

NCF 2009 SUMMER CAMP: DOTA - Disciples of the Almighty (Part 2)

Praise the Lord! Finally, after months of prayer and preparation, NCF's 2009 Summer Camp pushed through last April 22 to 25.

The vigor with which the participants engaged in the different collective activities were also shown when they momentarily parted ways towards their different workshops.

THE WORKSHOPS

In line with the camp's goal of "aiming to raise warriors through music and the creative arts," four lesson-packed sessions were allotted for each of the workshops, which ran for an hour and a half. Teachers and students alike expressed their testimonials to these fruitful experiences.

Dance Workshop

The dance workshops were handled by none other than NCF's Dance Ministry, composed of Angel Baldonado, Joan and Jackie Garcia, Hannah Nueva, and Gracce Mones. Having a general session for their first meeting where some basic rudiments of dance were taught, they were later divided into two classes: Tambourines and Flags.



Being among the teachers of the tambourine students, Hannah Nueva, who was one of the youngest of the crew, could proudly express satisfaction in the motives of their students, "they wanted to learn tambourines for their churches."

As for Angel Baldonado, who experienced teaching the flag class, the students showed a talent for learning easily. Angel, who held the flag class along with Sis. Joan Garcia, noticed their progress, "three have their backgrounds on dance, and even the new one finds it easy to pick up on the pace."

Sure enough, the students could prove to be promising additions to the dance ministries in their churches.

Voice and Worship-Leading Workshop



For some, it's hard to imagine congregational worship services without the worship leaders, people gifted by God with not only the voice, but more importantly, the encouraging aura of a Christian that helps to spur everybody into worshipping the Lord. And here in this workshop was where promising campers were developed. This class was handled by Sis. Gigi Dantes.

Sis. Gigi observed, that her students "were all hungry for learning." Though this in itself was already a blessing, she further added, "they catch up in the basics, but they have a long way to go."

Speaking of the students, the younger generation of worship leaders has been improving their command of the voice, which was infused in the context of worship leading, for which the students were very grateful in spite of the difficult task of mastering their voices and timings in the merely four sessions of basics.

"Even with the constraints on the time allotted for training, we learned a lot" said a 13-year old student named Sharon Palting.

The experience was pretty much summed up by the words of another student named Roxanne Dela Cruz who said, "I do catch up with the lessons. Ate Gigi teaches well; the whole group feels blessed to have her."

Guitar Workshops

Then came the guitars; the whole arsenal of strings was divided into three sections: Rhythm, Bass and Guitar.

The Rhythm class under Bro. Michael Dantes, who found the class to be "a little challenging," had quite a lot of students, considering that this was pretty much the basics. The more the merrier, they say, and both teacher and students were of the same opinion that the class was very "HAPPY"



Bro. Michael said, "The students are eager to learn. They have high potentials and I have high hopes for them."

While the teacher has the high hopes, the students felt equally blessed. Students like Glenn Santos, aged 17, could express such testimony, "Bro. Mike is very talented. I learned a lot, even up to the broken chords I never learned of."

Another would be the case of Patricia Gozun. Patricia, who was awarded Camper of the Year, also had her share of struggles in the workshop, "being left-handed, I found difficulties in playing, but Bro. Mike teaches us well. He's very talented. Even with the problems, I was still able to cope up."

Beside them would be the Bass class handled by Pastor Kirby Figueras, who himself has quite an experience, "the students were eager and determined to learn. Even the faster learners had the humility to seek more learning." He found the class to be such a challenge, "I had a bit of a hard time explaining. First, the instrument was heavy and there are a lot of basics to teach just to make them understand the concept of playing it." Furthermore, he adds, "there are times when I am shouting my heart out. I believe they appreciated it, expressing the passion of playing." Of course, beginners found a bit of a hard time playing it. Says Rolalyn Maluya, aged 16, "it's a bit difficult, but we can cope with the lessons. "Pastor Kirby is patient; he gives encouragement everytime we miss things."



Those who prove to be fairly steeped in the basics went to the next level, the Lead Guitar class, handled by Bro. Justy Guzman, who was himself a professional performer once in the Filipino music industry. Bro. Justy, who now serves his talents to the Lord for quite a time already, had agreed to teach in the camp workshops.



Bro. Justy said, "I was excited; it's my first time to teach here. The students were obedient, and learned the basics of leads bit by bit." His advices were pretty simple: "Practice. Don't Rush. Pray for wisdom."

