Music at Saint Agnes Cathedral

The St. Agnes Cathedral Choir of Men & Boys

Diocese of Rockville Centre

Rockville Centre, New York



Michael L. Bower, Director

mbower@stagnescathedral.org

Handbook: 2026-2027

Saint Agnes Cathedral
29 Quealy Place
Rockville Centre, NY 11570

Most Reverend John O. Barres, D.D., S.T. D., J.C.L.,
Diocesan Bishop
The Very Reverend Michael F. Duffy, Rector

Associate Pastors
Reverend Christopher Heller
Reverend Hilary Nwajagu
Reverend Emmanuel Nwogu

In Residence
Reverend Lachlan Cameron, S.T.L.

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Music helps us express what words alone cannot. When we are at Sunday Liturgy and all are lifting their voices in song, the sound of the assembly, celebrant, choir, cantor and organ creates a wonderful expression of faith.

Each member of the Men and Boys Choir has the opportunity to explore their faith through the music they sing. Equally important, they strengthen the faith of those around them with the beautiful melodies and texts which they present. By sharing the gifts God has given them, our Choir enriches the lives of many.

St. Agnes Cathedral Choir of Men and Boys

This publication is a 2026/2027 resource book for our choir members and their families. It provides Choir Policies, a Calendar of Events and a Roster.

Attendance Policy

All choir members are expected to punctually attend the appropriate rehearsals and Sunday masses. To be excused from a choir event, parents must write a note or phone the Music Office. Unexcused absences are followed up with a phone call. This is to ensure the safety of a child who is "missing" from rehearsal. After four unexcused absences, a meeting must be held between the director, parent and chorister before continuing in the choir program.

Vestments

Each choir member is assigned a choir number, which identifies his cubby, songbooks and robes. Each member is provided a cassock and surplice (long purple robe and white short robe, respectively). The choir member is responsible for making sure cassocks/surplices are clean and neat for every performance. Probationers will receive cassocks and surplices in the Fall but only wear the cassock until they are invested with a surplice in March. These vestments are hung in numerical order in the Music Office and remain there unless they are taken to be cleaned or mended. PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE TAGS AS THEY SHOW THE NAME/NUMBER FOR THE SINGERS. Choir medals are kept with the vestments. Please be sure to have the Choir # and name of the chorister affixed with tape on both the robe and surplice for Identification.

Dress Code

Although the choir members wear cassocks and surplices over their street clothes for Sunday masses, it is important that they look professional and neat when the choir performs. Proper dress for Sunday Liturgies includes a dress shirt, dress pants, socks, and dress shoes. This dress code is even more significant if the choir is singing at engagements outside the church. For special occasions, it may be necessary for each member to wear the "choir uniform." This is basically a pair of Khaki dress pants, a white polo/golf shirt or dress shirt and a navy blue blazer. A number of blazers are available in the Music Office for those boys who don't already own one.

Safety

Please park on Quealy Place when picking up boys after rehearsals. In the unlikely event that a choir member is not claimed within a few minutes after rehearsal, they will wait in the RECTORY OFFICE and may be picked up there*

Liturgy and Rehearsal Schedule

The Men and Boys Choir usually sings every third Sunday at the televised 11:00 Liturgy. On these Sundays, Tenors and Basses are expected to arrive at 9:45 and Sopranos and Altos should arrive at 10:15 for "warm-up" rehearsals. There are several special liturgies the Choir will participate in during the year and they are highlighted on the accompanying **Calendar of Events**. Please take the choir calendar into consideration when planning family vacations, especially around the Christmas and Easter holidays.

Regular weekly rehearsals will vary for each choir member depending on his status in the choir (Group A-probationer, Group B-2nd year 4th Gr., or Advanced), his singing section (soprano, also, tenor and bass) and his school schedule (St. Agnes boys are available to sing at earlier daytime rehearsals than public school boys).

Schedule of Regular Rehearsals and Sunday Masses

Groups A & B (Probationer Boys & 2nd Year 4th Grade Boys)
Monday afternoons from 4:15 to 5:00
Thursday evenings only prior to scheduled Sunday Liturgies
from 5:30 to 7:45 (includes dinner)**
Scheduled Sunday Morning 11:00 Liturgies (10:15 Rehearsal)

St. Agnes & Public Middle School Boys Not in Groups A & B (Advanced)
Monday afternoons from 3:00 to 4:00
Thursday evenings from 5:30 to 7:45 (includes dinner)**
Scheduled Sunday Morning 11:00 Liturgies (10:15 Rehearsal)*

Elementary Public School Boys Not in Groups A & B (Advanced)
Monday afternoons from 4:15-5:00
Thursday evenings from 5:30 to 7:45 (includes dinner)**
Scheduled Sunday Morning 11:00 Liturgies (10:15 Rehearsal)*

High School Boys, Adults & Changed Voices
Thursday evenings from 7:00-7:45
Scheduled Sunday Morning 11:00 Liturgies (9:45 Rehearsal)*

*** The Schedule *usually* works out to be every 3rd Sunday (not always)**
**** After Easter, Thursday evening rehearsals are from 7:00-7:45 (no dinner)**

***Advanced Choir refers to Men and Boys singers in the choir for more then two (2) years (exception: 2nd year 5th Graders are also included)**
***Please note the special events on calendar: Concerts, trips, investitures, etc.**

Achievements

Probationers:

Probationers are taught the basics of being a choirboy: how to process with a group; how to hold music; discipline at Mass and rehearsals, etc. In addition, probationers receive individual instruction in vocal production and learn how to read music. Probationers will take turns singing with choir. In March, the boys are invested into the choir and become Beginners. Although invested members of the

Choir, their schedule remains the same as they continue their studies in vocal production and sight singing until they pass all requirements for the Junior level.

