



NOTRE DAME
MAGNIFICAT
CHOIR

HANDBOOK

(updated as of 08/18/2023)

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Mission Statement

The Magnificat Choir proclaims the glory of God through prayerful song and strives to draw people closer to Christ with its ministry. The choir celebrates and builds upon the rich musical traditions of the Church, uplifts women's voices, and serves the community as the hands and feet of Christ. As a diverse group of singers, the ensemble reflects the Notre Dame family by fostering a spirit of community that creates lifelong friendships.

Introduction to the Choir

Our Name: The Magnificat Choir derives its name from the song of the Blessed Virgin Mary: “Magnificat anima mea Dominum” (“My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord”). With Our Lady, through song, our souls proclaim the Lord’s greatness and our spirits rejoice in our Saving God. Mary’s words inspire our mission to serve, worship, and uplift women’s voices as we follow her perfect example of a life of praise.

Who we are: The Magnificat Choir is currently composed of singers from various academic and faith backgrounds who primarily serve as music ministers at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. The choir is inclusive, welcoming, and open to all Notre Dame, Saint Mary’s, and Holy Cross students who sing in the treble range.

What we do: Through uplifting and prayerful music, the Magnificat Choir proclaims the glory of God at the 5pm Saturday Vigil Mass at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, and welcomes visitors to campus at the masses following home football games. In addition to serving as music ministers at the Basilica, the choir performs at a variety of concerts and special collaborative events throughout the school year. Each year, the choir extends their ministry beyond the Notre Dame campus by sharing their music in domestic and international tours. Most recently, the group has traveled to Ireland, South America, and Florida.

What we sing: The choir draws repertoire from a variety of cultures and traditions including Gregorian and Eastern chant, Renaissance polyphony, South American hymnody, and music from the 16th Century through the present day. Recognizing the importance of new music for the Church, the group regularly commissions original pieces for women’s voices and sponsors an annual composition contest. In order to live out the mission of uplifting women’s voices, a special emphasis is placed on the singing of music and texts of female artists.

Who we serve: Beyond their ministry on Notre Dame’s campus, the Magnificat Choir engages in community outreach especially with the Catholic Worker movement in South Bend, visits Notre Dame Clubs and local parishes nationwide on tours, and collaborates with the Holy Cross Missions around the globe.

Our choir community: While the time spent in rehearsal and Mass routinely brings the members of the choir together, the choir community extends far beyond the rehearsal room and Basilica. Members are invited to participate in weekly dinners at the dining halls, volunteer at group service opportunities in South Bend, and a variety of social events throughout the academic year. In addition, the choir comes together to celebrate both incoming freshman and graduating seniors each year by participating in Welcome Weekend and Commencement festivities. The strong friendships built within this choir serve as an academic, spiritual, and social support for members throughout their time at Notre Dame.

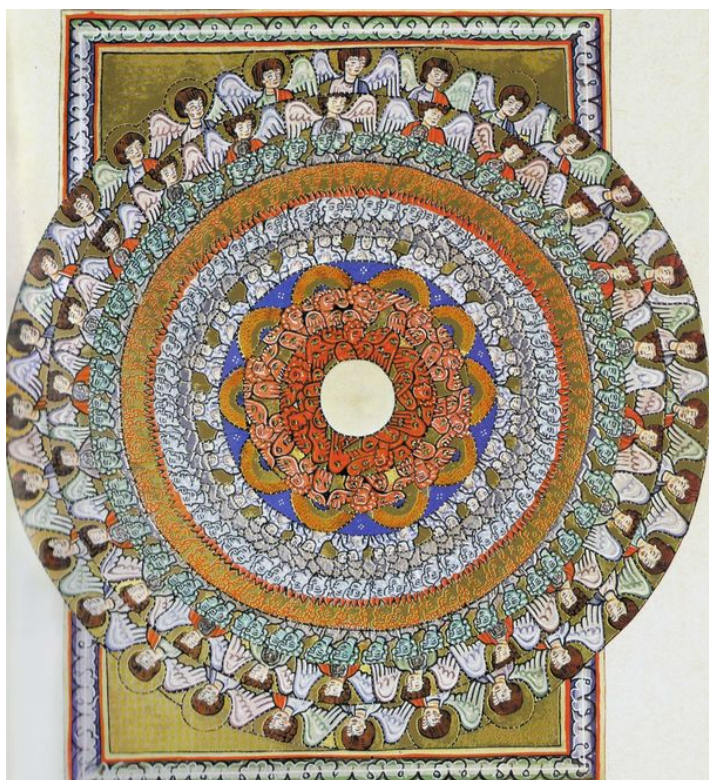
Our Patron Saint: St. Hildegard of Bingen

Our Patron Saint: St. Hildegard of Bingen (1098-1179) was a talented Medieval mystic, poet, writer, scientist, composer of music, and Doctor of the Church. She not only led her own abbey of religious women, but worked tirelessly for the betterment of the Church as a whole, confronting the rich and powerful of her day to bring about reform. Her writings show her love for God's creation and her extensive work with medicinal healing, aspects that greatly influenced how she served her own abbey, her local community, and the broader Church community. This saint reflects the choir's love for new music and academic diversity, as well as its mission to uplift women's voices and better the lives of those in the Notre Dame community and far beyond.