Such fatherly advices were very appreciated by the students, one of which is Eman Esteras, age 15, "he teaches like a father; we were given equal treatment. We learned well the basics, as well as the principles of lead guitars."

Piano Workshop



Across the other workshop huts, the place between the main cabins fell under the Piano class, headed by Sis. Joam Fajardo of GVBC. Being a vast field to learn, the piano lessons were limited to the very basic rudiments, and yet within was still a huge heap of learning to be absorbed by the willing students. Sis. Joam commented, “The age bracket was very varied. Also, most of them do not have any formal background on keyboards. Yet they are fast learners; they have a good ear for music.”

All this can be attested by students such as Robert P. Balon, age 19, “whatever I studied before in keyboards, I finally understood clearly. I can now construct chords better. I am so blessed that I am able to join the workshop. Thank God!”

The challenges can be simplified by 13-year old JJ Nueva: “Practice, practice, practice...”

Drum Workshop

Apparently, one of the *literally* loudest and most active classes in the camp would be the Drum class handled by Bro. Paul Regalado from GVBC.

The class had a lot of students, and a lot more to learn. One student named Jerson Misona sang a similar impasse as with the piano students, “it all boils down to practice...”

A more positive outlook at the challenges was provided by 16-year old Richard Quiano, “I like the way Bro. Paul teaches; the basics, holding the drumsticks, and others.” Richard who was also awarded as Camper of the Year decided that it was “...the talent I want to offer to God.”



Drawing Workshop



Beside the place of the Drum class was the Drawing workshop, handled by Pastor Mark Dantes. Drawing, of course, is art, and God is Himself a God of Art, and it is but fitting to offer such talents to the Lord.

“Most students were very young,” according to Pastor Mark, “but they could cope with the instructions.”

“I myself am refreshed with my talent, having had not much practice in drawing for years. I am thankful to the Lord for being able to share the talent given to me.”

But though most of the students were young ones, some, like Bro. Aljon Salipot, who as elder also had new experiences in the field, “I learned a lot of new things, like the proper way of handling the pencil. Simple things like that can be made more beautiful.”

Multimedia Workshop

Last but definitely not the least was the Multimedia Workshop, handled by Bro. Joshua Dantes. The workshop refreshed students with the basics of MS PowerPoint, which proved useful in managing praise and worship line-ups.

While most of the students possess a background of MS PowerPoint, some, like Peter Ambrosio, aged 15, still found an experience, “I learned a lot and enjoyed studying in multimedia. Bro. Joshua explains the fundamentals well.”



Foremost among those experiences was that of Mrs. Rhamlyn Sugang. A teacher by profession, she found the basics to be most refreshing. Teacher Rham said, “It was difficult to learn at first, but I began to learn quickly when exposed to the hands-on activities.

“I always had fear of handling computers before. Our sessions somehow helped.”

And it helped indeed, as much as all the workshops helped unlock new avenues for serving the Lord.

ENDS AND RESULTS



To this end, both the workshops and the camp activities helped in bringing the campers closer to God once more. Assessing the blessings at the end, overall Camp Director, Pastor Andrew Fajardo, could not help but say that the camp “was very fulfilling indeed.”

“It was a fulfilling sight, especially when you see their responsive hearts. I thank the Lord for the salvation that came among us, the talents being offered, and we are giving back all the glory to God for the breakthrough He has given for the likes of young people.”

Included in this happy ending would be one of the most awaited parts: SWIMMING! No better way to oust the extra summer heat than to splash in the pool.

It was, to repeat, quite a fulfilling end, as seen in the gradual change of attitude in the praise and worship services towards the camp’s end and beyond.

Awarding and Departure

Speaking of the ends, there’s always the awarding ceremonies at the end of camps. After granting tokens of recognition and gratitude for the staff (particularly the kitchen staff and the drivers) came the awarding of campers.

Foremost among these would be the Camper of the Year Awards, which was accorded to Richard Quiano and Patricia Gozun.

Among the special awards was the Wacky Camper Award which was bagged by 12-year old Paolo Turibio.

Also up for grabs was the Best Group award, from



which Group 1 had emerged victorious, while all other groups tied in competition for the second and third places.

Finally, after a heartwarming picture-taking session, the campers started to board the transports by 3:00 pm on April 25.

Such a wonderful experience, too much to be summed up to mere pages. But this is just the beginning, for the participants, now out into the battlefield, will now need God's presence even more in serving Him from and beyond the successful NCF Summer Camp 2009.