

2019- 2020 Handbook

Formation for lifelong praise of God



Archdiocesan Youth Choir

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St. Cecilia Institute for Sacred Liturgy, Music and the Arts

STAFF:

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CONTACT INFORMATION:

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THE CHOIR OF THE BAPTIZED:

Christ is always present in his Church...in the assembly of the baptized, when it prays and sings. Learning to sing in the liturgy is a lifelong journey that ends in our heavenly destiny—a place among the angels and saints, singing forever before the throne of God.

DIFFERENT GIFTS, THE SAME SPIRIT:

The choir is the joyful attendant of the People of God along its pilgrim way, and a sign of its heavenly home. Some members of the community, through a discernment of gifts, are called forth to share particular musical talents in choirs that lead and sing on behalf of the assembled Church. Children, youth and adults are formed for this ministry. They are called into service of the Mother Church, cultivating its art, preparing for its worship, and committing to its discipline of liturgical prayer.

MISSION:

The mission of the choir is *formation for lifelong praise of God* through sacred, liturgical choral music with its purpose to sing throughout the Archdiocese and in its Mother Church, Saint Cecilia Cathedral, specifically:

- To advance the ministry of liturgical children's choirs.
- To complement the children's school and parish musical experiences.
- To serve the Archdiocese of Omaha as ambassadors of the Archbishop.

EVENING PRAYER:

Besides regular participation in the Sunday Eucharist, the choir will participate in the singing of some form of Liturgy of the Hours, the daily prayer of the Church, within the rehearsal.

PARTICIPANTS:

The Archdiocesan Youth Choir (AYC) , is open to boys and girls (treble voices) in 4th Grade through High School, through the urban deaneries of the Archdiocese. The AYC is comprised of two ensembles, Nova Choir and Magnificat Treble Choir. **Nova Choir (NC)** is the training choir, leading students toward participation in more advanced ensembles. **The Magnificat Treble Choir (MTC)** will be offered to choristers with intermediate and or advanced musicianship. Please feel free to encourage students to join, and contact the Director for more copies of recruitment materials.

CHORAL PERFORMANCE:

The choir will sing about twice a month at liturgies at St. Cecilia Cathedral and in other parishes, and at additional Archdiocesan and community events.

SCHEDULE:

Both choirs (NC and MTC) will rehearse Wednesdays, from **3:30-5:45pm.** from September through May. Please see the schedule for all rehearsals, liturgies, and performances. Parents are also notified by email before every event.

SELECTION/ AUDITION PROCESS:

Participation in the AYC is by audition. The child will be tested for basic range, vocal aptitude, and reading, and will be asked to sing a hymn (such as "Joyful, Joyful") or another familiar song. Please contact the Director for further information. Choristers may be added to the choir at any time during the year at the discretion of the staff. Students who have been in AYC previously may also be requested to audition again each fall, for the purpose of testing for vocal changes.

Auditions will be held on the following dates:

Saturday, August 17

Wednesday, August 21

Saturday, August 24

Auditions may be scheduled at other times if necessary. Please contact the director.

REHEARSAL YEAR:

Rehearsals will begin Wednesday, September 4, 2019 and continue through May 20, 2020.

FEES AND METHOD OF PAYMENT:

Choristers pay a \$20.00 monthly tuition from August through May. Auto-withdrawal forms for monthly payment will be made available, if desired. Choristers not using the auto-withdrawal will be invoiced twice a year, October 1st and March 1st. Payment is due 20 days after the date of the invoice. Late payments will be assessed a \$25.00 fee. A limited number of scholarships and fee waivers are available.

COMMITMENT AND ATTENDANCE:

The choir season is a year-long commitment, from September through May. Choir members are expected to attend all scheduled rehearsals, liturgies and performances, and are expected to be on time. In the event that a member must be absent or more than five minutes late, the parent or guardian should email the director at rkfisher@archomaha.org, or leave a voice message on the AYC voicemail (402.553.5524 EXT. 4.) A written excuse will be accepted, provided that it is written by the parent or guardian. Forms for absences known in advance are provided at registration, and are also available in the choir room before and after rehearsals. This is to ensure the safety of a child who is missing from rehearsal.

