

## *Women Not Admitted to the Choir?*

*"On the same principle it follows that singers in church have a real liturgical office, and that therefore women, being incapable of exercising such office, cannot be admitted to form part of the choir. Whenever, then, it is desired to employ the acute voices of sopranos and contraltos, these parts must be taken by boys, according to the most ancient usage of the Church." (Pope St. Pius X, "Inter Sollicitudines", 1914)*

*"Choir-schools for boys should be established not only for the greater churches and cathedrals, but also for smaller parish churches. The boys should be taught by the choirmaster to sing properly, so that, in accordance with the ancient custom of the Church, they may sing in the choir with the men, especially as in polyphonic music the highest part, the cantus, ought to be sung by boys." (Pope Pius XI, "Divini Cultus", 1928)*

*Note: The liturgical practice of all male singers may date back to the Old Testament (see 1 Chron. 6:16-32) and may also be considered in light of St. Paul's instruction that "As in all the churches of the holy ones, women should keep silent in the churches, for they are not allowed to speak, but should be subordinate, as even the law says. But if they want to learn anything, they should ask their husbands at home. For it is improper for a woman to speak in the church." (St. Paul under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in 1 Cor. 14:33-35)*

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