

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

about PUERI CANTORES FESTIVALS



Where can I download the Festival music?

The majority of the repertoire music is available as free downloadable pdfs on the AFPC website [HERE](#).

Where can I order the pieces that need to be purchased?

Any titles that do NOT have an asterisk by it on the repertoire list will need to be purchased. You may purchase those published titles through your preferred music distributor. AFPC has an agreement with Losers's Music in Lebanon, PA to provide Festival pieces at a 25% discount, and we encourage you to consider this option. Just email losers@lmf.net with the requested song titles and number of copies needed, and be sure to mention that you are an AFPC member to receive the 25% discount. As a matter of justice to composers, arrangers and publishers, please order an adequate number of music copies and refrain from distributing photocopied scores of those works under copyright protection.

Do I have to rehearse the music with my choir ahead of time?

Yes! Preparation is essential for the success of the event. Choir directors should start rehearsing the repertoire with their choirs in the fall. The more prepared your singers are, the more they will get out of the festival experience. Rehearsed choirs lend to a smooth, efficient, and fun day for everyone. Each singer should bring their black 3-ring binders with all the music securely placed in liturgical order, along with a pencil to mark their scores.

Are practice recordings available?

Yes! Most of the pieces on the festival repertoire are offered at no extra cost as MP3 rehearsal recordings for participating choirs. Once you've registered your choir for a Festival, an email will be sent to you to access the MP3s via a secure online webpage. Be sure to register early to receive these valuable teaching aids!

Can you explain the difference between the individual preludes & group preludes?

The "Festival" part of the day is the prelude to the Mass. It begins with (A) 1-5 individual choirs performing one sacred choral piece, followed by (B) the combined choirs joining together to sing the three appointed prelude pieces. The individual prelude portion is optional and is limited to the first 5 choirs to submit their festival registration. All choirs must prepare the three combined prelude pieces.

The Festival repertoire is a little ambitious for my fledgling choir, but I really want to give my singers this Festival experience. What do you suggest?

We encourage you to participate! Choirs of all skill levels can be found at our festivals.

Simply put: learn what you can as thoroughly as you are able. At the end of the day, these festivals are about evangelizing our youth and introducing them to the power and beauty of sacred music and worship, bringing them ever closer to God. We hope you find the repertoire practical and accessible and use it throughout the year at your school and parish Masses.

Can my third graders participate?

We respectfully request that you do not bring your third graders to the festival. We've found the festival day (7 hours with three 1-hour rehearsals & Mass) to be too long for the younger singers. They lack the stamina and focus to stay engaged throughout the entire day and tend to be less prepared musically, which can cause disruption to the rehearsals. We encourage you to invite the third graders to attend the Festival Mass as a congregant so they can witness what they have to look forward to next year.

What should my choir wear to the festival?

Choir robes, school uniforms, or white blouses and black pants or knee-length skirts are all acceptable attire options. If needed, singers may change into their robes during the final break before the Festival begins.

How many chaperones can I bring?

We ask that each choir bring 1 adult chaperone for every 8-10 children in your group, in addition to the choir director.

Some of my students are from low-income families and can't afford to participate in the Festival. Is financial assistance available?

Yes! We have scholarships available through the William H. Hannon Scholarship Fund. Please contact the AFPC office for more information.

My choir has been selected to sing a piece in the individual preludes. Will there be time on the Festival day to rehearse with my choir and accompanist?

Yes! Choirs singing a piece in the individual prelude are given time to rehearse with the accompanist during the lunch or snack period. Please refer to the schedule of the day in your festival's brochure.

Some of my choristers are very shy. How will the children be arranged?

Most guest conductors will arrange the singers by voice part and height before or after the warmup period. If a few of your singers are nervous to be separated, have them pair up with a choirmate who is in the same section and near the same height. You should also encourage your singers to interact with their peers from other local schools and parishes. The Festival is an opportunity to make new friends!

How do I receive my professional development credits?

During registration on the Festival day, you will receive a certificate of attendance from the Festival coordinator. You should submit that certificate, along with the festival brochure to your diocesan Catholic Schools Office. We recommend 8 professional development credits for preparation and participation in the festival.

Can the singers' families come to the Festival Mass?

Absolutely! The Festival Mass is open to the public, and we invite all family members and friends to attend the special liturgy. Be sure to arrive at least 30 minutes early for the preludes too. Please come and show your singers your support!

What is the role of the Choir Director on Festival Day?

Choir directors are essential partners in the festival's success. Throughout the day, they should remain engaged with their singers, reinforce the guest conductor's instructions, assist with focus and behavior, and model healthy singing. Directors also help with choir placement and ensure singers move promptly between rehearsals, breaks, and performance spaces.

I (the choir director) am not able to attend the actual Festival day. Can my singers still attend?

Of course! Your singers have put in months of hard work in preparation for the festival day, and we'd hate for them to miss out on the main event. You are welcome to send your singers to the Festival with parent chaperones. The singers will be under the musical leadership of the guest conductor the entire festival day.

How should I handle Festival payments?

All fees are listed in your individual festival brochure. Typically, the school or parish covers the annual membership/choir registration fee, while families pay the \$25 fee for each participating singer. Please collect these funds and submit one combined payment to AFPC, either online or by check. To reserve your choir's place early, you may first pay the membership/choir registration fee, then submit the remaining participant fees by the registration deadline.

My choir can no longer participate in the Festival. Can we get a refund?

We understand the unpredictable and changeable nature of working with children. Please see our Official Festival Choir Participant Cancellation and Refund Policy [HERE](#).

Does my choir have to be located within the diocese where a Festival is being held in order to be eligible to participate?

Nope! There are no geographical limits to participate in a Pueri Cantores Festival. We encourage your choir to travel to one (or more!) of our 20 regional Festivals offered this school year. Click [HERE](#) to see where we'll be in 2027. We hope to have your choir join us at a Festival!

How do I bring a Pueri Cantores Festival to my diocese?

We're always looking to expand and partner with dioceses around the country so that we can reach more young people and their families. The success of a festival is driven by local leadership and a collaborative "boots on the ground" approach. Discussions for organizing an inaugural festival should begin at least one year in advance. Please reach out to us any time to get the conversation started.

Have more questions? Please contact the Pueri Cantores office.

www.pcchoirs.org / 714-633-7554 / info@pcchoirs.org