A total of three absences (per semester) will result in dismissal from the choir. Absences include: personal illness, family functions, sports, and all other absences. Late arrival will not count toward absence. An excessive amount of late arrivals will result in membership being reviewed by the directors.

Absence Notification: To ensure the safety of our students, parents/emergency contact will be notified within the first 15 minutes of rehearsals and services. If you are running late, please notify our staff via text messaging (217.512.0747).

REHEARSAL SCHEDULE:

3:30-3:55pm	Skills Group A, Room 208
3:55-4:00pm	Bathroom/Water Break
4:00-5:00pm	MTC Rehearsal (Room 208), NC Rehearsal (Room 206)
5:00-5:15pm	Vespers (Room ?)
5:15-5:20pm	Bathroom Break
5:20-5:45pm	Skills Group B, Room 208

REHEARSAL PROCEDURES:

Skills Group A, for students from St. Cecilia's school, will begin at 3:30pm in Room 208. Students arriving after 3:30 will be allowed into St. Cecilia Institute by a trained adult/volunteer. These students will remain in the reception area until 3:55pm. Rehearsals will begin **ON TIME** at **4:00pm**. We cannot provide supervision for non-choir siblings or other children before, during, or after rehearsals. We also ask that children be picked up promptly after rehearsal, no later than 5:50pm. Choristers should wait in the reception area indoors until parents arrive to pick them up.

DUAL BOOKING OF MINISTRIES:

In the event that a chorister is scheduled for another ministry (e.g. altar services) at the same liturgy the choir is singing, **he/she will be expected to trade with another in order to sing**. This

is because of the extended and specific nature of the training necessary to fulfill one's duty in the choir. Please look at server schedules far in advance to avoid conflicts.

DRESS CODE:

The choir members will wear vestments for liturgies and other special events, at St. Cecilia Cathedral and other locations. Students should wear **dark shoes**. We also ask that students invest in a pair of khaki pants/skirt and a dark colored polo shirt. During weekly rehearsals, members may wear casual attire or school uniforms.

INCLEMENT WEATHER:

The AYC will follow Saint Cecilia Grade School's policy on early dismissal for inclement winter weather. If school is canceled or dismissed due to snow, ice or extreme cold conditions, choir rehearsal will be cancelled.

PARENT PARTICIPATION:

Parents are needed to help the children vest, and with supervision before, during and after rehearsals and liturgies. The director will ask you how you are able to help. All volunteers must complete Safe Environment Training before participating. Please contact Krystal Peteler (kapeteler@archomaha.org) at 402.553.5524 EXT. 1 to register or with questions about the training program or go directly to the Archdiocesan of Omaha website. The \$10 fee for training will be reimbursed by the St. Cecilia Institute. [AYC Fee Waivers are available to students whose parents volunteer on a regular basis.](#)

ACCESS TO THE INSTITUTE:

Access to the St. Cecilia Institute is available using the Webster Street door on Wednesdays until 4:00. Parents will be given a code to unlock the door after that time. A door greeter will be present on Wednesdays and Sundays. For security reasons, door codes should not be given to students or their siblings.

PARENT MODELING:

Your children's participation in choir is intended as formation, not only when they sing as a choir, but also as part of their broader spiritual formation. It is important that when they attend liturgy, they participate using the skills they have learned in choir. Children also can teach adults—ask them to share with you what they have learned. Children also are very aware of what adults value, based on observing their actions. Your own efforts at full, conscious, active participation in liturgy will serve as a model and reinforcement of the importance of Liturgy in your family's life and contribute to the worship of the whole Church. Thank you for your support of your child's ministry, musical formation and spiritual development. Please keep the mission and activities of the Archdiocesan Youth Choir in your prayers, as we are guided by the intercession of Saint Cecilia, patroness of Musicians. Saint Cecilia, pray for us!