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Special Music & Concerts

During the 2025 - 2026 Season

St. Agnes Cathedral
Office of Music Ministry
29 Quealy Place
Rockville Centre, NY 11570-4021
(516) 764-9578

With Organ & Voice
Music at Saint Agnes Cathedral

2025 - 2026

The Cathedral of St. Agnes
Office of Music Ministry
Rockville Centre, New York
www.StAgnesCathedral.org



Most Rev. John O. Barres, D.D., S.T.D., J.C.L.
Diocesan Bishop

The Very Reverend Michael F. Duffy, Rector



Most Rev. William Murphy, S.T.D., Bishop Emeritus



Michael L. Bower, Director of Music



Maura Goodwin, Associate Director of Music



Rockville Centre Guild for the Arts

American Guild of Organists

Present

With Organ & Voice
Music at Saint Agnes Cathedral
Rockville Centre, New York

We are now into the third decade of special concerts and services of music at Saint Agnes Cathedral! While there have been concerts in Saint Agnes for many, many years (under the direction of Mrs. Bertha Reilly, Msgr. Williams, Mr. Paul LaMedica, and Mr. Christoph Tietze, to name a few past directors), the present organization of these events came about in 2000, when our magnificent new pipe organs were built. In addition to hundreds of liturgies, the musicians of Saint Agnes, along with outstanding visiting artists, present concerts and special music to enhance the musical and spiritual life of our community. Many of the concerts feature our wonderful pipe organ and at least one of our choirs. Please plan to attend these wonderful events, which are designed to appeal to a variety of ages and musical tastes.

We are especially grateful to all who have collaborated on presenting these events: The Nassau Chapter of the American Guild of Organists and the Rockville Centre Guild for the Arts.

The year will open with a very special presentation Gabriel Faure's "Requiem" in the context of a 7:30 Evening All Souls' Day Mass (November 2), and our Annual Girls Choirs Investiture and Mass on November 22!

We will have a return of our Advent/Christmas Concert on December 12, Solem Sung Solemn Vespers on the 3rd Sunday Evening of Advent (Gaudete Sunday), with choir as well!

To commemorate the Solemnity of Saint Agnes, our Patroness, there will be a Solemn Mass on January 21, 2026. On March 15, we'll have the Choir of Men and Boys' annual Investiture Ceremony and Mass. On the 4th Sunday Evening of Lent, we will have Solemn Sung Vespers (Laetare Sunday) with choir as well! On Wednesday of Holy Week: April 1, there will be the Office of Tenebrae.

On Friday evening, May 29, the South Shore Symphony will join with the Cathedral Choirs to present Beethoven's famous Symphony No. 9, The "Ode to Joy!"

As well as these special presentations, the choirs, cantors, organists and musicians prepare and help us to pray with BEAUTIFUL music throughout the year, each and every Sunday, holy days (Christmas and Easter), Thanksgiving, Confirmations, First Holy Communions, etc.!

We look forward to seeing you at many of these liturgies and events, and having the opportunity to thank you for your support to our Music Ministry!

All the Very Best,
Michael L. Bower, Director of Music

Sunday, November 2, 7:30 PM
Solemn Mass of All Souls' Day: Gabriel Fauré "Requiem"
Cathedral Choirs, Chamber Orchestra & Soloists
Free-will Offering

Saturday, November 22, 4:30 PM
Saint Cecilia Day: Choir Investiture, Mass, Concert and 40th Anniversary Reunion!
Saint Agnes Cathedral Junior & Senior Girls Choirs
Free-will Offering

Friday Evening, December 12, 7:30 PM
Advent/Christmas Concert
The Cathedral Choirs, Orchestra, and Soloists
Michael L. Bower, Conductor
Maura Goodwin, Associate Conductor
Suggested Donation of \$25 and \$20
(Patron Level Donations are available)

Sunday, December 14*, 4:30 PM
Sung Solemn Vespers for Advent
* Gaudete Sunday (with Choir)

Wednesday, January 21, 2026, 7:30 PM
Commemoration of
The Solemnity of Saint Agnes, Virgin, Martyr
Principal Patroness of the Diocese
and Titular Patroness of the Cathedral

Sunday, March 15
10:30 Investiture Ceremony, 11:00 AM Mass
Choir of Men and Boys & Diocesan Boys and
Teens Choir of Rockville Centre
Free-will Offering

Sunday, March 15*, 4:30 PM
Sung Solemn Vespers
* Laetare Sunday (with Choir)

Wednesday, April 1, 7:30 PM
The Office of Tenebrae
The Cathedral Singers
Free-will Offering

Friday, May 29, 7:30 PM
The South Shore Symphony & the Cathedral Choirs
Beethoven's "Symphony No. 9"
Suggested Donation of \$25 and \$20



**Solemn Mass of All Souls' Day:
Gabriel Fauré "Requiem"**
Sunday, November 2, 7:30PM

The Requiem Mass receives its name from its first words, "Requiem aeternam," found in the Introit (Entrance Chant). The texts of this Mass have formed the Church's liturgical prayer for the dead over the centuries. While originally sung in Gregorian chant, many composers have set these venerable texts to music.



