

RELIGION

Dawson Park Gospel Music Festival

Gospel music stars will brighten Portland at ecumenical workshop, concert, seminar, and Oregon premiere of new gospel mass

'St. Martin de Porres Mass' to be sung in cathedral by massive gospel choir from Oregon, Washington. Protestants, Catholics, blacks, whites, young, old people come together to celebrate new gospel music with national gospel artists, composers.

Gospel music is the music that seeks universal truths beyond mere entertainment, and this city's lively community of gospel songwriters and musicians will play host to an important attempt to show off the miracle of this peculiarly American invention in an important large church as part of the Catholic Church's 150th anniversary in Oregon celebration in February.

Two nationally-known gospel music composers will preside over a workshop, a seminar, four rehearsals, and two concerts during an in-depth look at gospel music for Catholic and other European-heritage

churches in Portland during a four-day event produced and directed by Joyce Boles of Albina Arts Center, during Black History Month in February.

Rev. Milton Biggum, perhaps the most well-known producer and composer working in gospel music today, will join with Leon Roberts, a well-known Catholic gospel music composer will work together with members of the Washington State and Portland-Vancouver chapters of the Gospel Music Workshop of America, with the Pacific Northwest Mass Choir, and with the Portland Black Catholic Lay Caucus to produce the four days of study and singing, said Boles.

Biggum is president of Savoy Records in New York, and is associated with nationally well-known choirs such as Georgia Mass Choir, Florida Mass Choir, and New Jersey Mass Choir. The winner of two Grammys, he has produced well-known singers such as the late Rev. James Cleveland, Rev. Clay Evans,

the Anointed Pace Sisters, and several others. He has been named the producer of the year several times by the Gospel Music Workshop of America. Rev. Biggum is also pastor of Mt. Vernon Baptist Church in northern New Jersey.

The term "mass choir" means among African-Americans a large choir singing black gospel music. The mass choir movement has found expression in at least 40 U.S. locations.

Biggum is expected to teach and direct his own new music at the workshop, which will be followed with a 7 pm Saturday concert at Maranatha Church, 4222 NE 12th Ave., where the Portland Metropolitan Youth Mass choir will also appear, said Boles.

Prominent local gospel music director, keyboard player, and songwriter Minister Terry Davis is music director of the event. Davis was the winner recently of a Community Treasure award from TACS. He directs the large Portland Metropolitan

Youth Mass Choir, and is co-director of Portland Mass Choir. Davis is also music director of the local BMWA chapter. He has several songs recorded on different gospel music albums in national distribution. Minister is an honorific used among African-American church people for a churchman who is not ordained.

Leon Roberts was director of liturgical music at St. Augustine parish in Washington, DC, for 15 years. He is author of the widely-sung "St. Augustine Mass," which is published in "Lead Me, Guide Me," the first African-American hymnal ever published in the United States. His music also appears in Episcopal and United Church of Christ hymnals. He is currently the Florence Van Keuren Artist in Residence at the Concord Baptist Church of Christ in Brooklyn, NY.

Roberts will teach and direct his new composition, "The St. Martin de Porres Mass," to be sung at the 5:30 pm mass at St. Mary's Cathedral Sunday, Feb. 18. Boles said she ex-

pects a 100 to 200-voice choir to sing the mass, which will be celebrated by Fr. Nicolaus Marandu of Immaculate Heart Parish, as part of the re-opening of the refurbished St. Mary's Cathedral, 1716 NW Davis. Fr. Marandu is a native of Tanzania, and is the only priest of color in western Oregon.

Music for both the mass and the concert will be rehearsed at two evening rehearsals, 7-10 pm at Immaculate Heart Church, 2930 N. Williams Avenue, and by a 3 pm Saturday rehearsal at Maranatha Church 4222 NE 12th Ave., and by a 3:30 pm rehearsal at St. Mary's Cathedral.

