandemonium while at the same time arouse and guide their spirits in holy defiance. Such is the urge of invincible Beauty; such is the force of innocence.

These images bring to mind a similar force of innocence in our own nation, a force arising against a different kind of pandemonium, one which is not exogenous but threatens us from within. With what name should we identify this threat? You choose. Consider its telltale menacing signs: our weakening solidarity around a common national purpose, our growing coarseness, the loss of our cohesion around the good, the true and the beautiful. The din of this newly forming threat is not deafening; it is lulling. It is not frightening; it is soporific. It hypnotizes us into a state of carefreeness where the edifying lessons of the past and the ennobling promises of the future no longer matter or stir us.

What force can awaken us from this self-induced cultural slumber? What psalm-singing David have we to confront this soul-suffocating Goliath of indifference? What is our response to the tranquilizing din of this nascent pandemonium?

As exaggerated a claim as it may seem I propose that one such force are the child singers of the American Federation Pueri Cantores. The American Federation ([www.pcchoirs.org](http://www.pcchoirs.org)) is part of an international federation founded in the last century and endorsed by the Vatican. Its mission is to bring young and adolescent singers together to learn sacred music. They perform in local, regional, national and – at times – international venues. Not only do they explore more deeply the realms of beauty and the sacred, they share the experience with their peers, near and far, and together discover the richness of the faith. But, this is not exclusively a religious endeavor. These young choristers learn about the transcendence of the true and the beautiful and the self-fulfillment one finds in pursuing them. More to the point, the singing of these young people rallies the spirit of the families and communities fortunate to hear them and inspires in everyone a desire to rise above the mesmerizing drumbeat of pointlessness and to raise the banner for truth and beauty. Their voices are a polished pebble is David's sling. Let us pray it has the same vanquishing effect.

The American Federation Pueri Cantores is listed in NCCF's catalog. Through some miracle they have survived the two-year suspension of choral activity wrought by COVID and the consequent financial setback. Now, their "festival Masses" are occurring again. With much needed support they will be able to expand their outreach to more venues around the country so that the din of our national pandemonium will give way to the timeless and universal exultation of praise.

[Read more Advancing the Kingdom](#)



*Dana Robinson is the Chairman of the Board of Trustees  
of the National Catholic Community Foundation*

## Job Postings

Do you have a job posting for a choir director, music teacher, or worship leader position at your church or school? AFPC would be happy to advertise the position through our extensive communication channels. Just email the job description with contact information to [info@pcchoirs.org](mailto:info@pcchoirs.org).



**AMERICAN FEDERATION  
PUERI CANTORES**