



Members of the Father Capodanno Memorial Chapel sings the first song of their Easter Musical, "Tell me the story of Jesus," at the Chapel on Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island, N.Y., on Mar. 16, 2008. This is the chapel's first Easter musical and members of the cast are all a part of the congregation and belong to both Catholic and Protestant denominations.

Small Congregation Puts on Big Production

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The lights dimmed on a crowd of people settling into their pews in a small chapel on Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island, N.Y., at about 7:30 p.m. on Sunday Mar. 16, 2008. Suddenly, a growing sound of angelic voices sing out in perfect pitch, "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?" The choir emerged from the back of the chapel continuing their song and making their way to the stage. A hush fell over the audience and a beautiful Easter musical began in the Father Capodanno Memorial Chapel.

Chaplain Michael E. Hall, Command Chaplain at the Chapel and for Coast Guard Sector New York, employed the talents of his parishioners and put on a musical to commemorate the life and death of Jesus titled, "Tell me the story of Jesus," based on a play by Sandi Zimmerman Rebert. Hall used the script from Rebert's play; however he infused it with traditional and contemporary Christian music to develop it into a musical.

"Easter is a time of hope and renewal, and we wanted to do something special this time and tell Jesus' story through a play, but incorporate music in it as well," said Hall, who took over as command Chaplain three years ago with one protestant family in his congregation. Through faith and hard work that number has grown to about 40 members.

"It was a challenge for us," said Hall. "We are a small chapel community and it was a big effort."

The cast of 30, including 12 children, from both the Protestant and Catholic congregations practiced and made all of the sets and costumes in about six weeks.

“It has been pretty intense,” said Coast Guard Petty Officer 2nd Class Corinne Powers, who plays Mary Magdalene, but we really pulled it together and everyone has really enjoyed themselves.”

The play featured 12 solos, 10 choir songs and two songs performed by the children.

“We get to sing Jesus loves the little children,” said Katiana Casler, 6, a part the children’s choir, with enthusiasm.

“Practice was really fun because I got to play with my friends,” said Jason Callaham, 7, a member of the children’s choir.

This is Father Capodanno Memorial Chapel’s first Easter musical, but hopefully not their last.

“It really has turned out to be a big success,” said Hall. “We have tremendous talent for music in this congregation and hopefully it will continue next year.”

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