



AMERICAN FEDERATION PUERI CANTORES

The Vatican based official student choral organization of the Catholic Church



National Catholic High School Choral Festivals & Pueri Cantores Choral Festivals

November 2020

AFPC NEWSLETTER

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COVID-19 Resources for Choir Directors

We at the American Federation Pueri Cantores are committed to the health and wellbeing of our choristers, families and teachers and want to help pedagogues create efficient and safe spaces to assist moving forward with choral programs. Please click [here](#) to read the latest information from the American Choral Director's Association regarding communal singing and choral pedagogy during the pandemic. Pages 12-30 address school situations, while pages 80-86 address music in worship. Also, please click [here](#) for the latest information from The Voice Foundation's Journal of Voice regarding choral singing and pedagogy.

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2021 Pueri Cantores Festival Season

We acknowledge the severity of COVID-19 and the dangers choral singing presents at this time. The health and safety of our choristers and their families is of the utmost importance to us. Should the threat of the pandemic relent by the time of the Festival Season, it would be our great pleasure to offer these events to the young singers in your area.

Be a part of this nationally recognized student choral experience!



Announcing
2021



**AMERICAN FEDERATION
PUERI CANTORES**

**National Catholic
High School
Choral Festivals**

&

**National
Pueri Cantores
Choral Festivals**

South Florida Mixed Voice (grades 4-12)
Archdiocese of Miami and neighboring dioceses
Saturday, February 13, St. Luke Catholic Church, Palm Springs, FL

Chicago Mixed Voice (grades 4-12)
Archdiocese of Chicago and neighboring dioceses
Saturday, March 6, Holy Name Cathedral, Chicago, IL
Bishop Joseph Perry, *Celebrant*

New England Mixed Voice (grades 4-12)
Archdioceses of Boston and Hartford and neighboring dioceses
Saturday, March 13, Cathedral of the Holy Cross, Boston, MA

Phoenix Treble (grades 4-8)
Diocese of Phoenix and neighboring dioceses
Saturday, March 13, St. Mary's Basilica, Phoenix, AZ

Mid Atlantic Mixed Voice (grades 4-12)
Archdioceses of Baltimore, Philadelphia, Washington, D.C.
and neighboring dioceses
Saturday, March 20, Basilica of the National Shrine of the
Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Baltimore, MD
Archbishop William E. Lori, *Celebrant*

Pittsburgh Mixed Voice (grades 4-12)
Diocese of Pittsburgh and neighboring dioceses
Saturday, March 20, St. Paul Cathedral, Pittsburgh, PA
Bishop David A. Zubik, *Celebrant*

Fort Wayne-South Bend Mixed Voice (grades 4-12)
(Closed Registration)
Thursday, March 25, St. Pius X Church, Granger, IN
Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades, *Celebrant*

Southern California Treble (grades 4-8)
Archdiocese of Los Angeles and neighboring dioceses
Saturday, April 24, Christ Cathedral, Garden Grove, CA

New York Treble (grades 4-8)
Archdioceses of New York and Newark
and neighboring dioceses
Saturday, April 24, St. John Nepomucene Church, New York, NY

New York High School
Archdioceses of New York and Newark
and neighboring dioceses
Date and location to be announced

Southern California High School
Archdiocese of Los Angeles and neighboring dioceses
Date and location to be announced

Houston Mixed Voice (grades 4-12)
Archdioceses of Galveston-Houston and
San Antonio and neighboring dioceses
Date and location to be announced

**The William H. Hannon Scholarship Fund is available for choirs
in need of financial assistance to purchase music for Festival participation.**

Professional Development Credits available for participating school conductors

Visit www.pchoirs.org for schedule updates, repertoires and additional details.

Virtual Choir Project



In case you missed it--- click on the image above to see and hear the virtual choir with 60 students from around the U.S. performing as one united ensemble "Jubilate!" (Be Joyful in the Lord) by Michael Bedford. During these uncertain and difficult times, we hope the singers of the American Federation of Pueri Cantores will be a bright light for you and your loved ones.



INSTITUTE &



AMERICAN FEDERATION
PUERI CANTORES

Outreach Initiative: Hispanic Ministry and Evangelizing the Underserved

AFPC's core mission is to evangelize and transform children's lives by bringing them closer to their faith through the study and performance of sacred music in the liturgy. Thanks to the generous support and partnership of Our Sunday Visitor Institute, AFPC has launched a new initiative to include outreach to rural and underserved urban populations, as well as, responding to the lack of sacred choral music in the Spanish language.

