

Welcome Back, Choirs!
September 25 2016

In lieu of my usual article, I will be talking about our parish choirs this week. “Connecting Music to Mass” for this week (along with past weeks) can be found at www.stclarechurch.org/musictomass

You’ve no doubt noticed in the last couple weeks that our choirs have returned to our Sunday liturgies. The adult choirs have undergone some exciting changes that will broaden our scope of ministry moving forward. Previously, we had a choir of about 30 singers that sang regularly for the 8:30 Mass, and a choir of about 15 singers that sang regularly for the 10:30 Mass. If you were at one of the Triduum liturgies, Pentecost, or Corpus Christi Mass, you experienced these two ensembles combined, which produced even more fruits than their work as two separate ensembles.

After a year of directing these wonderful singers and consulting with Fr. Jim, I decided to make a jump and try something new this year. We have combined into one large choir, which, after some new folks joining over the summer, totals 48 singers. 48 singers – indeed, our parish is blessed! Two sub-groups of this large choir are a **Men’s Schola Cantorum** and **Women’s Schola Cantorum**. *What is a Schola Cantorum???* It’s the Church’s universal term for a choir, literally translated to “school of singers.”

Without going into great detail on scheduling, you will hear these three ensembles – the mixed, men’s, and women’s, choirs – at our 8:30 and 10:30 Masses on a regular basis. I am very grateful for the flexibility of these singers as we embark on a new scheduling adventure this season. If you are interested in joining us, please contact me at your earliest convenience!

Our children’s choirs are also in full swing as of last week. New this year is the **Cherub Choir** (2nd-4th grade) which rehearses on Wednesdays from 3:10p-3:40p. The **Treble Choir** (5th-8th grade) rehearses from 3:45p-4:45p on Wednesdays. Both choirs rehearse in the St. Clare School choir room. Interested singers and their parents are welcomed to contact me about membership! If you have a school dismissal conflict with our start time, please still contact me to see if we can work something out.

Some people raise their eyebrows at the word “performance” when associated with music ministry. But... our choirs perform. They perform acts of praise, thanksgiving, worship, and adoration to God week after week. I am happily indebted to these singers (and their supportive families) who give lavishly of their time and talent to enrich our parish liturgies. Our parish is truly blessed with choirs who help us *pray* at Mass!

Stephen Eros
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