Both Biggum and Roberts will instruct during a 9-1 pm workshop Saturday morning, "How to get your music recorded and published." The workshop cost \$5 per participant for four rehearsals and two concerts. The seminar costs \$30, and one quarter hour credit from Portland State University is available for an additional charge of \$35. Both the concert and

the celebrated mass will be free and open to the public. Free-will offerings will be taken at both.

Both Biggum and Roberts will meet with local artists and writers by appointment only. Call 284-9043 to schedule an appointment on the afternoons of Feb. 15 and 16.

This workshop with the other events is the most ambitious project so far for both Albina Arts Center and the Portland-Vancouver chapter of GMWA, said Boles. This may also be the first time serious gospel music has been sung in the Oregon cathedral as part of a regular mass, she said. Major sponsorship of the event has been provided by the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon, and by Oregon Catholic Press.

Albina Arts Center, Inc., Dawson Park Gospel Music Festival, July 13, 1996, 2830 N. Williams, #301, Portland, OR 97227-1650 503-284-9043, Fax 503-284-9043 Call First, Contact: Joyce Boles.

Special Evening Of Negro Spirituals

BY MARGARET ISAACS

Having read about Alzheimers Disease, it's victims and their families; I decided to attend a support group for these families of these Alzheimer victims. I saw and felt the pain of some; the impatience of others; anger and frustration were apparent in most all of them. I listened to solutions to emotional problems, offered by laymen and professionals alike, and I saw pity in the faces of the professionals from time to time.

I came away from the meeting with the thought...If only the outlook could be changed to view this disease victims from where, perhaps, they are. They seem to be at a place where trouble and life's problems and material needs mean nothing to them anymore. Children in grown-up bodies. The Bible tell us that Jesus said "Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven". These little children are perhaps Just Crossing Over Bit By Bit Into the Kingdom Of God.

"Just Crossing Over"

(loved ones with Alzheimers Disease)

There's a story I'd like to tell you of a child born long, long ago; of an old farm house with a lake close by and an old iron pot on the stove.

That child knelt near for warmth and cheer to that old black wood-burning stove. She didn't know that the family was poor; she only knew of the love that family wove.

Oatmeal every day was a treat to her. Beans at supper was her favorite fare. The old heated iron in her bed at night; and the long flannel gown made with care.

The Bible stories her mother read to her were alive in the little heart for all time; the rides on her father's broad shoulders; and the short Easter Speeches that rhymed.

This child grew with great love in her heart for the birds and beast and each blessed day; she learned to trust and have faith in the goodness of men; and God gave her grace and

took the stain of sin away.

Now she's grown old with peace and joy in her heart; and a serene smile on the old wrinkled face. Her eyes shine forth with the wisdom of God; and at her vision of a heavenly place.

She repeats disjointed phrases, senseless to us all; and she walks at midnight as if night were day.

She answers inappropriately or sometimes not at all; But God knows her heart, what she intends to say.

She remembers the Aunts, the Uncles, her father and mother and all the lessons she learned at their knees. She remembers the God of mercy they all served; the battles He fought, the suffering he relieved.

Her friends and family think that her mind is wandering, when at times she talks, when no one is there But she's only crossing over the bar that separates; speaking with Spirits in the land God has prepared.

Who is it should care if her mind is fading? She no longer sees the world as we do; she sees only peace

and love and glory; She has the Great White Throne in her view.

She thinks as a young child would think; and bodily functions mean nothing to her. There are flashes of memory, of a life gone before; and the immediate past is a total blur.

Through sorrow and pain and fire and blood; she looks away up in glory. God hears her call; He comforts and gives peace from His Great Throne; God loves this dear child and leads her along.

She knows where she's going; She's looked over the hill. She longs for that place where no tears shall ever fall; She talks with her Spirits and waits with great patience, while she avidly listens for the trumpets call.

Yes, she is back to being that child of so long ago. That child who trusted and cared and had great love. She has a pure heart, a faith in God and a belief she shared; and God, Himself, will soon call this beautiful child home.