Sopranos and Altos (Juniors, Seniors, Choristers):
The terms Junior, Senior and Chorister denote different levels of achievement within the soprano and alto sections. At all three levels, boys are considered full singing members of the choir. ***Choristers*** have achieved the highest standards of musical and disciplinary excellence and serve as examples for the younger members. A ***Select Ensemble*** of the advanced singers of the alto and soprano section, ***(and tenor & basses sections)*** sings for additional liturgies, concerts and special events. Juniors display their medals on light blue ribbons; seniors on dark blue ribbons and choristers have red ribbons.

Choir Organization

The choir is divided into teams. Team leaders are chosen by the choir director to be in charge of each team. Team leaders are expected to help the members of their teams and to set a good example. They wear special team leader medals (silver) on red ribbons. An outstanding team leader may qualify to become a head chorister. The choir director also appoints one or two head choristers and one or two deputy head choristers as the soprano and alto section's leaders. The Head Chorister(s) wear(s) a red ribbon with a large gold medal. Outstanding graduating 8th graders may become Bishops Chorister and receive a wide green ribbon and a large medal, which is the highest honor bestowed on a chorister.

Point System

Each choir member is encouraged to be a responsible, contributing member of the choir. Points are awarded at the end of each rehearsal, liturgy or performance to indicate the choir members' level of participation, punctuality, and effort. Points may be subtracted for bad behavior or lack of punctual attendance. The minimum number of points required for each level in the soprano and alto sections are as follows:

JUNIOR	**Light Blue Ribbon and Bronze Medal**	90 POINTS
SENIOR	**Dark Blue Ribbon and Bronze Medal**	180 POINTS
CHORISTER	**Red Ribbon and Bronze Medal**	325 POINTS

TEAM LEADER: Red Ribbon and Silver Medal 470 POINTS
(outstanding leadership skills—music, repertoire, etc)

HEAD CHORISTER: Wide Red Velvet and Large Gold Medal 615 POINTS
(Head of Team Leaders and singers)

BISHOP'S CHORISTER: Wide Green Ribbon and Large Gold Medal! Upon completion of 8th Grade, and going to High School! To be worn and as h.s. member!

CHORAL SCHOLAR: Wide Purple Ribbon and Large Gold Medal! Boys/Teens who continue to sing the soprano/alto part at the beginning of high school years!

Saint Agnes Cathedral Choir of Men & Boys
2026-2027 Calendar of Events!

(Please note that items on this schedule are subject to change)

All first year boys are considered probationers and are required to follow the Group A Probationer Schedule for the entire school year unless otherwise requested. This includes regular Monday probationer rehearsals (4:15-5:00), the scheduled Thursday evening rehearsals (5:30-7:45) and the corresponding scheduled Sunday Liturgies. The boys who will follow the probationer schedule, denoted by Group A, are outlined at the back of this Calendar of Events. In addition, 2nd Year 4th Grade boys are required to follow a similar special rehearsal and Liturgy schedule as well, denoted by Group B, as outlined behind this calendar. All members, including those in Groups A & B, are scheduled to sing for Christmas, the Investiture Ceremony, and Easter Sunday.

September

****Voice Check-ups and Robe Fittings are on Wednesday, September 9th and Friday, September 11th. Our First Rehearsals are Monday, September 14th & Thursday the 17th, and our First Mass is Sunday, September 20th!***

9	**Wednesday**	**3:00-5:00 pm**	**Voice Check-ups & Robe Fitting**
11	**Friday**	**3:00-5:00 pm**	**for returning boys and teens.**
		Scheduled times, or when available during these hours.	

14	Monday	3:00-4:00 pm	**First Rehearsal!**
		4:15-5:00 pm	**1st Rehearsal** for returning Public Elem. & Group B Boys (**No Group A** just yet!) **(Next Week!)**
17	Thursday	5:30-7:45 pm	1st Thursday Rehearsal with 1st dinner! Including Group B boys **(No Group A) Tenors and Basses: 1st Rehearsal!**
20	**25th Sunday in Ordinary Time**	**11:00 Mass First Sunday!**	**Rehearsal for Tenors/Basses at 9:45 Rehearsal for Sopranos/Altos at 10:15 including Group B (No Group A Boys)**
21	Monday	3:00-4:00	Rehearsal
		4:15-5:00	Public Elem., Groups **A & B**
	(First Probationer Group A/New Boys Rehearsal! - Welcome !!!)		
24	Thursday	5:30-7:45	Rehearsal with dinner (No Groups)
27	Sunday	Happy B-Day Mr. Bower!!!	



2026-2027 Calendar of Events (Continued)

28	Monday	3:00-4:00 4:15-5:00	Rehearsal Public Elem., Groups A & B



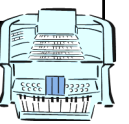
October

Special Mass BBQ Dinner Party for Thursday, October 8!

1	Thursday	5:30-7:45	Rehearsal with dinner (No Groups)

4	**Sunday**	**Ministry Fair!** **7:00**	**OPENING OF OUR CONCERT SERIES!** **Gail Archer, Organist in Concert.**

ALL are Welcomed! EXTRA POINTS FOR SINGERS WHO ATTEND!!!



