

Regensburger Domspatzen

More than thousand years –
Singing in the Regensburg Cathedral



The „**Regensburger Domspatzen**“, the Regensburg cathedral choir has been in existence for more than a thousand years. In the year 975 Bishop Wolfgang founded a separate school for the cathedral, which in addition to general education attributed great importance to musical education. The pupils (students) had to sing the liturgy in the church of the bishop. In the middle of the 20th century, the director (Domkapellmeister) Joseph Schrems initiated a new golden age of the choir. But it was not until the 1930s that **Dr. Theobald Schrems** made the cathedral choir world-famous. In less than forty years, from 1924 to 1963, Domkapellmeister (choir director) Schrems extended the concert activities of the choir without disregarding his liturgical duties in the cathedral.



The choir exclusively consists of boys and young men. The Musikgymnasium (grammar school) of the "Regensburger Domspatzen" and its own boarding school and a primary school were founded by Dr. Theobald Schrems.

From 1964 – 1994, **Georg Ratzinger** was the director of the "world's oldest boys' choir". Each year he went on a long tour with his choir in Germany. In 1984 and 1987, the Domspatzen went on an extended tour abroad to the USA, and one year later to Hungary and to Japan. Connections with Eastern-Asia were strengthened in 1991 and 1994. The choir was hosted in Japan, Hongkong and Korea. Tours to Hungary, the Czech Republic and Poland followed.

Georg Ratzinger's younger brother is Joseph Ratzinger, who was elected pope in April 2005 and who adopted the name Benedict XVI.

Since the summer of 1994, the direction of the Regensburger Domspatzen has been in the hands of **Roland Büchner**, who was born in Karlstadt on Main in 1954. Before he started his work in Regensburg, he had been director of music in Altötting and a lecturer of organ and choir direction at the College of Church Music in Regensburg. Under his leadership, the choir gave three concerts in Japan (1998, 2000 and 2004). Further tours abroad led them to Italy, Hungary, Scotland, the Philippines and to France. In 2008 the Regensburger Domspatzen gave concerts in South Africa, in 2005 and 2009 in the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican, in 2011 in Taiwan and in 2012 in China.

Since the Regensburger Domspatzen have become UNICEF-Junior-Ambassador in 2003, they have already collected about 60.000,00 Euro for various projects in Africa. Apart from that they also act as „Ambassadors to the European Federation of Choirs of the Union“.



In the year 2004, the City of Regensburg honoured Roland Büchner with the City's Cultural Award. Roland Büchner is married and has four children.

The combination of the choir with a grammar school makes it easier to coordinate the musical tasks. The education at the Domspatzen grammar school also comprises free instrumental lessons. 200 of the 400 students who attend the Domspatzen grammar school live in the adjoining boarding school, and 130 of them make use of the day-care centre. As free-time activities, the school offers a variety of leisure amenities, like its own indoor swimming pool, a gymnasium, a sports field, a tennis court, a fitness centre and several leisure rooms. The boarding school is managed by a Catholic priest. The primary school of the Regensburger Domspatzen is newly built and now situated next to the grammar school. Musically gifted pupils from grade 1- 4 are taught there.

The extensive musical repertory of the Regensburger Domspatzen contains the oldest songs of the church, the Gregorian Chant, vocal music of the 16th century with works by Palestrina, Lasso and Hassler, and baroque music, music of romanticism, folk-songs and works of contemporary composers. On their concert tours, the Domspatzen can be heard all over the world. Each year they go on an extensive tour through Germany. Once a year they perform a longer oratorical work with renowned orchestras and soloists (e.g. Johann Sebastian Bach's "The Passion of St John", "The Passion of St Matthew", G.Fr. Händel's "Messiah", J. Haydn's "The Creation"). The Domspatzen also appear regularly on the radio and on television. Numerous records and CD recordings have been released.



On their US tour in 2014 there will be 56 members of the choir (34 boys and 22 adolescents).

The program contains sacred and secular a cappella music, compositions from Renaissance, Baroque, Romanticism and modern times as well as madrigals, solo parts and folk songs.

The choir will be conducted by Professor Roland BÜchner.

The main task of the Regensburger Domspatzen is the arrangement of the liturgy during holy service at the cathedral of Regensburg. Each Sunday, during high mass they sing the Gregorian Chants as well as holy masses arranged for several voices and motets. The way the Regensburger Domspatzen perform religious high festivals is especially impressive.

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/4ik0hzdo4v7jlwx/sJuw6iZ8s8>

Youtube: The life of the Regensburger Domspatzen

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dLfpoPA2a1w>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VIVuGQWhKHk>

Youtube-Cannel:

<http://www.youtube.com/user/DomspatzenRegensburg/videos>

How to become a Regensburg boys choir singer:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0aeQJRmTw4o>

10 Parts of documentation about Regensburger Domspatzen

Part 1: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=smunC7ztwBA>

Part 2: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gegzcVNWvwk>

Part 3: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iUKYqhTQc5w>

Part 4: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YH-biR8kJ4E>

Part 5: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZsgW16EQb_s

Part 6: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=md_3SapCjtc

Part 7: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0c5l9dlmvNg>

Part 8: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLAd0-k9B80>

Part 9: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gTvWPYQE5TI>

Part 10: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ffEfQaHZz9Q>