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Joyful music rings out at Morristown youth choir festival

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On March 7, several youth choral groups from the Paterson Diocese helped fill Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church in Morristown, N.J., with the joyful sounds of sacred music as they participated in the historic 2026 New Jersey Pueri Cantores Youth Choral Festival and Mass alongside other youth choirs.

The March 7 event at Assumption marked the first time a Pueri Cantores Youth Choral Festival and Mass was hosted in the Paterson Diocese.

Youth in grades 4-12 from choirs across the Paterson Diocese and their directors participated in the Pueri Cantores experience, representing several parishes and a school. They included choirs from the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist in Paterson, N.J., Assumption Parish in Morristown, N.J., St. Vincent Martyr Parish in Madison, N.J., Holy Spirit School and Parish in Pequannock, N.J. and Our Lady of Fatima Parish in the Highland Lakes neighborhood of Vernon, N.J.



A few of the 11 participating choirs originated from other dioceses in the Garden State, as well as Brooklyn and Pennsylvania.

According to Holy Spirit School, the children spent the day in focused rehearsals led by guest conductor Dr. Alfred Calabrese from Texas, preparing for a choral prelude and Mass with Bishop Kevin J. Sweeney. Dr. Calabrese engaged the group throughout, ending the event with a group selfie that captured the day's spirit.

Families of choir members and members of the parish and school communities also attended to support the children.

Pueri Cantores is the international student choral organization of the Roman Catholic Church. All participating children received a medal in recognition of their hard work and to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the organization's receipt of Vatican approval.

In 1907, Pueri Cantores was founded in France to evangelize and serve through sacred music. What began in Europe quickly spread across continents. Today, Pueri Cantores includes national federations in 43 countries, representing more than 70,000 young singers worldwide.

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