5	Monday	3:00-4:00 4:15-5:00	Rehearsal Public Elem., Groups A & B
8	Thursday **PRACTICE FOR SUNDAY!**	5:30-7:45	Rehearsal with dinner **Groups A (Probationers!) & B!**

11	**28th Sunday in Ordinary Time** **Probationers: First Sunday!**	**11:00 Mass**	**Rehearsal Tenors/Basses at 9:45** **Rehearsal Sopranos/Altos at 10:15** **(Groups A & B)**

12	**Monday**	**xxxxxxxx**	**No Rehearsal (Columbus Day)**
15	Thursday	5:30-7:45	Rehearsal with dinner (No Groups)
19	Monday	3:00-4:00 4:15-5:00	Rehearsal Public Elem., Groups A & B
22	Thursday	5:30-7:45	Rehearsal with dinner (No Groups)
26	Monday	3:00-4:00 4:15-5:00	Rehearsal Public Elem., Groups A & B
29	Thursday **PRACTICE FOR SUNDAY!**	5:30-7:45	Rehearsal with dinner **Groups A (Probationers!) & B!**

31 **HAPPY HALLOWEEN!**



November

1	**The Solemnity of All Saints**	**11:00 Mass**	**Rehearsal for Tenors/Basses at 9:45** **Rehearsal for Sopranos/Altos at 10:15** **Including Groups A & B**

2026-2027 Calendar of Events (Continued)

2	Monday	3:00-4:00 4:15-5:00	Rehearsal Public Elem., Groups A & B
5	Thursday	5:30-7:45	Rehearsal with dinner (No Groups)
9	Monday	3:00-4:00 4:15-5:00	Rehearsal Public Elem., Groups A & B
11	**Wednesday**	**Veterans' Day**	***God Bless our Service People!***
12	Thursday	5:30-7:45	Rehearsal with dinner (No Groups)
16	Monday	3:00-4:00 4:15-5:00	Rehearsal Public Elem., Groups A & B
19	Thursday	5:30-7:45	Rehearsal with dinner , including **Groups A (Probationers!) & B!**

22 The Solemnity of Christ the King 11:00 Mass
All Singers at 10:00 AM
Rehearsal Tenors/Basses at 10:00
Rehearsal Sopranos/Altos at 10:00
(Groups A & B too!)

23	Monday	3:00-4:00 4:15-5:00	Rehearsal Public Elem., Groups A & B

26 Happy Thanksgiving - Happy Turkey Day!!!



29 Sunday 6:30—8:30 PM to be held at St. Agnes Cathedral. Final Piano Dress Rehearsal for Christmas Concert (at St. Patrick's Cathedral on Thursday, December 17!), For ALL Singers in their 2nd Year and Up. (No first year boys, which is Group A)

30	Monday	3:00-4:00 4:15-5:00	Rehearsal Public Elem., Groups A & B

December

All Singers (excepting Group A) from Mr. Bower's Choirs (2nd Years and UP!) will perform in the Hallmark Christmas Concert on Thursday Evening, December 17, in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Fifth Avenue, New York City.

Tentative Christmas Caroling Events TBD!!!

2026-2027 Calendar of Events (Continued)

December (con't)

The Final Piano Rehearsal will be on Sunday, November 29. Participants must also attend the Thursday, December 16 Dress Rehearsal in St. Patrick's Cathedral, Fifth Avenue, New York City .

Our Choir Christmas Party will be held on Thursday, Dec 10th at 6:15 pm (Boys reh. begins at 5:30 PM) Full Choir at 7:00 PM.

All members are expected to report at 10:00am for the 11:00 AM Christmas Mass on Friday , Dec. 25th! Alumni welcomed as well!

3	Thursday	5:30-7:45	Rehearsal with dinner (No Groups)
7	Monday	3:00-4:00 4:15-5:00	Rehearsal Public Elem., Groups A & B
10	Thursday	5:30-7:45	Rehearsal with dinner including Groups A & B; **Christmas Party for all members at 6:15 pm.**
13	**3rd Sunday of Advent**	**11:00 Mass**	**Rehearsal Tenors/Basses at 9:45 Rehearsal Sopranos/Altos at 10:15 (Groups A & B too!)**
14	Monday	3:00-4:00 4:15-5:00	Rehearsal Public Elem., Groups A & B
16	**Wednesday**	**Evening Times TBD**	**Orchestral/Choir Dress Rehearsal in St. Patrick's Cathedral for Christmas Concert All 2nd Year Singers & Up, including Group B (NO Group A)**
17	**Thursday**	**?7:30? Concert in the St. Patrick's Cathedral: *Hallmark Christmas Concert!***	
21	Monday	3:00-4:00 4:15-5:00	Rehearsal Public Elem., Groups A & B



25 Friday Christmas 11:00 Liturgy Rehearsal for all at 10:00 am (Including Groups A & B) & Alumni

12/28/26—12/31/26 xxxxx No Rehearsals – Christmas Recess!

January 2027! Happy New Year!

Please note changes on Jan. 28th as well as the changes in the Masses on the corresponding Sunday, Jan. 31st, for Catholic Schools Week and our Teen Choir!