The Church prays in the Requiem Mass that the holy souls in purgatory may enter into the eternal rest of heaven. While the texts contain stark reminders of final judgment, they are also filled with hope because of the redemption won for us by Jesus Christ in his saving passion and death on the Cross.

On All Souls' Day, "the Church offers the eucharistic sacrifice and its own intercession for the dead... in the yearly remembrance of all the sons and daughters of the Church who sleep in Christ. The Church seeks to help the faithful departed by earnest prayer to God for their entry into the communion of saints in heaven. In this way, because of the communion of all Christ's members with one another, the Church obtains spiritual help for the dead and brings the consolation of hope to the living." (Ceremonial of Bishops, §395).

Gabriel Fauré's (1845-1924) "Requiem" will be sung this evening in the context of its original purpose, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. The first version of Fauré's "Requiem" was performed for a funeral in 1888 at the Church of La Madeleine in Paris. It would undergo further edits, reaching completion in 1890. Fauré said about his own work that it is "dominated from beginning to end by a very human feeling of faith in eternal rest." One hundred singers from the Cathedral Choirs had the distinct joy of performing this work in that very church in Paris, this past July 6. This will be a truly special evening, as those singers shall bring back to Rockville Centre, the spirit of our Roman Catholic Church in France to the United States, and our Diocesan Center on Long Island.

Please join us as we pray for the repose of the souls of our loved ones who have gone before us, and of all the faithful departed.

FREE-WILL OFFERING

**Saint Cecilia Investiture, Mass,
Concert, and 40th Anniversary
Reunion**
Saturday, November 22, 4:30 P.M.
Saint Agnes Junior and Senior Girls' Choirs; Maura Goodwin, Director



The St. Agnes Cathedral Junior and Senior Girls Choirs are very excited to share their annual St. Cecilia Choir Investiture and Mass with you! We ask the special patronage of St. Cecilia for the Girls Choirs during their Choir Investiture. St. Cecilia was a young Roman virgin and martyr, who died in the second century for her faith in Christ. She is the patron saint of music and musicians.



During our special Investiture Ceremony, we'll welcome our newest choristers into the Girls' Choir! The Mass and Concert will feature our young musicians, grades 3 through 8, as they sing their hearts to God. The girls are excited to share some of their favorite choir pieces with you! Following the Concert, please join us for a reception in the Msgr. James P. Kelly Parish Center to congratulate our young singers. We ask for the special intercession of St. Cecilia, as we give honor and glory to God through sacred song.



On this Evening, we shall also celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the founding of this Choir! And we invite all Alumni of the Choir to join us for the Investiture, Mass, Concert, and a Special Performance!

FREE-WILL OFFERING

**Stay Awake, Watch, and
Make Ready the Way of the Lord
Preparation for the Birth of Christ**
Friday Evening, December 12, 7:30 PM

Seasonal Favorites will be presented by the Cathedral Chorale, the Choir of Men and Boys, Diocesan Boys/Teens Choir of Rockville Centre, Senior Girls Choir, Master Chorale 2013, and Chamber Choirs, directed by Michael L. Bower.

"Music, Movement and Majesty" describes this concert, which includes familiar carols of the "Season, Olde and New;" an impressive procession of the Three Wise Men ("We Three Kings"), Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus" with the dramatic "standing room" of the audience, in three parts of the Cathedral!

SUGGESTED TICKET DONATION: \$25 & \$20
(Special Patron Level Donations are Available)



**Sung Solemn Vespers on the Third Sunday
Evening of Advent**
Sunday, December 14,* 4:30 PM



The Advent season is a time of "devout and expectant delight" as the Church prepares for the celebration of Christmas. We prepare ourselves to celebrate Christ's first coming by reminding ourselves of his Second Coming at the end of time.

On Sunday evening during the Advent season, we will pray Vespers, the Evening Prayer of the Church keeping watch for our Lord when he comes again. The prayer we send up becomes "like incense in the Lord's sight." (Psalm 141:2).

The prayer, which comes from the Church's Liturgy of the Hours, is primarily scripturally based, featuring the chanting of the psalms, reading from scripture, prayers of intercession as well as the singing of hymns and canticles. A homily will be preached each evening.

* On the third Sunday of Advent (December 14), Gaudete Sunday, the celebration of Vespers will be further enhanced with choral singing.

