**Divine Mercy School Choir**

**2019-2020**

Director: Amanda Decker

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Purpose and Eligibility

The purpose of the Divine Mercy School Choir is to lead and inspire the community to raise their voices and hearts in song during mass and other prayer opportunities. One of St. Augustine’s most famous quotes is, “To sing well is to pray twice.”

Students in Grades 3-8 are eligible to participate. There is no audition required to participate, however, everyone is expected to come with a willingness and genuine desire to participate in singing with the choir. Consistent attendance is expected, including weekday masses and the monthly youth-led masses on the weekends.

Expectations

* #1 RULE- When the teacher is talking, you are not!
* Arrive ON TIME for all rehearsals and masses, with a joyful and willing heart.
* Please come dressed appropriately for mass and for practices, as stated in the Student Handbook.
* Be respectful of others and of the property of the parish and school.
* Leave all food, drinks, and gum out of rehearsals and mass. Water is allowed with permission.

Consequences

Failure to comply with the expectations will result in the following:

* 1st time- Verbal warning
* 2nd time- Discussion with parent
* 3rd time- Dismissal from choir

Attendance Policy

In order for our choir to be their best, consistent attendance to rehearsals and masses is crucial. Even when one student misses, our choir is a totally different group- EVERY VOICE has importance. **If absences become a consistent issue, the student will be dismissed.** Please make every attempt to schedule appointments on alternate days, and make sure any big homework projects are managed well to avoid missing. Obviously, if your child is sick, please do not send them. However, do email or call the choir director to inform them of the absence. With the “hustle and bustle” of the school day, the office is not always able to relay the message to the music department.

Pickup Policy

Please make every attempt to have your child picked up on time. If a student is not picked up by 4:05pm, they will need to report to the After Care program in the school, and the parent will be responsible for any fees charged.

When We Sing

*Weekly Practices*

The DM Choir practices every Tuesday, from noon-12:25, and Thursday afternoons, from 3:15-4pm. If school is cancelled due to weather, we WILL NOT have practice. Also, if a practice has to be cancelled due to an unforeseen emergency (director is ill, bad weather conditions, etc.), you will be notified by email through the school office. Please keep an eye on your email. Students are expected to make these rehearsals, and they WILL NOT be reminded to attend. If they “forget,” it counts as an absence. Please have them write the days in their planners to help them remember.

*Weekday Masses at School*

The DM School choir sings for all school masses during the week, which typically fall on ***WEDNESDAYS at 8:15 am***, unless there is a Holy Day of Obligation during the week. In that case, the mass will be moved to that day. These mases take place in the gym, and all are invited to attend. Students are to arrive at school at the normal drop-off time, report to their classrooms to drop off bookbags and check in with the teacher, then come to the gym to warm up. Students should be in their seats no later than 8am. Students should also wear their uniforms to mass- please do not wear dress down attire when we sing at school mass!

*Weekend Masses*

The DM School Choir will sing once a month for our weekend liturgies at our main worship site, 800 Marquette Ave. Students are allowed to wear “Sunday best” for these masses. (Appropriate attire is listed on following page.) Below is the schedule for the year:

September 15th at 9:30 December 15th at 11:00 March 22nd at 11:00

October 27th at 9:30 January 26th at 9:30 April 19th at 9:30

November 23rd at 4:00 February 22nd at 4:00 May 31st at 9:30

If for some reason your child is unable to attend due to illness or family conflict, please let the director know immediately. After 3 absences from the weekend masses, the student may be dismissed from the choir.

Singing Solos:

Each week, 2 students will have the opportunity to sing the responsorial psalm and the Gospel acclamation. We start with older students in the beginning, as they have more experience and tend to be less nervous. Younger/newer students will be asked as the year progresses.

In order to be considered for a solo, you must attend the practices. Students will be selected the Thursday before the mass, and given the music to practice that day. Most songs can be found on YouTube to sing along with. Students may also set up a time to work with Mrs. Decker during their recess time.

**Please note:** Students will be selected on ability. If the student struggles with singing in tune, articulating, or they are too quiet, they will not be asked. We will, however, work on their singing skills to get them prepared if they in fact would like a solo. The last thing we want to see is the student have a fear of singing because they were embarrassed.

*What is Sunday Best?*

One big lesson to teach our students is how to dress their best. This isn’t just a life long skill to know, but when we come in the presence of the Lord, we should strive to look our very best. For weekend masses, students should adhere to the following:

Boys:

Nice slacks- NO JEANS- with a belt

Nice shirt, tucked in (Polo shirts are acceptable, as is a button down shirt. Tie optional.)

Nice dress shoes desired. Tennis shoes should be either black or gray, and no neon ornamentations or shoelaces.

Hair should be combed and out of your face.

Girls:

Skirt, Dress- Hemline should be no shorter than the ends of your fingertips when your arms are down by your side.

Nice Slacks and Shirt tucked in- NO JEANS!

Nice dress shoes. Avoid flip flops and tennis shoes.

Hair should be combed and pulled out of face.

Jewelry is fine, however, nothing that will cause a distraction. (Large dangly earrings, big necklaces, bangle bracelets, etc. should be avoided.)