2026-2027 Calendar of Events (Continued)



January

4	Monday	3:00-4:00 4:15-5:00	Rehearsal Public Elem., Groups A & B
7	Thursday	5:30-7:45	**Rehearsal with dinner (With Groups A and B too!)**
10	**Baptism of the Lord**	**11:00 Mass**	**Rehearsal Tenors/Basses at 9:45** Rehearsal Sopranos/Altos at 10:15 Including Groups A & B
	Happy Birthday, Mr. Delmond!		
11	Monday	3:00-4:00 4:15-5:00	Rehearsal Public Elem., Groups A & B
14	Thursday	5:30-7:45	Rehearsal with dinner (No Groups)
16	Saturday	Happy Birthday, Mrs. Baldwin!	
18	**Monday**	**xxxxxxxx**	**No Rehearsal – Martin Luther King**
21	Thursday	?5:30-7:45?	?Rehearsal with dinner? TBD
St. Agnes Feast Day:		7:30 Mass!	(More information forthcoming)
25	Monday	3:00-4:00 4:15-5:00	Rehearsal Public Elem., Groups A & B
27	Wednesday	Mozart's Birthday	
28	**Thursday**	**5:30-7:45**	**Thursday Rehearsal with dinner!** **Including Group B boys**
		7:00-8:45	**High School Boys, changed voices asked to stay an extra hour to rehearse with the High School Girls for 11:00 Sunday Mass.**
31	*4th Sunday In Ordinary Time*	*9:30 Mass*	*Rehearsal for Sopranos/Altos only at 8:45 including Group B for Catholic Schools Week.*
		11:00 Liturgy	*Rehearsal only for High School & Changed Voices at 9:45 with High School Girls.*







2026-2027 Calendar of Events (Continued)

February

1	Monday	3:00-4:00 4:15-5:00	Rehearsal Public Elem., Groups A & B
3	***St. Blaise-Blessing of Throats!***		
4	Thursday	5:30-7:45	Rehearsal with dinner (No Groups)
8	Monday	3:00-4:00 4:15-5:00	Rehearsal Public Elem., Groups A & B
11	Thursday	5:30-7:45	**Rehearsal with dinner (With Groups A and B too!)**
14	Happy St. Valentine's Day		
15—18	**xxxxxxxx**	**No Rehearsals – Mid Winter Recess**	
21	**2nd Sunday in Lent**	**11:00 Mass**	**Rehearsal Tenors/Basses at 9:45 Rehearsal Sopranos/Altos at 10:15 including Groups A & B**
22	Monday	3:00-4:00 4:15-5:00	Rehearsal Public Elem., Groups A & B
25	**Thursday**	5:30-7:45 **5:30-8:15**	Rehearsal with dinner (No Groups) **Rehearsal with dinner (including Group B)**

Please note longer time.

Rehearsal for the Chrism Mass of Holy Week!

March

We will have the two Investiture Practices: on March 4th and 11th. At least one parent of Group A Boys is required at the 7:00 PM Reh. on the 11th. And the Investiture Mass will take place on Sunday, March 14th! The newest members of the Choir will be invested and our veteran singers recognized in a ceremony on Sunday, March 14. A Brunch reception will follow for ALL singers and their families.

1	Monday	3:00-4:00 4:15-5:00	Rehearsal Public Elem., Groups A & B
4	**Thursday**	**5:30-7:45**	**Rehearsal I for Investiture with Dinner Groups A and B too! ALL SINGERS**
8	Monday	3:00-4:00 4:15-5:00	Rehearsal Public Elem., Groups A & B

2026-2027 Calendar of Events (Continued)

March (Con't)*

We will have the Dress Rehearsal for the Holy Week Masses at 5:30 for the boys, 6:15 pm Easter Party for ALL, and rehearsal for ALL at 7:00 pm on Thursday, March 18. Holy Week Masses on March 21st, 23rd*, 28th.

11 Thursday 5:30-7:45 Rehearsal II for Investiture with Dinner
Groups A and B! ALL SINGERS
At least one parent of "Group A Boys- New Boys!" must attend the rehearsal at 7:00 PM in the Cathedral.

14 5th Sunday in Lent 10:45 Investiture Ceremony New Choir Members!
11:00 Mass
9:45 Rehearsal for ALL, including
Brunch Reception!!! Groups A & B! ALL Members



15 Monday 3:00-4:00 Rehearsal
4:15-5:00 Public Elem., Groups A & B
Left-overs from the Party!



17 Happy St. Patrick's Day!

18 Thursday 5:30-7:45 Rehearsal with dinner including
Groups A & B; Choir Easter Party for ALL at 6:15 PM.
Raffle Prizes for boys and teens. Gifts for the men of the Choir.
Dress Rehearsal for the Holy Week Masses!



21* Palm Sunday 11:00 Mass Rehearsal Tenors/Basses at 9:45
PLEASE NOTE TIME! Rehearsal: Sopranos/Altos at 9:45 as well. **Groups A and B as well!**

22 Monday 3:00-4:00 Rehearsal
4:15-5:00 Public Elem., Groups A & B

23* 4:00 PM Chrism Mass Rehearsal for ALL *Except Group A
Tuesday at 2:45 am



28 Easter Sunday 11:00 Mass Rehearsal for ALL at 10:00 including
ALL SINGERS! Groups A & B and Alumni!!!

2026- 2027 Calendar of Events (Continued)

April

March 29– April 1 xxxxxxxx Easter Recess - No Rehearsals

AFTER EASTER, THE THURSDAY REHEARSALS ARE FROM 7:00 –7:45 ONLY — NO DINNERS UNTIL NEXT SEPTEMBER!