AFPC has commissioned 3 Latino composers to create a body of sacred choral music in the Spanish language to make available to the public and start implementing in our Festival repertoires, beginning in 2022. These composers include Peter Kolar (Director of the El Paso, TX Diocesan Choir), Carlos Zapién (Director of Music, St. Augustine Cathedral in Tucson, AZ), and Jesús López Moreno (Director of the Colegio de Infantes de la Insigne y Nacional Basilica de Santa Maria de Guadalupe in Mexico City).

AFPC has chosen the Archdiocese of Omaha, NE to launch the inaugural rural festival initiative, reaching farm communities in a 100-mile radius. AFPC intends for this pilot program to be the start of many more such events around the U.S. in coming years. With the aid and support of local leadership, the Omaha Festival will take place in 2022.

Choir Organization during COVID-19



The Cathedral Choristers



The Cathedral Chorale



Combined Choirs performing virtually: The Cathedral Choir, Chorale and Cathedral Choristers

The Cathedral Choirs at the Episcopal Cathedral of Saint John the Divine, New York City, began their 2020-21 season experimenting with different rehearsal paradigms in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. In the sunny and warm days of September and October, the Cathedral Choristers (35, 4th-8th graders) and the Cathedral Chorale (35 adult volunteers) rehearsed outdoors in separate rehearsals with facemasks while keeping 12-15 feet social distance. We used a portable sound system and a Clavinova to lead the ensembles spread over an outside distance of 200+ feet. In late October, we transitioned to inside the Cathedral which allows ample space for social distancing. Measured by length or internal volume, the Cathedral is one of the five largest church buildings in the world with over 600 feet of nave space. After 25 minutes of rehearsal we take a five minute break, turn on industrial fans and allow the air to recycle-doors remain open on the sides of the cathedral. All members electing to be in-person get their temperature checked before entering and are required to answer a short questionnaire verifying that they have followed CDC guidelines since the last rehearsal.

Rehearsals are simultaneously broadcasted over Zoom on an Ipad for any members electing to participate from home. We found our members comfortable with our set-up as we followed CDC guidelines and a [scientific aerosol study](#) entitled the *International Coalition of Performing Arts Aerosol Study Round 2*. With our services online, the ensembles only rehearse in-person and combine together virtually as we record virtual choir videos for our weekly online Sunday services. Choir members create their individual choir videos following a synced conducting video, organ accompaniment, and click track. Following all of these COVID-19 safety measures has allowed our choirs to once again flourish and enjoy the beauty of singing together. There have been moments of profound catharsis and healing as the choirs once again hear their voices united together in song and prayer.

I hope you enjoy our recent virtual choir recording *O How Amiable* by Ralph Vaughan Williams: <https://youtu.be/AFRplin2ayw>

Bryan Zaros
Associate Choirmaster
The Cathedral of St. John the Divine
New York, New York

Looking for more resources? Click [HERE](#) to watch all the AFPC-NCEA webinars for Conductors of Catholic Student Choirs, Worship Leaders and Classroom Teachers. Click [HERE](#) to view sample virtual choir rehearsals and lessons.

NCCF Cantemus Fund

The Catholic Philanthropist

Faith Working Through Philanthropy

National Catholic Community Foundation

ADVANCING THE KINGDOM

Fledgling disciples

By Dana Robinson



"Sing for your supper ... songbirds always eat". This lyric from the Rodgers and Hart Broadway musical, "The Boys from Syracuse" borrows from the 'Little Tommy Tucker' nursery rhyme first published in 1744. Its association with singing and children brings to mind a fund recently established at NCCF.

The Cantemus Fund has been set up to support and endow the mission of the American Federation Pueri Cantores, a chapter of the International Federation Pueri Cantores. Though not as old as Little Tommy Tucker the International Federation traces its roots to *Les Petits Chanteurs a la Boix*, a group of child singers organized in the early 1900s in France and inspired by the writings of St. Pius X. This musical mustard seed grew through the war-torn countries of Europe and was officially recognized by the Vatican in 1951 as an evangelical apostolate. From Gregorian chant to modern polyphonic and contemporary music the American Federation promotes liturgical singing among young Americans between the ages of eight and eighteen. Once trained these choristers gather in local, regional and national "festivals" where through their participation in the liturgy they praise God and cultivate fraternity among their peers. Every five years the choirs assemble in Rome with their international counterparts to perform at a papal Mass. As readers might imagine for these youngsters (and their parents and grandparents) this shared exposure to Beauty and to the Sacred is a life-transformative experience.