**Commemoration of the
Solemnity of Saint Agnes, Virgin, Martyr**
Wednesday, January 21, 2026, 7:30 PM Solemn Mass



Saint Agnes, Virgin and Martyr, is the patroness of our cathedral and diocese. We will celebrate this great feast with two days of celebration, including Solemn Vespers and Solemn Mass.

An important martyr in the early Church, Saint Agnes is mentioned in the second listing of saints in the Roman Canon (Eucharistic Prayer I). Born in 291 AD, she was raised in a Christian family. Saint Agnes was very beautiful and highly sought after for marriage. However, she made a promise to God never to stain her purity. Her love for our Lord was so great that whenever a man wished to marry her, she would say, "Jesus Christ is my only spouse!" During a persecution, she was ordered to sacrifice to the pagan gods or be violated. She was tortured, but preserving her virginity, she was martyred and finally saw her heavenly spouse.



On the Day of the Solemnity of our patroness, Saint Agnes, there will be a Solemn Mass at which The Cathedral Singers will enhance our prayer and festive spirit with selections from Tomás Luis de Victoria's "Missa O Quam Gloriosum" and other sacred works.

Boys' Choir Investiture
Sunday, March 15, 10:30 AM

Our Cathedral Choir of Men and Boys and the Diocesan Boys and Teens Choir of Rockville Centre have a rich history here in Rockville Centre and beyond. Beginning its 66th year, the flourishing 75 voice Cathedral Choirs will invest the new Probationers (first year singers) into the Choir and sing for the 11:00 AM Mass. Veteran singers will also be recognized.



The Choir was begun at the request of the first Bishop of our Diocese, the late Most Reverend Walter P. Kellenberg. Early special performances include performing with Leonard Bernstein at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. and at Shea Stadium for His Holiness, Pope St. John Paul II. Under the direction of Mr. Bower, the choir has continued to travel and perform in many places, including, the White House, Lincoln Center, the Vatican, and with Gerald Wirth in Vienna, Austria.

FREE-WILL OFFERING

**Sung Solemn Vespers on the Fourth Sunday
Evening of Lent**
March 15, 4:30 PM

The season of Lent, by means of penance, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, is meant to dispose the faithful, who more diligently hear the word of God and devote themselves to prayer, to celebrate the paschal mystery of the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus. On the Sunday evening of Lent, we will pray Solemn Vespers from the Liturgy of the Hours. During this season when it is most appropriate to meditate upon the Word of God, we will enter into this scripturally based prayer of singing the psalms and reading from scripture. A homily will be preached at each celebration



On the Fourth Sunday of Lent, Laetare Sunday, (March 15) a day marking that the Lenten season is more than halfway through, penitential discipline is lightened up. The evening's liturgy will feature our choir and a fuller usage of the organ, which is only played to sustain singing during Lent.

The Office of Tenebrae
Wednesday, April 1, 7:30 PM

A new favorite at Saint Agnes, drawing from an ancient tradition, the hauntingly beautiful Office of Tenebrae commemorates the betrayal, death, and burial of Christ. In days of old, it comprised the Church's early morning prayers, though it would be anticipated on the night before. The image of light and darkness is prominent in this celebration, as fifteen candles will be extinguished gradually, symbolizing the abandonment of Jesus by his disciples.



The prayer will begin with the Office of Readings from the Church's current Liturgy of the Hours with the chanting of the psalms and reading from scripture. It will continue with other distinctive elements of the traditional Office of Tenebrae, readings from sacred scripture and early Church Fathers, as well as the singing of the Lamentations of Jeremiah, and the Allegri "Miserere," which was originally composed for the Office of Tenebrae. The congregation will be engaged in the prayers and singing, while at the same time, masterpieces will be brought out from the Church's treasury of sacred music to enhance our prayer.

FREE WILL OFFERING



Ludwig Beethoven's Symphony No. 9
Friday, May 29, 7:30 PM
South Shore Symphony, Cathedral Choirs, and Master-Chorale
Adam Glaser, Conductor

The major choirs of the Cathedral Music Program continue to combine for large scale musical presentations. To mark the 26th Anniversary of the collaboration of the 80 piece instrumental jewel of the Village of Rockville Centre with the Cathedral Music Program, the group will present a thunderous performance of Beethoven's last and greatest symphony. Innovative for his day time, Beethoven includes a chorus and soloists for the final movement of the work. Our Cathedral Chorale, MasterChorale2013, and the Gentlemen of the Choir of Men & Boys will provide the leadership for our younger singers to perform this famous melodic finale!

The Choir numbers approximately one thousand "boys to men." This Evening will be an opportunity to gather these men and thank them for their contribution to the liturgical life of St. Agnes Cathedral, share many stories, and join in the success of our present Choir!

SUGGESTED DONATION: \$25 & \$20

