

The Catholic Voice

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AT ST. JOSEPH
BASILICA**

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**ST. JOSEPH
CONFERENCE
IN FREMONT**



Singing for Pope Francis

BY CHRISTOPHER COSBEY

Last spring, I joined the Golden Gate Boys Choir and Bellringers. The singers come from parishes and schools all over the Diocese of Oakland. My brother Nicholas and I were the only students from St. Isidore School in the choir.

I didn't know any of the choir members and was nervous to try something new. During Christmas break, we went to the International Pueri Cantores music festival in Rome, Italy. Thinking about traveling to Italy made me feel even more nervous!

The first day in Rome, the choirs had a private tour of the Vatican Museum. Our choir stayed in a convent hotel about 15 minutes away from the Vatican. We were the only ones staying there. Each morning, the nuns made breakfast for over 40 of us. I had three roommates and played video games a lot at night.

For our first field trip, we took our bus to Assisi because St. Francis lived there. We sang a Mass in the Crypt Chapel of St. Catherine, Basilica of St. Francis. After singing, we visited St. Francis' tomb. We also had a field trip to St. Benedict's Monastery, and we went inside the cave where he lived for three years.

The next day, we sang a Mass at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Wall with about 20 choirs from all over the United States. St. Paul's tomb is under

this altar. Later that night, the Golden Gate Boys Choir was the only choir selected from the United States to sing at a special concert, The Colors of Pueri Cantores at St. Andrew Church.

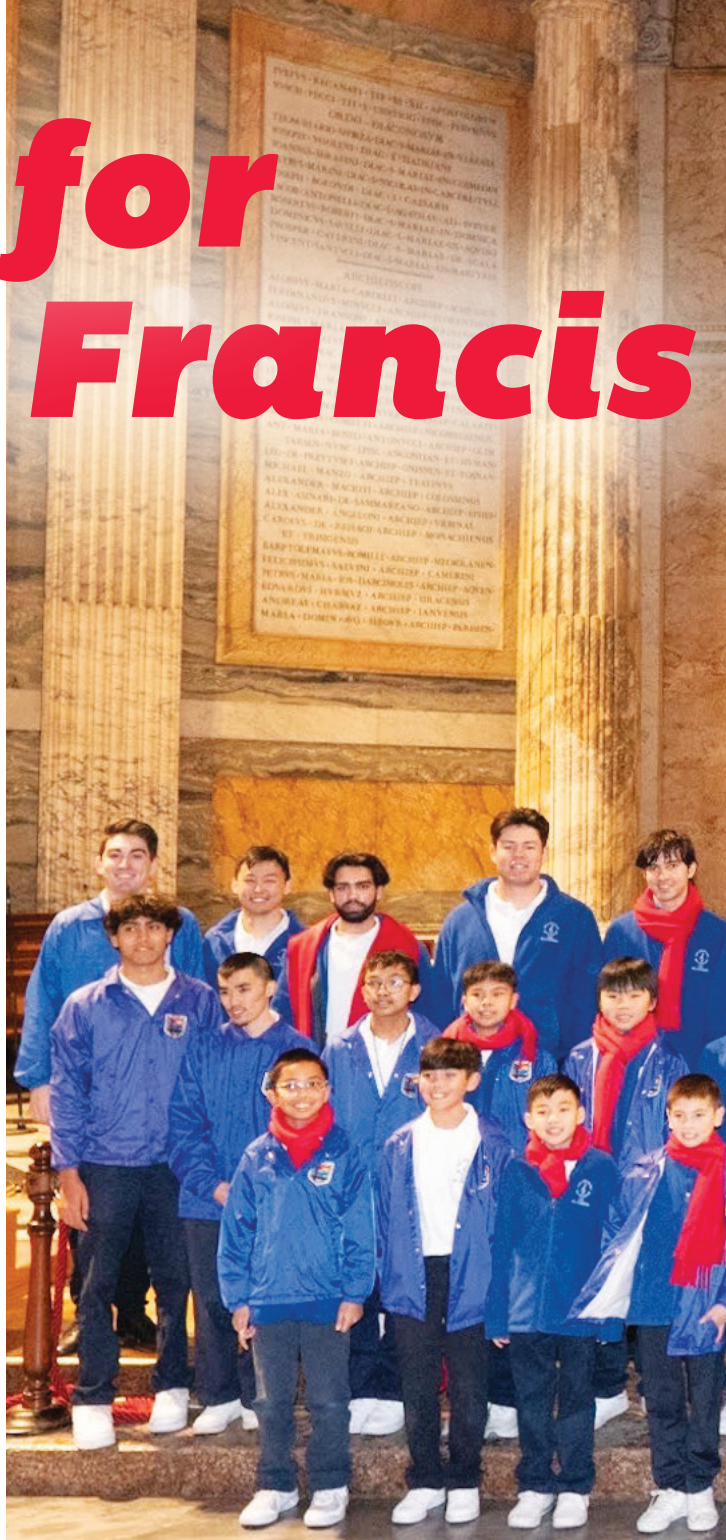
On Dec. 30, we went to Vatican City and had an audience with Pope Francis. We sang *Et In Terra Pax* for Pope Francis. When he went down the aisle to leave, my sister Olivia touched Pope Francis' hand. On New Year's Day, we sang for the papal Mass at St. Peter's Basilica. There were more than 3,000 kids singing with us from all over the world.

After the festival, we traveled to a small village and stayed with a host family. The best part of staying in their house was eating their homemade pasta!

Now that I'm back home, I'm glad I didn't listen to my nervousness. Joining the choir and going to Rome is one of the best memories of my life. I now have new friends from all over the Diocese of Oakland! ▲

Christopher Cosby, 10, is a fifth-grade student at St. Isidore School in Danville.

Pictured, left to right: (1) The Golden Gate Boys Choir and Bellringers after singing mass at St Paul Outside the Walls (Photo by Albert Agbulos) (2) My sister Olivia right before Pope Francis gave her a high five! (3) My brother Nicholas and I at St. Peter's Basilica after singing the Papal Mass for the Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary (4) My parents and sister came to Italy, too!



GOLDEN GATE BOYS CHOIR AND BELLRINGERS PERFORM AT INTERNATIONAL MUSIC FESTIVAL



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