5	**Monday**	**3:00-4:00**	**Rehearsal -Trip to "Once Upon a Sunday" Ice Cream Parlor**
		4:10-5:00	Public Elem., Groups A & B
8	Thursday	7:00-7:45	Rehearsal (No Groups-No Dinner)
12	Monday	3:00-4:00	Rehearsal
	4:15-5:00	**Pub. Elem, Grps A & B - Trip to "Once Upon a Sunday" Ice Cream Parlor**	
15	Thursday	7:00-7:45	**Rehearsal (With Groups A and B too!)**
18	**4th Sunday of Easter**	**11:00 Mass**	**Rehearsal Tenors/Basses at 9:45 Rehearsal Sopranos/Altos at 10:15 including Groups A & B**
19	Monday	3:00-4:00	Rehearsal
		4:15-5:00	Public Elem., Groups A & B
22	Thursday	5:30-7:45	Rehearsal with dinner (No Groups)
26	Monday	3:00-4:00	Rehearsal
		4:15-5:00	Public Elem., Groups A & B

29 Thursday 7:00-7:45 **Rehearsal (With Groups A and B too!)**
PIANO DRESS for Olde St. Patrick's Cathedral !

May

1 Saturday 3:00-9:00 **Rehearsal (With Groups A and B too!)**
Rehearsal, Dinner, Concert!!! At Olde St. Patrick's Cathedral , New York City!

3	**Monday**	**3:00-4:00**	**Rehearsal**
OPEN HOUSE!		**4:15-5:00**	**Public Elem., Groups A & B**
6	Thursday	XXXXXX	NO Rehearsal - Ascension Thursday
9	**7th Sunday of Easter**	**11:00 Mass**	**Rehearsal Tenors/Basses at 9:45 Rehearsal Sopranos/Altos at 10:15 including Groups A & B**
Mother's Day!			

2026-2027 Calendar of Events (Continued)

<u>May Con't)</u>
Regular Monday and Thursday Rehearsals Conclude.

Rehearsal for Deacon Ordination on Thursday, 13th or 20th. TBD

22 Deacon Ordination 11:00 AM Mass
9:45 Warm-ups

3rd Year Singers and UP ONLY

<u>June</u>
Rehearsal for Priest Ordination on Thursday, 10th or 17th. TBD

12 or 19? Priesthood Ordination 11:00 AM Mass
9:45 Warm-ups

3rd Year Singers and UP ONLY

<u>END OF THE REGULAR CHOIR SEASON</u>
July/August

Singing the National Anthem! Possibly at Yankee Stadium!



2026-2027 Additional Information

Group A - Probationer Schedule

In conjunction with the regular Monday afternoon rehearsals (4:15-5:00), the probationer boys will generally rehearse on scheduled Thursday evenings (5:30-7:45/includes dinner) prior to the Sundays when the Choir is expected to perform (usually every third Sunday-there are exceptions!) as well as the corresponding Sunday Liturgy itself (11:00). In addition to these dates, Group A probationers are scheduled to rehearse/sing **Dec. 10th & 25th** (Christmas), **March 4th, 11th, and Sunday, March, the 14th (Investiture), March 26th, and April 5th,** (Easter). See references to **Group A** on the **Calendar of Events** for these dates and the appropriate Thursdays and Sundays. The following boys are included in Group A:

Group A Probationers

Hunter Cordoza
James Frevola
Luke Giovanniello
Robert Gassmann
Connor Gruosso
Frank Guzman
John Jordan

John Paul Kampfer
Patrick Lavin
Ciaran Monk
Darwin Ramkhelawan
Donovan Schafler
Additions, Not avail at press time

Group B - 2nd Year Boys Schedule

Similar to the probationer schedule, the Group B Boys (2nd Year Boys) will be responsible for attending their appropriate Monday rehearsal while attending rehearsals on scheduled Thursday evenings (5:30-7:45/includes dinner) prior to the Sundays when the Choir is expected to perform (usually every third Sunday-there are exceptions!) as well as the corresponding Sunday Liturgy itself (11:00). In addition, Group B boys are responsible to rehearse/sing on **Nov. 29th, Dec. 10th, 16th, 17th, and 25th** (Christmas), **Jan 31st** (Catholic Schools Wk), **February 25th (**Chrism Mass Reh.), **March 4th and 11th, Sunday, March 14th** (Investiture), **March 18th**, **21st, March 30th, (Chrism Mass), 28th** (Easter). See references to **Group B** on the **Calendar of Events** for these dates and the appropriate Thursdays and Sundays. The following boys are included in Group

Group B - 2nd Year, 4th Grade Boys*

(may include several grades or they may be added into full schedule.) **Consultation with Director first. Boys in 5th Grade are eligible to apply to join Advanced Choir.!**
*** As per Various School Schedules and Availabilities**

Matthew Bent
Matthew Ciancimino
David Deluso
Ellis Drum
Rowan Drum
Francois Ezeocha
Rion Feehan
John Gegerson

Benjamin Leap
Henry Leap
Michael Lee
Raphael Lilavois
Andrew Lynch
Michael Matthews
James Meagher
Declan O'Brien

Terence O'Brien
Matthew Palitz
Mikael Rodriguez
Benjamin Rzeszut
Biago Valenti
Austin Wood
Ward Zimmer

Choir History

The St. Agnes Cathedral Parish Choir of Men and Boys was founded in 1960 at the request of the recently appointed 1st Bishop of the Diocese of Rockville Centre, the late Most Reverend Walter P. Kellenberg. A highlight of that first year was their singing at Midnight Mass in the Cathedral. The Choir has had a distinguished career, which has included widespread performances and outstanding conductors. They have three studio recordings to their credit.

