

Have We Found Paul?

"Great many talents... those with prior theatre experience and even hidden ones. We're on the lookout for more guys to audition though."

- Paul The Musical judges

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After the recce trip, the organisers were certain this would be where Paul The Musical would receive its audience. UCC boasts a wide stage (most importantly, to incorporate the musicians), state-of-the-art light and sound facilities, 1246-large sitting capacity, vibrant performing arts support and professional services.

The organising committee roped in Nicholas Pang, Marketing Manager and Lyndley Ah-Qune, IT Coordinator, who put together the open call that was conducted in September.

A website, publishing information like the synopsis and audition criteria for positions under Cast, Crew, Musician and Publicity Team, was set up. Publicity collateral was designed and disseminated to all Catholic

churches, schools and academic organisations.

Coupled with ardent support from St Mary's friars and parishioners, the initial hype produced over a hundred people, who came all abuzz from the different parishes and schools, for the first round of auditions.

Held on 10, 11 and 12 Oct at St Clare Hall, the participants were informed beforehand of their designated time slots on a first come, first served basis. They were housed in a waiting room where an excerpt of the script was given out to be read at the audition later.

Besides the script-reading, participants had to carry through an emotions exercise, conveying happy, sad and angry expressions, as well as perform two songs of their choice without any musical accompaniment.

Hearing the nervous giggles and clapping of knee caps, I thought how fortunate I wasn't part of this teeth-chatter.

While some ladies in the holding area at the back of the hall distracted their nerves by taking photos with newfound friends, the guys generally maintained a poise of cool confidence.

But everyone who took their spots in front of the three judges and the camcorder, sung, acted and emoted to the best of their abilities.

Commented participant Constance Ang, who learnt about the auditions through the Catholic News, "It's ex-

citing to watch the participants before you perform. The audition is very professionally conducted... I can tell that a lot of effort has been put into this. The musical will definitely be a successful one."

Resounding her is fellow participant, Jose San Gabriel from Church of the Holy Spirit, "St Paul, who went from a sinner to a saint, is a very exciting character. Can't wait to see what the musical will be like!"

So what did the judges think?

"Great many talents... obvious ones, like those with prior theatre experiences, and even hidden ones, like those who've never performed in their lives before. We're on the lookout for more guys to audition though," one judge let on.

Does this mean Paul is still somewhere out there?

Paul The Musical, Auditions Round 2, will be held on 15 and 16 Nov from 7.30 to 10 pm. For more information, please refer to www.stmary.sg/paulthemusical or email paulthemusical@stmary.sg

Paul The Musical will be held at the University Cultural Centre on 26-28 July 2009. Information about ticket sale will be announced at a later date.

The Friars Invite You...

JOIN them every Tuesday at the St Anthony's Devotion sessions. Yes, make this an Advent effort and not just because you lost your house keys!

friar desmond de silva

Devotion to the Saints

The saints remind us of the grace of God in our lives and how it bears good fruit if we respond generously. Their lives encourage us to live a life of holiness and grace received at baptism. We honour saints to receive inspiration and guidance from their lives and teachings.

They were men and women who were as ordinary as us, yet attuned to the presence and will of God and we in turn, are inspired to do the same in our Christian living, as an expression of our faith.

Why were the sessions introduced?

As a Franciscan parish, we wish to share some of our spirituality with our parishioners, and there's no better way to do so than through a devotion to St Anthony.

It gives us an opportunity to assist others in prayer, to pray with them and for them, to be present to the people and hopefully through St Anthony, they may come to experience the abundant goodness and mercy of God in their lives.

How did this devotion start?

This devotion originated in 1617 when a childless wife prayed to St Anthony that she and her husband might conceive a child. Anthony is said to have appeared to her and told her to pray before his statute in the local Franciscan church on nine consecutive Tuesdays. Her prayer was answered, the child was born and the devotion began.

What does a St Anthony's devotion constitute of?

The devotion constitutes of general prayers addressed

to God through St Anthony - the prayers of St Anthony himself and prayers addressed to St Anthony.

During the devotion, there will be Scripture reading and sharing done by a friar; petitions are read to help us train our hearts to listen to the stories of others. We also have the blessing of bread and veneration of the relic of St Anthony.

In the breaking of bread, Anthony is symbolically expressed as the Guardian of brotherhood and the great helper in need. Here's one story that professed his virtue.

In 1890, Louise Bouffier from Toulon tried to open her shop door. Neither she nor her locksmith was successful. She asked Anthony for help, promising to take up the cause of the poor. She then tried again and was able to open the door. In her thankfulness, she distributed bread to the poor.

The distribution of blessed bread derived as a means to always remember that Anthony, Father of the poor, always had a special love for them and we ought to share our bread and resources with the hungry and marginalised of today's society.

The Veneration of Relic gives us a personal encounter with the saint himself, to receive his blessing and intercession to assist us on our life's journey.

Why are parishioners encouraged to attend?

St Anthony is a man of God, as much as he is a man for others. He is interested in everyone, from the biggest details of their lives to the smallest detail, like losing a set of keys; he will assist us to find it. In his life on earth, he lived and preached the Gospel and worked for God's kingdom.

He now helps us in our earthly pilgrimage and being one who understands the struggles and difficulties we face, he is certainly one person, one Christian, one saint whom we can turn to for guidance in our life.

Prayer of Worship

We begin our act of worship with the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours (6.10 pm), followed by the celebration of the Eucharist (6.30 pm) and St Anthony's Devotion (7pm).



Photo: St Mary's Archives

St Anthony is often depicted with the Christ child in his arms due to popular belief that Jesus appeared to him in that form.