

BULLETIN

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Composer Hopes Pro-Life Song Will Touch Hearts

By STEPHEN O'KANE Staff Writer

ATLANTA—When David Burke was asked to write a pro-life song, he had no idea what would take place during the next two years. Those simple requests led to a powerful musical experience, heightened recently when video images were contributed to illustrate the piece.

Filled with children's voices, the song has been used by churches around the country and at an international pro-life Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., last October.

"I'm just trying to carry out the work of the Holy Spirit, whose only intention with this song, I believe, is to celebrate life and preserve it," said Burke, who has served as a parish music minister in Smyrna and Duluth.

The first suggestions that he compose a song began after people saw "Wonders of His Love," a musical written by Burke that tells the story of the Blessed Mother appearing to a high school choir. A strong supporter of the pro-life movement, Burke was admittedly intrigued.

"I am a father of two beautiful children and couldn't imagine my life without them," he said.

But he was not sure where the music would come from. He had the inspiration, the motivation, and certainly the support of those around him, but it wasn't until he sat in front of a piano at home after Mass that the idea became a reality.

"I was sitting at the piano one day and a tune came into my head," Burke recalled.

This experience is not foreign to Burke. He says that many of the songs he writes come in just that way, as an unexplained tune that flows softly through his spirit.

As he continued to play the tune on his piano, a thought entered that this could be the song for the unborn. Burke said he reflected on this subject while playing the song and soon after, the words came to him. He believes the inspiration came from the Holy Spirit so the message could touch the hearts of others.

"I really believe that the Holy Spirit, who gave me the talent to write and play music ... uses me as a spiritual tool or vessel to bring his messages to others," said Burke.

The song, entitled "We Want to See the World," depicts a conver-

sation between an angel and several unborn children. The angel tells the children about the many beautiful experiences of living on Earth and the children respond with a resounding innocence, saying, "We want to see the world."

When the music and lyrics were complete, Burke recorded the song and sent it free, along with sheet music, to a database of 15,000 Catholic churches nationwide. He hoped they would use it in October for Respect Life Month. Burke was pleasantly surprised at the reaction.

"I received an overwhelming positive response. Countless churches wrote me, thanked me, and said they would use the song during October, particularly on the first Sunday, which is Respect Life Sunday," he said.

The positive reaction to this life-affirming song continues. Burke is often asked to perform the song at pro-life events. Last October, he, along with Cathy Biscan and her children, who sang on the original recording, performed the song at the 15th annual pro-life International Week of Prayer and Fasting Mass, celebrated at the national Basilica of the Immaculate Conception.

He also has appeared on radio shows throughout the country, including Loving Life, a weekly show on KVSS Spirit Catholic Radio of Omaha, Neb., and National Pro-Life Radio.

Burke, who hails from Avery Island, La., has been playing music since he was in elementary school. He attended the University of New Orleans, where he earned his bachelor's degree in music theory and composition, and then moved to Atlanta to attend the Music



David Burke, right, observes (L-R) Cathy Biscan, Sarah Dotson, David Biscan, and Ashley Biscan record his song.

Business Institute.

He was active in the music program at St. Thomas the Apostle Church in Smyrna, and then moved to Duluth where he became the leader of Cornerstone, the Life Teen band at St. Benedict Church.

Burke makes it clear that this is his mission by offering the song for free on the Web site, www.wewant-toseetheworld.com. Recently

Burke met with Mike Hodapp, who leads a special ministry for children with disabilities, to discuss

the possibility of creating a visual element for "We Want to See the World."

"I have noticed that when I write Christian music that moves people in very special ways, they surface to take the song to a higher level," said Burke of his meeting with Hodapp. Hodapp recorded a video to the song and gave the production to Burke to use.

Burke uploaded the video on his Web site and also sent it to several respect life ministries and pro-life organizations "to alert them to the new tool they could use to present this song at pro-life activities,



David Burke (far left), Cathy Biscan (far right) and a group of children gather just before performing "We Want to See the World" at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C. Burke, Biscan and her two children (Ashley, back left; and David, far right), who are members at St. Benedict Church, Duluth, were invited during the 15th Annual International Week of Prayer and Fasting to sing the song with a Virginia children's choir at the conference's Mass held at the basilica on Monday, Oct. 8.

events, counseling sessions."

Burke holds tight to the hope that "We Want to See the World" will have a profound effect on those who come across it, especially expectant parents considering an abortion.

"My ultimate desire is for the song to help persuade an expectant parent to not have an abortion," said Burke. "I believe that this purpose is the reason the Holy Spirit sent me this song, and I am carrying out his work by spreading the song as far as possible to save as many lives as possible. If this composition saves just one life, every effort I put into the song will be worth it beyond imagination."