



Magnificat News

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Magnificat Academy

Choir School
of the
Cathedral Church of St. Paul
in
Worcester, Massachusetts

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Beauty Offered to the Child of Bethlehem *A Reflection by Pope Benedict XVI*

The concern for the beauty of God's house and the concern for the poor of God cannot be separated. Man is in need not only of what is useful but also of what is beautiful; he needs not only his own house but also the presence of God and the signs of his presence. Wherever he is glorified, there our heart rejoices also. All of us have nowadays become somewhat puritanical: Should we not have given all these treasures to the poor?

We overlook, in so asking, that beauty given over to the Lord is the only true common property of everybody. What a difference there is between a residence and a church, between a museum and a cathedral! What a difference there is between laboring through the art museums of the Louvre, the Uffizi, or the British Museum and prayerfully participating in the song of praise rising from the very stones in a living church! The beauty offered the Child of Bethlehem is dedicated to all, and we need it like daily bread.

Those who would rob a child of beauty to make something useful out of it do not support but destroy; they take away the light, without which all our calculations turn cold and trivial. Of course, if we truly join the pilgrimage of the centuries, which was anxious to lavish the most beautiful things of this world on the newborn King, then we must never forget that he still lives in a stable, in a prison, in the favelas [South American slums], and that we do not praise him should we refuse to find him there. Yet such an awareness will not enslave us under the tyranny of usefulness, where joy becomes a stranger and somber seriousness a dogma.

From: *Gottes Angesicht suchen*, p.12, quoted in Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Co-Workers of the Truth* (Ignatius, 1992)

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Responding to a Clear Call

The founding of Magnificat Academy in 2005 in Warren was a response to a vital need of area families, together with a clear vision and deep desire to provide an excellent education for our children.

The idea of offering a Choir School as an integral aspect of this education was inspired by models in Europe and North America, in which music, and particularly sacred music, is at the heart of the curriculum, providing a healthy and holy influence on all other aspects of school life. We have also been responding to a clear call expressed in the historical and recent teachings of the Catholic Church regarding Sacred Music, such as the following excerpt from the documents of Vatican II:

The musical tradition of the universal Church is a treasure of inestimable value, greater even than that of any other art. The main reason for this pre-eminence is that, as sacred song united to the words, it forms a necessary or integral part of the solemn liturgy. Holy Scripture, indeed, has bestowed praise upon sacred song, and the same may be said of the fathers of the Church and of the Roman pontiffs who in recent times, led by St. Pius X, have explained more precisely the ministerial function supplied by sacred music in the service of the Lord.

The treasure of sacred music is to be preserved and fostered with great care. Choirs must be diligently promoted, especially in cathedral churches. Great importance is to be attached to the teaching and practice of music in ... Catholic institutions and schools.
[emphasis added]

Sacrosanctum Concilium (112-116)

The Mission of Magnificat Academy

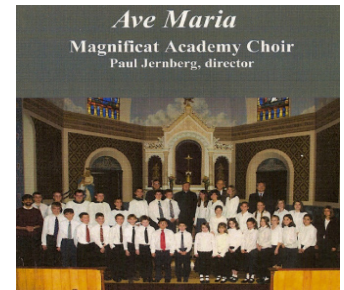
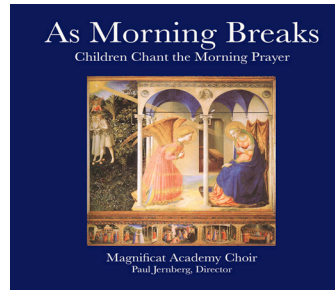
... Through providing beautiful music for Cathedral liturgies, concerts and other events; inspired and guided by the teaching documents of the Church such as *Sacrosanctum Concilium* and *Musica Sacram*, we also seek to contribute to the renewal of sacred music in the universal Church.

