

New Catholic Musical To Be Performed At St. Brigid

ALPHARETTA—A new Catholic musical with 21 original songs, and singers and actors from the Catholic community, will be performed in February and March at St. Brigid Church.

Entitled "The Wonders of His Love," the musical is written and directed by David Burke, who holds a bachelor's degree in music theory/composition and in choral music education. A teacher, he has performed in the Atlanta Symphony Chorus and parish ensemble groups and formerly led the Life Teen band, Cornerstone, at St. Benedict Church, Duluth.

The story of the musical involves the Virgin Mary, who is sent by God to bring seven teenagers to heaven for a brief visit to receive a special message from Him.

When Burke asked musician Cathy Weaver Biscan to sing the role of Mary, she was stunned. During her prayer time two months earlier in an adoration chapel, she had heard an interior voice directing her to contact a St. Brigid acquaintance and "tell him you want to be the Virgin Mary in the musical."

"I immediately went to my journal and wrote down what I heard," she said, "but I didn't act on it right away . . . Frankly, I didn't want him to think I was crazy by telling him what I had heard."

In his search for a church to host the production, Burke was also attracted to the beauty of St. Brigid Church. When he came to Mass there and heard the homily by Father Bob Frederick, he immediately envisioned the priest as the person to play the role of Jesus. Presentations to Father Frederick and to Father Joe Corbett, pastor of St. Brigid, led to the pastor's approval for the musical to be performed there. In addition, Father Frederick will appear in the role of Jesus in the last three performances, while Jordan Colletta, a St. Benedict parishioner, will play the role of Jesus in the first two performances.

The performers believe that the musical is a special work of evangelization, Biscan said. "Through this chain of events, we realized that this musical wasn't just an ordinary play. It was a divine appointment: a special calling for David, me, and everyone involved in the production to carry out a mission."

Father Corbett has designated Our Lady of Perpetual Help Home in Atlanta for those incurably ill with cancer to receive a portion of the proceeds from the musical. Hawthorne Dominican sisters rely completely on God's providence to support their work at the home.

When the cast visited the home on Saturday, Jan. 8, before singing some of the songs from the musical, one of the caretakers asked, "What is this Fatima? I would like to know more."

Cast member Emily Jester, a senior at Chattahoochee High School, immediately went to her purse. Pulling out a small book, she said to the man, "I just stuck this in my purse this morning, and I wasn't sure why I did. Now I know why . . . this is the story of Our Lady of Fatima and it's for you."

She handed it to him and said, "A small miracle? I would say 'yes.'"

The musical began with a dream Burke had.

"Approximately four years ago, I had a dream about a group of young people walking to heaven and chanting a melody, which later became one of the songs for the musical: 'I Want Forever To Be

Near You.' Afterward, most of the compositions I wrote pertained to the theme of reaching heaven," he said.

Performances will be held Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 19 and 20, Saturday, March 5, and Saturday and Sunday, March 12 and 13, at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$15 and are available after Mass at St. Brigid and during the week in the church office. The church is located at 3400 Old Alabama Road.

The cast also includes Meagan Steele, a senior at Northview High School, Andrea Jester, a junior at Chattahoochee High School, Joey Kang, a Georgia State University student, Joe Fuller, a Georgia Tech student, and John and Kelly Burke, sophomore and freshman, respectively, at Habersham Central High School.

A CD of the songs from the musical will be available for purchase after each show.

"I hope that you will come to see this humorous, entertaining and inspiring production. You will be truly blessed," Biscan said.



Cast members of a new Catholic musical rehearse for the production of "The Wonders of His Love," a story about the Virgin Mary who appears before Catholic high school choir members and says that God has sent her to bring them to heaven for a brief visit. Pictured (*standing, l-r*) are Joe Fuller, Joey Kang, Meagan Steele and Cathy Biscan. Sitting (*l-r*) are Kelly and John Burke and Andrea and Emily Jester. Written by David Burke, the show features 21 new songs and is a spiritual blend of comedy, drama and emotion.