For those of us who are blind to the green shoots of 'the new springtime' which Pope John Paul II foresaw we would do well to click on www.pcco.org. Go there and visit the YouTube recordings of young people around the globe performing uplifting music under the batons of Pueri Cantores conductors. Even the most jaded among us will be moved by the power of sacred song raised with such authentic zeal and joy. Indeed, we may rediscover our ability to 'give reason for our hope' as we are exhorted to do by St. Peter in that first letter attributed to him. [Read more](#)



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

& Treasurer of the Board of Directors of the American Federation Pueri Cantores

A VOICE FROM THE VINEYARD

"While the primary mission of NCCF is to facilitate the engagement of individuals and families in Catholic philanthropy we also endeavor to bring to the attention of our community members the good works of organizations whose paths we routinely cross. These are the real 'laborers in the vineyard' and it is their mission to which this column gives voice".

Pueri Cantores



With 32 federations comprising 70,000 young singers worldwide, Pueri Cantores is the international student choral organization of the Roman Catholic Church, whose mission is to evangelize and catechize choristers through the medium of sacred music, aiding them in growing in their faith and rooting them ever deeper to the Church. Here in the U.S. the American Federation organizes choral festivals at the local and national levels held in the regional Cathedral, Basilica, or other church of architectural significance. Our Treble voice festivals (for grades 4-8), and Mixed Voice festivals (for grades 4-12) are in the context of a Eucharistic liturgy, and feature a broad repertoire of Gregorian chant, classical and modern polyphonic music, and contemporary compositions. Our High School Festivals (for grades 9-12) explore a different "mini-Masterwork" each year, with rehearsals culminating in a late afternoon/evening concert accompanied by chamber orchestra. In all cases, the repertoire learned for the annual festival can be sung in parish and school liturgies and concerts. A roster of esteemed guest conductors provides an engaging festival experience for participating choirs and their families.

As a corporate partner of the National Catholic Educational Association, AFPC provides professional opportunities for music teachers and no cost music education resources for the 6400 Catholic schools in our nation. In addition, each year with NCEA we sponsor three webinars to assist in the training of parochial school music teachers in the areas of children's choral and vocal pedagogy.



This organization has a fund with NCCF. To learn more about this fund please click [here](#).



**National Catholic
Community Foundation**

*"Faith working
through philanthropy"*

FIPC Spirituality Commission

Federatio Internationalis
Pueri Cantores



Dear Pueri Cantores! Dear Girls and Boys!

We greet you as members of the Spirituality Commission. We want to help you, as well as the entire Pueri Cantores family (the choristers, parents, conductors, and church assistants) to live the faith and prayer, and, especially, to experience fully the significance of the Church liturgy.

We want to introduce ourselves to you and also, because October is the month of the Holy Rosary, we would like to encourage you to say this beautiful prayer.

Cornelia Nepple Kost

1. My name is Cornelia Nepple Kost, I am a teacher of German and Religious Studies at a high school (lycée) in Lucerne. Currently, I also work as an organist and choir conductor in Zurich, Switzerland
2. In the Rosary, I contemplate the fact that Mary was chosen for her special role, I contemplate her devotion and participation in the suffering of her Son, Jesus, as well as her royal dignity as the Mother of God.



Fr. James Conlon

1. I am Fr. James Conlon, pastor of St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Ann Arbor, Michigan in the USA and board member of the American Federation of Pueri Cantores. As a priest I am committed to the promotion of the work of the federation and spreading the joy that music adds to the celebration of our Catholic faith.
2. In Luke's gospel Mary's heart is so full of joy that she burst into song in the great hymn- the Magnificat, recalling God's tender mercy to her and the Chosen People. When we pray the rosary we echo that joy by recalling how God fulfilled the promises made to Israel (and to all humanity) in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.



Fr. Wiesław Hudek

1. My name is Wiesław Hudek and I have been a Catholic priest for 26 years. I am President of the Polish Federation of Pueri Cantores and ecclesiastical assistant of the International Federation of Pueri Cantores. My heart is filled with joy whenever I can help others to comprehend the Gospel and show the beauty of liturgical music.
2. The Rosary prayer was taught to me and my two brothers by my grandmother, who showed us that with this simple prayer we can attain a lot. This prayer calms me down and allows me to focus on pondering God's mysteries.



Dear Pueri Cantores!

We suggest you pray one decade of the Holy Rosary every day throughout October (choosing one of the mysteries: Joyful, Sorrowful, Glorious, or Luminous).

Let us pray for our Pueri Cantores Federation, for the end of the pandemic, for a happy meeting in Florence in 2021, and for Peace in the world.

We thank you now for praying together!

May the good God bless you, and Mary hug you close to her motherly heart.

Cornelia, Fr. James and Fr. Wiesław

Switzerland-USA-Poland, September 2020

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](#)



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