Entrance into the choir is by audition/interview only. Boys attend the Cathedral school and other schools in Rockville Centre and neighboring communities. The Choir has a training group of about 12 younger singers, mainly 3rd grade probationers (training group voices) and about 35 advanced singers (sopranos and altos) who rehearse twice a week. The treble singers follow the Royal School of Church Music training scheme for achievement/rewards in relation to their participation in the group. The tenor and bass singers are made up of 20 voluntary trained choral singers from the Parish and experienced high school boys from the soprano and alto sections (changed voices) who rehearse twice a week. The Choir regularly sings for the 11:00 AM Sunday Mass in the Cathedral, as well as special services, concerts, and other events. Previous directors include Paul LaMedica and Christoph Tietze. Under their leadership, the Choir performed at the Kennedy Center under the direction of Leonard Bernstein, the White House, the National Shrine in Washington, D.C., and cathedrals in six states and four European countries, including the Cathedral in Cologne, Germany. During a 1988 tour of Italy, the Choir was featured at an international congress of church musicians and was honored with a Papal audience.

For the past 29 years the Choir has continued to flourish under the direction of Michael L. Bower. The Choir has performed at St. Patrick's Cathedral, Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center, The White House, St. Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue, New York City, The Cathedral Basilica in Ottawa, Canada, Shea Stadium for a Mets baseball game, CNN's Larry King Live Show, and with the Nashville Children's Choir. The Choir regularly takes a select concert ensemble on various regional tours. Singers from the Choir have performed in many professional organizations, including the Phil Donahue Show, the New York City Opera, various commercials and TV shows, and regional theater and opera companies. In 2002 the Choir sang Handel's "Messiah" with the South Shore Symphony of Rockville Centre. They also recorded a new Christmas CD with the Cathedral's new pipe organs. The Choir has appeared in master-class with James O'Donnell of Westminster Abbey, London, and John Romeri of the Cathedral Basilica of Philadelphia.

In 2004, they traveled on a concert tour to Washington D.C. and Virginia, singing at the most prestigious places in Roanoke and Williamsburgh. The Choir performed Mozart's "Requiem" for the one-year anniversary of the death of His Holiness Pope John Paul II (on April 2 of 2006). The Trebles sang Mahler's "Symphony No. 3" with the South Shore Symphony. The Choir also traveled on concert tour to New England in June of the same year.

For 2006-2007: the Choir performed the National Anthem at Yankee Stadium and Shea Stadium and a Christmas Concert at the Lynbrook Library Performing Arts Hall. In 2008, the Choir traveled to Washington, D.C., on a concert tour to sing at the White House and the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception and in September, performed a benefit concert for St. Agnes Cathedral Elementary School with the famous Irish tenor, Ronan Tynan. In the 2008-2009 Year, The Choir sang Beethoven's "Ninth Symphony" and performed at Citfield on July 8. For the 2009-2010 season, the Choir sang Handel's "Messiah" under Maestro Bower in December, and performed in a private master-class with Dr. Bruce Neswick of the Cathedral St. John the Divine, New York City in February.

In the Spring of 2011, the Choir performed in the Cathedral's Franz Liszt Music Festival and sang the National Anthem at Citifield. In the Fall of 2011, the Choir performed Rutter's "Requiem" for a 9/11 10th Anniversary Memorial and recorded a new professional Christmas CD. In the 2012-2013 season, the Choir traveled on Concert Tour to Italy, performed in a Master-Class with Martin Baker from Westminster Cathedral, England, sang in a professional Christmas Show at Westbury Music Fair with Fr. Charles and Laurie Mangano, a multifaceted Christmas Concert in St. Agnes Cathedral, a Choir Festival in Southampton, and at Citifield

For 2013-2014, events included the Hallmark Christmas Concert at St. Patrick's Cathedral, Fifth Avenue, New York City, presenting a Mozart Mass in St. Agnes with professional soloists and orchestra. The 2014-2015 season included a Christmas Concert and a concert tour to Ireland/England, and the premier performance at Madison Square Garden! And The Long Island Ducks! 2015-2016: the advanced Singers performed Handel's "Messiah" and a concert at Carnegie Hall! 2016-2017: a 9/11 15th Anniversary Concert of John Rutter's "Requiem," a Concert at St. Francis Xavier Parish, New York City, and Citifield & Long Island Ducks.

Season of 2017-2018: SeptemberFest! on 9/15, the Sistine Chapel Choir Exchange, the Cathedral Christmas Concert, the Diocesan Schools Mass on the Feast of St. Agnes, and the Concert Tour to Germany, Austria and Prague. 2018-2019: Long Island Festival of Trees, Mozart's "Requiem" Concert, National Anthem on August 9 to a Citifield, and winning Game!, viewed by 37,000 people in the stadium!

We began the 2019-2020 with a BANG!: The Annual Choir Recognition Mass for ALL Choirs, The Christmas Concert, then Covid came. However, for the 2020-2021, a Dedicated Group of Singers and Choir Helpers gathered for Rehearsals and certain singing events: The Installation Mass of the New Rector: The Very Reverend Michael Duffy, a Special Performance of a Select Group of Sopranos and Altos on CFN (Catholic Faith Network), The Christmas Day 11:00 AM Televised Mass, Our Annual Investiture Sung Prayer Service, and Mass. The Annual Awards Ceremony and Open House for Prospective New Singers. We had GREAT and healthy successes for the 2021-2022 Season!! The Hallmark Christmas Concert in St. Patrick's Cathedral in December, The Choir Festival Concert in St. Agnes on June 26, and the Performance of the National Anthem at Citifield on August 4!