... Our students, based on traditional Christian values and spirituality, the principles of the classical liberal arts integrated with modern needs and resources, fidelity to the Magisterium of the Catholic Church, and a commitment to excellence, so that they might be prepared to discover and fulfill their vocation in today's world.

An Encouraging Word from Thomas Frost

Thomas Frost was a member of the Vienna Boys' Choir prior to WWII. An accomplished musician in his own right, he has made musical history in this country as one of the great recording producers and directors of the 20th and 21st centuries. He has won six Grammy Awards for his recordings of such great musicians as Vladimir Horowitz, Rudolf Serkin, Yehudi Menuhin and the New York Philharmonic conducted by Leonard Bernstein. Having been introduced to Mr. Frost through one of our Magnificat families, we've been honored by his encouragement and appreciation of our

work. Here are a few of the comments which he recently sent to us:
I was very touched hearing the CDs of your Magnificat Academy Choir. The children display thorough musical training and convey deep sincerity and belief. My listening experience left me with renewed hope for the future. Mr. Frost is currently director of Thomas Frost Productions in Manhattan, and we look forward to his projected visit with us in 2009.



To Order one of our CDs,

Ave Maria or

As Morning Breaks:

1. visit our website, magnificatacademy.org, go to Music Recordings and pay with PayPal or
2. send your request to our mailing address, PO Box 128, New Braintree, MA 01531 with a check made out to Magnificat Academy for \$15 per CD.

Monsignor Moroney joins Magnificat Board of Trustees

Magnificat Academy is honored to welcome the new rector of St. Pauls Cathedral, Msgr. James P. Moroney, as a member of our Board of Trustees! Here is a brief summary of Msgr. Moroney's background:



A priest of the Diocese of Worcester for the past twenty-eight years, he is now rector of Saint Pauls Cathedral and serves as a member of the faculty of Saint Johns Seminary in Brighton. He pursued graduate studies at the Pontifical Gregorian University, the Pontifical Liturgy Institute at Saint Anselmos, and the Catholic University of America.

A past chairman of the Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions, Monsignor Moroney was Executive Director of the USCCB Secretariat for the Liturgy from 1996-2007. Pope John Paul II appointed him as the fourth American to serve as a consultant to the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments since the Second Vatican Council. Pope Benedict XVI has reappointed him as a consultant to that Congregation, which he also serves as an advisor to the Vox Clara Committee.

We feel more closely connected to the Cathedral as well as to the universal Church as a result of our present collaboration with Msgr. Moroney, and look forward to many years of service together!

At the same time we wish to express our great appreciation to *Paula Poulin* for all her hard work as treasurer over the past year and a half, as she steps down from her position on the Board due to other commitments.

We Give thanks

Looking back on the past year, we are filled with gratitude for the countless friends who have given so much of their time, talent and treasure to support the mission of our school! First, our thanks go to each of the many parents, teachers, and friends who contributed to the work of our school in Warren; to Fr. Daniel Becker and the parishioners at St. Paul and St. Thomas Aquinas in Warren for welcoming and helping us there. Since last June, many have provided help, guidance and encouragement as we have begun programs both at the Cathedral and at our New Braintree site. In this regard we particularly wish to thank:

- ... **Bishop McManus** and **Msgr. Moroney** for their blessing and support for us to become the Cathedral Choir School.
- ... **Dr. William Schmitt, Mr. John Schmitt** and all the **Trivium School** community for their partnership, looking forward to continued collaboration.
- ... **Ian Watson**, Cathedral Music Director, for his wonderful musical and moral support.
- ... **Dr. Francesco Cesareo**, president of Assumption College, and **Michelle Graveline**, chair of their Music department, for their support as we plan for future collaboration.
- ... **Mr. and Mrs. James McCrery**, the hosts of our June choir tour in Washington, D.C. For their preparation, hospitality and for revealing to us the beauty of our nation's Capital!
- ... **Tom and Janet Hardy**, for Tom's invaluable partnership, astute educational and business advice, and their generosity in hosting meetings in their home.
- ... Our **new neighbors in New Braintree**, who have given us such a warm welcome.
- ... **Jean Sullivan**, for her business assistance and advice, and for her unwavering belief in the mission of our school.
- ... **Valerie Ortiz**, for her gracious help in sending information to parents about our rehearsals, performances and programs.
- ... **Michael Grimes** and **Jason & Carey Walkenbush** for tireless help with our computers, internet service and CD orders.
- ... **Karen Walsh** and the **Walsh family**, for help with a variety of secretarial and other practical tasks.
- ... **Jeremy** and **Bethany Stefanos**, for their encouragement and help with practical tasks; for Bethany's help with this newsletter.
- ... **Rick and Terese Cross**, for their advice and support.
- ... **Wayne Six, Steve Rust, Rex Honsinger** and **Sam Bonneau**, for their maintenance/carpentry/repair work at our NB site.
- ... **John Vasile**, for his generous help with groundskeeping.
- ... **Mary Martin**, for her faithful help in the office.
- ... **Fr. Tom Schmitt, Fr. Joseph-Mary Brown, FJ, Fr. Mark Withoos**, the **Brothers of St. John** and the **Maronite Monks of Most Holy Trinity Monastery** for their spiritual support and guidance.
- ... All of the friends and benefactors not named here, who through their prayers and generous gifts have provided invaluable support to our mission.

Letter to Friends and Benefactors

At this feast of Epiphany, as we once more retrace the steps the Magi following the Star of Bethlehem to adore the newborn Christ child, the Gospel offers renewed hope in our quest to know and love God, and to accomplish the fullness of His will for our lives. As with the Magi, our attention is at times captured by what appear to be providential signs—as when they first discovered the Star—but we are then also faced with what seem to be long periods of seeking and strenuous effort, sometimes darkness and danger—as when they made their arduous journey and eventually risked falling into the hands of King Herod.

During this past year there have been several events and encounters that have pointed us in a clear direction. In fact it was on the Feast of the Epiphany just a year ago (2008) in which we received word that our school was being given a beautiful property with buildings in rural New Braintree. In June 2008 we received a visit from Msgr. James Moroney (see above), soon to become rector of St. Paul's Cathedral in Worcester, who expressed his enthusiastic appreciation and support of our school. Later in the year, both he and Bishop McManus would approve and bless the project of Magnificat Academy becoming the official Choir School of the Cathedral Church of St. Paul in Worcester, while maintaining its administrative autonomy.

As a result of this new direction, we have been obliged to take a year's hiatus from academic classes in order to prepare well for our new location and role. Many of our former Magnificat students are now enrolled at the new St. Thomas Aquinas School in Warren, but continue to participate in the choral programs at our New Braintree site. These have been joined by students from Trivium School in Lancaster, where I am directing the choral program this year; together as the Cathedral Youth Choir we gave a benefit concert on December 7th and then provided music for the 4pm Christmas Eve Mass. We will be welcoming many new students as we begin regular after-school instruction and rehearsals at the Cathedral Parish Center on January 12th, with one to three performances per month scheduled for the remainder of the school year.

In order to continue on course during this time of transition, we are in vital need of certain supports to assure our survival and the ability to provide the kind of quality education that is integral to the Magnificat vision. These supports fall mainly into two categories: 1.) we need *people* who believe in our mission, who are willing, competent and available to join our existing team to help in various ways: on the one hand there are always numerous projects such as those involving maintenance/repair at our New Braintree site, as well as office work, publicity, grant writing, etc.; on the other hand, we are in vital need of two or three key people with talents in business management, education and secretarial work who are available to take on major responsibilities on our administrative team. *It is only with these new team members* that we can set a date to resume our full academic program! 2.) we need *funds* to maintain our present budget (slightly over \$100K for this fiscal year) and to provide seed money for further growth. I ask you to prayer-

