



4/28/10

Greetings to all Junior Choir Directors and Junior Choir Members –

Hristos Voskrese! My name is Alexandra Starceвич, directress of the S.S.S. Mita Topalovich Choir of Joliet , Illinois . As you probably know, this year, our annual Choral Festivals will be in Chicago , Illinois, and will be jointly hosted by the S.S.S. Branko Radichevich and Stevan St. Mokranjac Choirs.

As in the past years, I am very **pleased and excited** to announce that we are to have another Mass Junior Choir performance for Festival on Sunday, May 30th (concert time at 1:30 p.m.). At this time, I would like to extend this invitation, not *only* to children who sing with an established Junior Choir within their parish, *but also* to children that will be attending the Festival that may not have an established Junior Choir within their parish, but have the want and desire to sing – meaning that I would love to have as many children on stage for this great event as possible! I will accept any child willing to sing from age 4 on up to high school.

I realize that this news comes very close to Festival time, as I just received word about it myself a few days ago, but I am certain that with a couple practices, and knowing how children “absorb” information so quickly, it will work out splendidly, as it has before. Believe me, I don’t look for perfection. My only objective is to expose the “hidden talents” of our children to this type of performance as much as possible, in order for them - when they are of age - to have the desire to join the ranks of our esteemed member Choirs.

The two selections I have chosen this year, are “**Duh Tvoj Blagij**” and “**Kosovo Je Srbija**”. From what I hear, “Duh Tvoj Blagij” has been taught to several Junior Choirs with much success. I have also taught this piece at St. Sava Camp in Libertyville , Illinois , in the past, so I’m aware of how fairly easy it is to learn. The other selection “Kosovo Je Srbija” is also a song I taught at St. Sava Camp last year – thus, there will be several children who are singing in the Mass Junior Choir performance who already know this quite well, and are really enthusiastic when singing this music piece. I am confident every child involved will exceed my/our expectations (and they ALWAYS do)!

For the piece “Duh Tvoj Blagij”, I have attached the sheet music onto this email. I would like to have as much “harmonization” as possible with this, so if you have children that can do just that, please encourage them to do so, otherwise, learning the “melody” will be just fine. I will however be “lowering” the pitch from the original attached score, to D major (F#, D, A) for our performance that day. I think it will be more “comfortable” for the children, so they don’t have to “reach-up” so high for the notes.

For our second selection, “Kosovo Je Srbija”, I do not have *traditional* sheet music for this song. However, I have attached a two-page “lyrics only” sheet on this email, along with a “you tube”

link of the song that hopefully our young singers can listen to during a practice, or at their own leisure (I most often find that this method works better when trying to teach music, especially to “younger” singers):

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tsN0IA-I2_g



Harmonizing also applies for this piece, although you will notice when listening to this selection, there isn't much harmony in the three "Verses" section, as there is in the "Chorus" section. As I mentioned before, encourage "harmony", but learning the melody will suffice.

You will also notice as you listen to "Kosovo Je Srbija", that there is musical accompaniment and some long pauses, throughout the song. Of course that will not be the case for us, however I am thinking of playing a "steady beat" on a type of bongo drum instrument. I did this for camp, and it seemed to keep the song "rolling along", and the campers seemed to like the drum accompanying them, thus being more excited about singing it.

What I also did for this selection at camp, was divide up parts. You will hear that on the verses only, there are only men *or* women singing at one time. In other words, on each of the "Verses", I would have the boys sing lines 1 and 2, the girls sing lines 3 and 4, and then have everyone sing the 5th line together (with harmony). Of course everyone would sing the "Chorus", in harmony, together. I may or may not do the "dividing of parts", pending the amount of "male participants" I have for our performance. So with saying that, please have every singer learn the song in its entirety. The pitch I used for teaching this song was basically the starting note in the beginning of the song where the gentleman starts singing after the music interlude, which I believe is a "low E" (I taught this during "Teen" week, so the most of the boys there had "lower singing ranges"). This may change however, when I see what I have to work with come rehearsal time at Festival. So feel free to try a slightly higher pitch once they know the song well enough to sing it without the "you tube" link.

If you find it too difficult or impossible to teach "Kosovo Je Srbija" using the "you tube" link, I will gladly send out a CD to you with the same rendition. Also, if you would at your earliest convenience, please email me a list of your Junior Choir participants, along with their ages. That way I will have an idea of the number of children I will be working with, along with knowing how many in each age group (especially for the "Kosovo" piece).

As of now, I do not have a scheduled practice time available for you, but will definitely send you more information, as the time draws closer (more than likely a Sunday "before concert time rehearsal").

As far as "singing attire", please have them in "nice dress" clothes. I believe that should be a fairly easy thing for everyone to abide by, without making it too complicated.

I am **so** looking forward to accomplishing, for what I believe is a **necessary and integral part** of our Festival weekend - having our children be heard, in SONG!

If you have any questions/concerns/comments etc., please do not hesitate to call or email me with them. I'm here to help in any way I can!

With anticipated excitement –

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