Just as one might ask family members or friends for prayers, it is a part of the Catholic Tradition to ask for the prayers of the saints as well. During her life, St. Hildegard of Bingen placed an emphasis on various causes important to the Magnificat Choir's mission; therefore, our choir has adopted her as our patron saint. The choir invokes St. Hildegard's prayers as we live out our mission today.

St. Hildegard, please watch over us as we serve others through our music. Bring us closer to Christ, whom you loved so dearly, and inspire us to work with true courage and hearts ready to serve our community. We ask that through your intercession, we may grow in virtue and bring others to the contemplation of the true, the good, and the beautiful. Amen.

Our Logo: The Magnificat Choir's logo, designed by Julian Mancini, ND'19, is inspired primarily by imagery associated with the choir's patron saint, the composer Hildegard of Bingen. Specifically, the image of Hildegard's heavenly vision of a "Choir of Angels," as recorded around the year 1150 in a collection of illuminated manuscripts known as *Scivias*, is used as a basis for the design. The original image depicts the nine choirs of angels in concentric rings around the Lord of Hosts, reminding us that God should be the center of our lives. The logo's circular image pays homage to the inspirational example that is found in Hildegard's life and music. At the same time, the logo gives a nod to the most common comment that our choristers hear following our performances, namely, that they sound like "a choir of angels." Additionally, the design calls to mind the rose window found in the cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris, as a reminder of our call to emulate Our Lady's (*Notre Dame*) example of a perfect life of praise in all that we do.



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Officers and Position Descriptions

President: Official student representative of the choir. The president runs weekly officer meetings, acts as concession stand manager, speaks on behalf of the choir at performances and events, oversees the entire board and all related projects. Must be a Notre Dame undergraduate. Minimum two years experience in the choir.

Vice President: The Vice President plans all choir social events, handles SAO requests for events, etc., handles choir apparel, ensures choir decorum at all Masses and events, assumes the duties of the President in her absence.

Secretary: The Secretary takes attendance at all rehearsals and events, emails announcements to the rest of the choir, handles SAO waivers, communicates constitution revisions to SAO, handles all other secretarial duties of the choir.

Treasurer: Creates budget, maintains record of the financial condition of the choir, handles all receipts, is responsible for the completion of spring allocation and winter reallocation meetings with the CCC, maintains record of choir merchandise, oversees ND Day fundraising.

Liturgical Commissioner: The Liturgical Commissioner coordinates choir retreats, leads prayer at rehearsal, gets trained as a Eucharistic Minister, arranges spiritual programming on choir tours and throughout the year.

Alumni Relations/Social Media Manager: The Alumni Relations Officer sends newsletters to the alumni base, manages Alumni Facebook group, assists Tour Director with contacting alumni clubs, works with the director to plan alumni reunions and visits to campus during football season. The social media manager also runs the choir's Instagram, Facebook, and helps promote album projects and travel.

- Website: magnificatchoir.nd.edu/
- Instagram: @ndmagnificatchoir
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/ndmagnificatchoir?mibextid=LQQJ4d
- Youtube: www.youtube.com/@notredamemagnificatchoir

Tour Director: The Tour Director is responsible for planning all travel details of yearly choir tours, coordinating homestays with local ND clubs while traveling, and works with the Vice President to gain SAO approval for tours.

Librarian: Librarians are responsible for music distribution, making copies, assigning binders and name tags, music collection, and keeping the music library organized. This is a paid position.

*To run, members must be in good standing and have been a member of the choir for one full semester. All officers must attend weekly 45 min officer meetings and make an effort to attend at least one choir dinner per week. While these position descriptions show what each officer is responsible for, the board collaborates on most projects. For those studying abroad, positions can be split by semester except for President, Vice President, and Tour Director.

Attendance Policy

This attendance policy serves to facilitate relationships among choir members and uphold the quality of the music we bring to the Notre Dame community. Consistent attendance is crucial to both the establishment of a community and the quality of the music we produce. Each choir member is independently valuable within the choir; therefore, you are expected to be present in rehearsals and masses and limit any absences.

Limitations to absences

1. Choir members are expected to attend each Monday and Wednesday rehearsal, in addition to Saturday rehearsal and mass as listed on the semester schedule.
2. The Magnificat Choir permits no more than 7 unexcused absences per semester.
3. Since our central focus is to serve as music ministers for Masses at the Basilica, we ask that no more than 4 of your unexcused absences are Masses.
4. At the discretion of the director, the choir might occasionally make an exception to the attendance policy for students with an unavoidable and required academic class conflict. These students must previously be 'in good standing' with the choir's attendance policy. If a weekly required-class-conflict-absence is approved by the director, those students are allowed no more than two additional absences per semester.