2022-2023 Season: Eight new Probationers to the Choir! Special Mass and Procession in New York City to St. Patrick's Cathedral, Handel's "Messiah" Concert, Investiture Ceremony and Mass, and Citifield on August 9! 2023-2024 Season!!!: Fourteen new Probationers to the Choir, The Christmas Concert in St. Agnes Cathedral in December, the Investiture Ceremony on March 17, Fundraising for the France Concert Tour, Performance of Bach's "Magnificat!" (BWV 243) & Vivaldi's "Gloria!" RV 589, and Citifield on July 30!

2024-2025: The Cathedral Choir of Men and Boys celebrated the 65th Anniversary of the Founding of the Choir with an Alumni Dinner and Concert. The Choir went on Concert Tour to Paris, France to sing in Notre Dame Cathedral, St. Agustin, and the Madeleine Churches, and at Versailles Palace. In the spirit of Mr. Bower's alma mater (Westminster Choir College), the Choir of Men and Boys is made up of a dedicated group of singers who strive to sing with the best quality and professionalism possible. 2025-2026: 25 New Boys joined the Probationer Class of the Choir!

Michael L. Bower, Conductor and organist, continues to enjoy the privilege of directing this wonderful group of talented musicians here on Long Island! A native of Floyd, Virginia, he began formal piano lessons at age six and was playing for Sunday school services in his home church by 12. He began teaching himself to play the organ at age 13 and held his first position as church organist at Zion Lutheran Church in Floyd at age 15.

Mr. Bower received his Bachelor's Degree Magna Cum Laude in Sacred Music and Organ Performance from Westminster Choir College, Princeton, where he studied organ with Donald McDonald, harpsichord with Mark Brombaugh, and conducting with Joseph Flummerfelt. He was a three-time recipient of the William and Mary Renneckar merit scholarship. During his undergraduate years, Mr. Bower pursued additional organ study with Marilyn Keiser of Indiana University and boys choir training with James Litton, Director of the American Boys Choir, Princeton and Gerre Hancock, St. Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue, New York. He was also a member of Donald Allured's Concert Handbell Choir. In 1985, he was appointed Associate Director of Music for St. Agnes Cathedral. At this time, he assisted Christoph Tietze in the development of a professional music program, including multiple choirs. He founded the Cathedral Girls Choir and trained the probationer group of the Boys Choir. In 1987, Bower continued specialized studies in organ and boys choir training with Stephen Cleobury at Kings College, Cambridge, and conducting with John Rutter at Clare College, Cambridge, England.

Michael earned his Master's Degree with Honors in Organ Performance from Manhattan School of Music in 1992, where he studied organ with John Walker, Baroque continuo with Kenneth Cooper, and conducting with Amy Keiser. At graduation, Bower received the John Cerovalo award for his outstanding performance of the music of Johann Sebastian Bach. He has also done graduate work in liturgy at Notre Dame University and the National Pastoral Musicians Institute. Bower has performed organ recitals on the East Coast, the Mid-West, Germany, Austria, Italy, France, and England. He has performed on the organ at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City and with the Long Island Choral Society of Garden City, New York. Bower also performed Ned Rorem's "Quaker Reader" in a concert at Columbia University as part of a festival celebrating the composer's 75th birthday in 1998. Michael is featured on the Christmas CD of the Cathedral Choir of Men and Boys released in December 2002, playing five solo organ selections. He has been a regional workshop clinician in choral vocal production, boys choirs, and organ performance.

Michael's duties at St. Agnes Cathedral include directing the 75-voice Choir of Men and Boys, the 80-voice Cathedral Chorale (Adult), and the Schola Cantorum (16-voice a capella ensemble), and the Cathedral Singers (extremely vocally gifted octet ensemble of the Cathedral's professional singers). Most recently, he has created the Diocesan Boys Choir of Rockville Centre. Mr. Bower has prepared and conducted the Cathedral Choirs and Orchestra in performances of many choral masterworks including Handel's *Messiah*, Beethoven's *Mass in C*, Haydn's *Harmoniemesse*, and Mozart's *Requiem*. He has also toured with the Choir of Men and Boys to sing at Avery Fisher Hall, Lincoln Center, St. Thomas Church, Fifth Avenue, New York City, The White House, and the Cathedral Basilica of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada. In 1998, he prepared the Cathedral Chorale for a performance at Carnegie Hall conducted by John Rutter. In 2000, Michael prepared the Chorale and other Rockville Centre choral singers for a Millennium performance of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*. Michael was the Dean of the Nassau County Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, Chair of the International Conference of Roman Catholic Cathedral Musicians, and past member of the Diocesan Liturgy Commission of Rockville Centre.