Special Evening Of Negro Spirituals

The Bethel A.M.E. Church Cathedral Choir is presenting a special evening of negro spirituals entitled "Once Upon A Time When We Were Colored."

The performance will be held Sunday, Feb. 25 at 5 p.m. at the Bethel A.M.E. Church, 5828 N.E. Eighth Ave.

Organizers say the presentation, which includes music, dance and storytelling, depicts a world which vanished in the wake of integration - the world of living colored.

"Behind the painful and sometimes humiliating barriers of racial segregation, there existed a totally black milieu in which a people nurtured, protected each other and enjoyed together.

"This evening is an effort to re-

mind a people not to forget where they came from or for their children to never forget the world that gave them their fathers and mothers, and how they survived with their pride and courage intact.

"It depicts a way of live from the cotton fields, to our way of having church, to the fish fries, to the times we walked down the isle of the colored coaches on trains to find a seat by the window, where we could look out and see familiar faces waving as the train slowly pulled away. Remembering and clinging to the promises we had heard all of our lives from those who had nurtured us once upon a time when we were colored!"

Promise Keepers '96: "Break Down The Walls!"

The international Christian ministry for men Promise Keepers has announced a stadium men's conference, set for Eugene, OR on August 2,3, 1996, at Autzen Stadium. Promise Keepers is a Christ-centered ministry dedicated to uniting men through vital relationships to become godly influences in their world.

The theme for 1996 is "Break Down the Walls," based on the scripture reference in Paul's Letter to the Ephesians, Chapter two, verse 14. "For he Him-

self is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility..."

Promise Keepers President Randy Phillips said, "there are centuries-old walls built of pain, hurt, neglect and abuse. Our desire is to exalt the person of Christ and power of the cross in a way that breaks down the walls that exist brother-to-brother, brother-to-sister, and church-to-church.

The Chairman of Promise Keepers' Board of Directors

Bishop Phillip Porter added that the concept of reconciliation is more than an headline; it must be demonstrated among Christians. "As the Church goes, God has ordained that the world goes. Reconciliation must be dealt with as individually and as personally as the sin question. We've got to deal with it."

Founder of Promise Keepers Bill McCartney said the key to breaking down the walls in homes and commu-

nities begins not with a movement, but with a man and Almighty God. "The fact is, men are as isolated as ever. Our culture has convinced men they can go it alone - but until we are reconciled to God, we can never be reconciled to our families and brothers. Revival starts in the heart of one man.

The Eugene, OR Men's Conference is one of 23 stadium conferences for men, to be held around the country in 1996. Other sites and dates will be announced in those conference cities.

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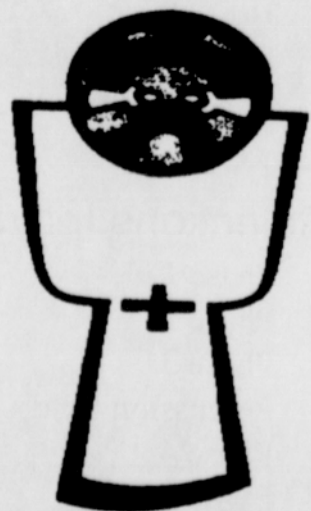
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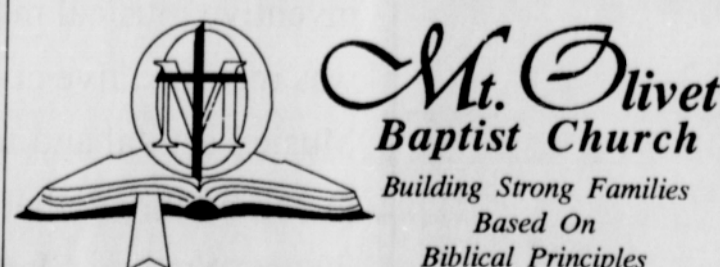
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