5. Throughout the semester, “bonus attendance” opportunities arise and may be used to subtract from your attendance total. These events will be listed on the semester calendar and/or be included in the weekly email as they arise.
6. In order to help you keep track of your absences throughout the semester, you can request that our secretary gives you “viewing access” of our attendance google sheet.
7. Excused absences:
 - a. An excused absence for medical reasons does not count towards your total for the semester. We ask that if you want an absence excused, please email an official doctor's note to Patrick (pkronner@nd.edu) and our secretary.
 - b. In order to maintain the choir's high musical standards, if excused absences become too numerous, you may be asked to take a leave of absence from the group.

Advance Notice and Punctuality

The semester schedule is provided at the beginning of the semester. Please notify Patrick *and* the secretary of any anticipated absences at the beginning of the semester. We understand that not all absences are foreseeable at the beginning of the semester; therefore, we ask that you give notice as soon as a conflict arises. We use every minute of our rehearsal time. Please arrive punctually so that we may begin when rehearsal starts and make the best use of our time together.

Holy Week, Commencement Weekend, and Welcome Weekend

1. Please keep in mind it is important to be in attendance for Holy Week, Commencement, and Welcome Weekend.
2. Please Note: Although much of Holy Week occurs during an academic break, membership in the Magnificat Choir requires students to sing for Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday masses and services.
3. The choir stays after final exams for Commencement Weekend to sing for the commencement Mass and a commencement concert.
4. The choir arrives early in the fall to welcome incoming students and sing for Welcome Weekend.
5. Other important commitments include: Advent Lessons and Carols and the Concert for the Missions (both in the fall semester).

Dress Code

Although every member of the choir will be assigned a robe, proper attire for mass is still important. Clean and church-appropriate shoes are required. Heels, especially stilettos, are not allowed because they can damage the wooden floor in the Basilica. If the choir is at an event without robes, “Sunday best” or business casual is appropriate.

Helpful Resources for Mass

As an inclusive choir, we welcome singers from all walks of life and religious backgrounds. If you are unfamiliar with the Roman Catholic Rite, there are many helpful websites that can walk you through the order of the mass. Particularly, <https://stjohnvianney.vermontcatholic.org/simple-guide-to-the-catholic-mass> is a great resource. It offers step-by-step instructions and explanations for the various parts of the mass. Of course, any of the officers or returning members of the choir would be more than happy to walk you through the order of the mass and explain things more personally for you.

A few reminders for Mass:

1. Just as phones are to be put away during rehearsal, there should not be phones out during mass as a sign of reverence and respect to the sacredness of the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.
2. Talking before/during mass is not permitted as the choir microphones are on and will pick up all noise.
3. Robes must be hung up properly and in numerical order after each mass.

Magnificat Choir 2023-2024



Scan to join our choir's GroupMe!

Prayers

Sign of the Cross (starts and ends prayer): In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Chorister's Prayer: Bless, O Lord, us Thy servants who minister in Thy temple. Grant that what we sing with our lips we may believe in our hearts, and what we believe in our hearts we may show forth in our lives. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Magnificat:

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord,
 my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
 for he has looked with favor on his lowly servant.
 From this day all generations will call me blessed:
 the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is his Name.
 He has mercy on those who fear him in every generation.
 He has shown the strength of his arm, he has scattered the proud in their conceit.
 He has cast down the mighty from their thrones,
 and has lifted up the lowly.
 He has filled the hungry with good things,
 and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has come to the help of his servant Israel
 for he has remembered his promise of mercy,
 the promise he made to our ancestors,
 to Abraham and his children forever.
 Amen.

St. Hildegard Prayer to the Holy Spirit:

Fire of the Spirit, life of the lives of creatures,
 spiral of sanctity, bond of all natures,
 glow of charity, lights of clarity,
 taste of sweetness to sinners, be with us and hear us.
 Composer of all things, light of all the risen,
 key of salvation, release from the dark prison,
 hope of all unions, scope of chastities,
 joy in the glory, strong honor,
 be with us and hear us. Amen.

Prayer for the Intercession of St. Hildegard:

St. Hildegard, please watch over us as we serve others through our music. Bring us closer to Christ, whom you loved so dearly, and inspire us to work with true courage and hearts ready to serve our community. We ask that through your intercession, we may grow in virtue and bring others to the contemplation of the true, the good, and the beautiful. Amen.

Our Father: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary: Hail Mary, full of grace! The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Glory Be: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hail Holy Queen: Hail, holy Queen, mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness, and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us; and, after this, our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

Pray for us O holy mother of God, that we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Grace Before Meals: Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts which we are about to receive from Thy bounty, Through Christ our Lord. Amen.