Other projects of Mr. Bower include recording at the Aaron Copland School of Music at Queens College for Pipedreams Radio Broadcast in October 2004, playing Widor's *Opus 42 Symphony in g minor* with the South Shore Symphony of Rockville Centre, and performing on the famed Cavaillé Coll organ at the Cathedral of Notre Dame, Paris, in July of 2005. In 2007, he performed a solo organ recital at Westminster Abbey, London. In January of 2008, he hosted the Conference of Cathedral Music Directors of the United States and Canada at St. Agnes Cathedral and presented a number of choirs and soloists in concert. That February, he performed Samuel Barber's organ concerto *Toccata Festiva* with the South Shore Symphony and Schola Cantorum. In that summer, he took The Choir of Men and Boys on a singing tour to Washington, D.C., and taught a choral conducting seminar at Mount St. Mary's College in Los Angeles. 2010: founded a new Diocesan Boys Choir of 45 select young singers and performed organ concerto works at St. Peter's Church, Citicorp Center in 2011. In the Fall of 2011, he prepared and conducted the Cathedral Choirs in a performance of John Rutter's *Requiem,* and recorded a new Christmas CD with the Choir of Men and Boys and Diocesan Boys Choir. In July of 2012, he took 100 singers from the Cathedral Choirs and Diocesan Boys Choir on a 10-Day Tour of Italy.

More projects! They include: 2013: taking a select ensemble of singers to perform in the Hallmark Christmas Concert at St. Patrick's Cathedral, Fifth Avenue, New York City, presenting the Brahms *Requiem* and Mozart *Mass* with professional soloists and orchestra (2014), and the concert tour to Ireland/England for 2015! Events in 2015/16: conducting again Handel's "Messiah," and taking the Choirs to perform at Carnegie Hall.

The 2016-2017Season found Maestro Bower conducting the 9/11 Memorial Concert of John Rutter's "Requiem," taking the Cathedral Choirs to perform at St. Francis Xavier Parish, New York City, preparing the Cathedral Choirs for a performance of Beethoven's "9th Symphony," and taking the Choir of Men and Boys, and Diocesan Boys and Teens Choir to perform the National Anthem at Citifield, and the Long Island Ducks.

Special endeavors for 2017-2018: performing Poulenc's "Organ Concerto," and the Cathedral Choirs performance of Mozart's "Requiem" in St. Stephen's Cathedral, Vienna! 2018-2019: Conducting two Pueri Cantores Choral Festivals in New York City, preparing the Cathedral Choirs for Mahler's "Symphony No. 3" performance, preparing and conducting the Cathedral Choirs, Orchestra and Guest Soloists in a critically acclaimed performance of Mozart's "Requiem" (aired on TV, Chanel 13!) and taking the Boys, Teens, and Men's Choirs to perform the National Anthem at Citifield to a packed stadium of 37,000 fans!

2019-2020 Season: Conducting the Entire Music Ministry Team of St. Agnes (100s of singers and players) in a Recognition Ceremony; presenting a Workshop on Children and Youth Choirs to the Diocese of Brooklyn; conducting the Annual Christmas Concert in St. Agnes Cathedral; presenting a workshop to the AGO chapters of Long Island on the Choral Music of John Rutter.

2021-2022: Bower played organ concerts in St. Mary's Cathedral, San Francisco; St. Rose of Lima, Massapequa, presented Faure's "Requiem" on All Souls Day, took 80 singers from the Cathedral Choirs to sing the Christmas Concert at St. Patrick's Cathedral; conducted a Choir Festival in Houston, Texas in March; performed Saint Saens's "Symphony No.3," produced the Diocesan Choir Festival in St. Agnes on June 26; visited the Ambassador of the United States to the Holy See, Italy; performed on the organ in St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican City; and took 400 Singers and Family Members to Citifield to perform the National Anthem on August 4!

2022-2023: Presented the Cathedral Choirs, Orchestra and Soloists in a December production of Handel's "Messiah," prepared the Choirs for a production Mahler's "Symphony No. 2," and performed an organ concert on the famous German pipe organ in St. Paul's Cathedral, Pittsburgh.

2023-2024: Directed the Cathedral Choirs, and played the Organ for a Special Eucharistic Mass and Procession in St. Patrick's Cathedral, presented the Cathedral Choirs and Orchestra in a Christmas Concert, and a Performance of Bach's "Magnificat!" (BWV 243) & Vivaldi's "Gloria!" RV 589, and directed a 100 singers in the National Anthem at Citifield on July 30!

2024-2025: He led the Choir of Men and Boys in a 65th Anniversary Alumni Dinner and Concert, and took 250 members of the St. Agnes Cathedral Music Program on a 10-Day Concert Tour to Paris, France. He prepared the Cathedral Choirs for a performance of Beethoven's 9th, and performed an organ concert at Central Synagogue, NYC.

Information for Probationers

At the end of each rehearsal, liturgy or performance, points are awarded to indicate the choir member's level of participation, as follows:

POINTS	PARTICIPATION
2	Outstanding participation and attention; eager to answer questions and demonstrate problematic passages
1	Average participation and attention
0	Below average; talking during rehearsal; late arrival
* Additional 1 point	Outstanding contribution or example

(The first point (check) is given as the boy arrives for rehearsal. ***Late arrivals will NOT receive the first check)***

Prayer for a Choir Member

Lord of Life,
fill my voice with love for You.
May the notes that sound
find their harmony as they pass through my heart.
May the song of my mouth
be a hymn of praise to You.

May I seek by my Voice
to give glory to You
rather than to bring attention to myself.
May I seek humble service to the parish community
by sharing of this gift
with which You, my Lord, have blessed me.
Use me, Lord of Rhythm and Harmony,
as You would play upon a hollow reed
so that those whom I am called to serve
may be attuned to Your Spirit and moved to prayer.

May my gift of service
truly be my prayer to You each day.