

St. John's Children's Choir Guidelines and Information

Practices

1. Practices are on Wednesday afternoons from 3:30 to 4:30 in the choir room. Occasionally a practice will be rescheduled or cancelled. Announcements will be made in advance either at choir practice or with take-home notes or phone calls or email. Ideally, monthly calendars will be sent home with the children.
2. For choir members attending St. John's School, supervision will be provided between 3 and 3:30 so parents will not have to pickup their children between school and choir practice. Teachers will direct children to go the school library after school, from there children will be taken to the church by adult volunteers.
3. From 3:00 to 3:30 children will be downstairs in the church and will be allowed to use the restroom, eat snacks, and get drinks of water so that choir practice time can be used more effectively. We do not provide snacks; children should bring them from home if they want. Children not attending St. John's School can meet the rest of the choir downstairs at this time. Children are reminded that we have responsibilities to keep the hall clean and respect those working in the offices.
4. Children are strongly encouraged and reminded to go the restroom before masses and practices instead of during masses and practices. These interruptions can disrupt valuable practice time and the solemnity of the mass.
5. Choir practice generally lasts one hour. After choir practice, children will remain in the church until their parent comes to pick them up. St. John's School students who are not picked up by 4:45 are taken to the after-school care program.
6. Children must be supervised at all times. Children are not allowed to leave our supervision until they are released to the person responsible for picking them up.
7. Attendance is taken at every practice and at each mass. Children must attend practice in order to sing at mass.
8. Practice time is generally spent learning and rehearsing songs for upcoming services. Practice time is also spent discussing the ministry of liturgical music so children will understand what they are supposed to do and why they are supposed to do it.
9. Parents are encouraged to attend practice and mass, especially when their children sing.

Requirements for Participation

10. Each child is required to have a permission form signed by their parent or guardian so that the child's parent or guardian is aware that they are participating in choir practice.
11. The teachers of St. John's School are not allowed to release students to us without parental permission. The best way to do this is for children to show their completed permission forms signed by their parent to their teacher. The child should then turn in their permission form at choir practice.. Parents can also bring their children to choir practice themselves.
12. Children are required to be in second grade or higher in order to participate in choir.
13. Choir participants must be parishioners of St. John's or attend St. John's School.
14. All of the information on the permission forms needs to be filled out before the child attends practice so that parents can be contacted for emergencies, last minute schedule changes, etc. Since children sometimes become ill during practice, it is very important that we have the correct and current information necessary to be able to contact a parent during practice.

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Who is Chosen to Sing and When do we Sing

15. Since the choir area in the sanctuary is not large enough to hold all of the children volunteering for choir, approximately 30 children are chosen to sing for each mass at St. John's. Efforts are being made to include as many children as possible at mass.
16. The choir director decides which children sing in the choir at mass. The list of children chosen to sing at a particular mass is decided upon after the practice prior to that mass. In general, the children chosen to sing at a particular mass are picked from those children who attended the previous practice.
17. The Children's Choir usually sings every Friday morning at the morning mass attended by St. John's School. Occasionally this mass is shifted to another day of the week to accommodate holy days and school schedules. Additionally the children's choir sings about twice a month during one of the weekend masses. Seasonal services at Christmas and Thanksgiving may also involve the Children's Choir. Announcements will be made at choir practice to inform children and parents of when the Children's Choir will be singing.
18. The choir director decides who will cantor and lead songs at each mass.

Behavior

19. Adult volunteers will encourage active participation and discouraged disruptive behavior. Appropriate behavior for church and respect for others is also expected. Candy or other treats are sometimes used for positive reinforcement. Disruptive children who repeatedly misbehave during the same practice may be taken directly to the after-care program for the duration of practice. St. John's school children misbehaving during mass will be returned to their classroom teacher. In the event of repeated or extreme disruptive behavior, the Choir Director will contact the child's parents.

Director

20. Comments, concerns, questions, suggestions, or people wishing to volunteer should be directed to the choir director: Andrew Tygielski, hm 772-4028, wk 544-2841, email atygielski@knology.net or Andrew.P.Tygielski@nasa.gov
21. With the trend of increasing participation, there is a need for more volunteers. Volunteers need not have musical skills and do not have to make weekly commitments, although these kinds of contributions would be very welcome.
22. Monthly activity calendars, permission forms, guidelines, and other information are available in the mailbox on the wall outside of the music ministry office downstairs in church. Monthly calendars are passed out at practices and are usually posted on the bulletin board outside the music ministry office.