

Glyndon Area Players bring Broadway to Sacred Heart

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When Homero Bayarena approached his pastor at Sacred Heart in Glyndon about establishing a resident community theater at the parish, he envisioned a program that would allow area actors, singers, dancers and other performers to express their creativity through high-quality theatrical productions.

Seventeen years later, the Glyndon Area Players (GAP) has surpassed all expectations, growing into one the largest and most successful theater groups in Maryland.

GAP is attempting its most ambitious and largest production ever when it hosts a full-scale, Broadway-caliber production of “Les Miserables” Aug. 8-10 and Aug. 14-17.

Sacred Heart parishioners make up more than half the 74-member cast, with others coming from throughout Maryland, Washington, D.C. and beyond. A live orchestra will accompany the performance – one of the few community theater groups that continues that tradition.

“Part of our mission is to showcase local talent,” said Bayarena, GAP president. “Not everyone can afford to go to the Hippodrome or Broadway productions in New York. This is a gift that we give to the community to enjoy theatrical experiences that will be their Broadway.”

Auditions begin April, Bayarena said, with rehearsals commencing in early June. The performances are hosted in Sacred Heart’s auditorium.

“We are a very welcoming and embracing group to all,” said Teresa Ertel, a Sacred Heart parishioner and assistant director for GAP’s production of “Les Miserables.”

“It’s always a great community experience.”

Past performances have included shows such as “Fiddler on the Roof,” “Godspell,” “The Wizard of Oz” and “Annie.”

Ertel credited Bayarena with taking GAP’s shows “to a level of excellence not usually seen in non-professional companies.”

“He guides us through the process of rehearsals and set builds with respect at the cornerstone of all we do,” she said.

Ertel said GAP’s “Les Miserables” features “elaborate music numbers” and

“beautiful costumes.” It’s a story of how love prevails, she said, even in times of struggle.

“Our cast of volunteers are of all ages and professions from our community,” she said, “and many are students of Sacred Heart, Notre Dame Preparatory, Maryvale and other Catholic schools. We even have an NDP religion teacher in the cast. They have worked hard and are all so talented.”

“Les Miserables” will be performed Aug 8 (8 p.m.), Aug. 9 (1 p.m. and 8 p.m.), Aug. 10 (2 p.m.), Aug. 14-15 (8 p.m.), Aug. 16 (1p.m. and 8 p.m.) and Aug. 17 (2 p.m.) Visit glyndonareaplayers.com for more information.

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