

DIOCESE OF ORANGE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OVER 200 CATHOLIC YOUTH FROM SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA UNITE TO PERFORM IN NEWPORT BEACH CHORAL FESTIVAL

ORANGE, Calif., (February 10, 2006) – The Choral Festival is performed annually and is sponsored by the American Federation of *Pueri Cantores* (young singers), the official student choral organization of the Catholic Church. The Most Rev. Jaime Soto, Auxiliary Bishop of Orange, will preside over the 5:00 p.m. gathering, February 11, 2006, at Our Lady Queen of Angels Church, Newport Beach. The event will involve 112 Diocese of Orange and 67 Diocese of San Diego students between 7 and 18 years of age. The two diocesan groups will join together to perform as a combined choir for the first time.

“I am truly inspired by the involvement of so many young Catholics in our local *Pueri Cantores* festival. This event allows our diocese and the Diocese of San Diego to unite and perform as one in the tranquility of God,” said Most Rev. Jaime Soto, Auxiliary Bishop of Orange.

The mission of the American Federation of *Pueri Cantores* is to bring together choirs of children from all over the United States to sing the peace of God. Choirs from Cornelia High School in Anaheim, Holy Family Cathedral in Orange, Our Lady Queen of Angels in Newport Beach, St. Mary Star of the Sea School in Oceanside and St. Michael’s in Poway-Donna Hill will all participate in the festival. The group will perform together under the direction of Dr. John Romeri from the Cathedral of St. Louis, Missouri.

Many of the participating choirs have been involved in other *Pueri Cantores* events throughout the US and Europe. This Past January The Holy Family Cathedral Choir, from the Diocese of Orange, traveled to Rome to perform before Pope Benedict XVI in the 33rd semi-annual *Pueri Cantores* International Congress, which takes place at St. Peter’s Basilica. The congress included 4,500 children from 14 different countries ages 7-18. The extraordinary six day event, included concerts and a pilgrimage tour of the major basilicas and the Christian catacombs.

“Our group is blessed to be involved in the *Pueri Cantores* program. The highlight of our trip to the Vatican was singing for the Pope during the New Year’s Day Mass at *Sala*

Nervi .The children were actually able to shake Pope Benedict XVI's hand. We look forward to joining the National *Pueri Cantores* Conference in Washington, DC in 2008," said Toni Dhuyvetter, Holy Family Cathedral choir director.

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