

Saint Mary's College Choirs Semi-Finalists in NBC Choir Competition

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NOTRE DAME, Ind. — Saint Mary's College learned today that its choral ensembles are semi-finalists in the NBC "Clash of the Choirs" show's Holiday Challenge. The Challenge invited choirs of 5-500 people to record a performance and send it to the network to be considered for promos to be shown during the show's four-night primetime broadcast next week. NBC would not disclose how many semi-finalists there are or how many choirs submitted entries to the contest.

The College entered clips by its Madrigal Singers and its Women's Choir. As semi-finalists, one or both of the clips may be shown. You can see the clips now on the NBC Web site. The College's Madrigal Singers sing "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" (<http://my.nbc.com/groups/videos/clash-of-the-choirs?videoID=660861>) while the College's Women's Choir sings "Amazing Grace" (<http://my.nbc.com/groups/videos/clash-of-the-choirs?videoID=676468>).

The timing of the contest was perfect, as far as Saint Mary's was concerned. "The show specified four or five pieces (songs) that could be performed, and we were just lucky that we had already prepared two of them for campus performances," said Nancy Menk, music professor.

The Madrigal Singers perform "We Wish You a Merry Christmas" annually at the Madrigal Dinner, held this year between November 30-December 2. The College simply taped the singers between the campus performances. The Dinner is a reenactment of a Renaissance-era holiday feast, complete with colorfully attired singers, instrumentalists, and a jester.

"The Women's Choir had just performed a beautiful arrangement of Amazing Grace this fall, so we had that in good shape too," Menk added.

"Clash of the Choirs" is a four-night competition beginning on Monday, December 17 at 8 p.m. (ET) featuring five celebrity choir directors—Nick Lachey, Patti LaBelle, Blake Shelton, Michael Bolton and Kelly Rowland. The five traveled to their hometowns and assembled amateur choirs that will compete live for the title of "America's Best Choir." Viewers at home will judge the choirs.

Please contact us if you would like to interview Professor Menk and/or our College singers.

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