

# Heart Beats



Newsletter Of The International Community Of Sacred Heart Cathedral

December 2014 - January 2015

**"May the words of our mouths (and those we write) and the meditations of our hearts, be pleasing in Thy sight, O Lord, our Rock and our Redeemer" - Psalm 19:14**

## From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Parishioner,

As 2014 rolls to a close (where has this year gone?), let me give thanks in the closing issue of the year! Thanks to the entire ICC (International Community Council) for their leadership and guidance during the past year. Their generosity truly brought meaning to our Sunday worship, liturgies and activities both spiritual and social. We may be limited by time and by our cultural differences in terms of achieving a deeper unity but I believe we are getting there. We are in the right direction.

Thank you also to the different ministries directly involved in the preparation and celebration of our Eucharist every Sunday - the Music Ministry, the Lectors and Commentators Guild, the Sacristy Group, the Hospitality Ministry, the Eucharistic Lay Ministers, The Lay Servers / Collection Group and Altar Servers. Our celebration has become more alive and meaningful by your dedication and creativity.

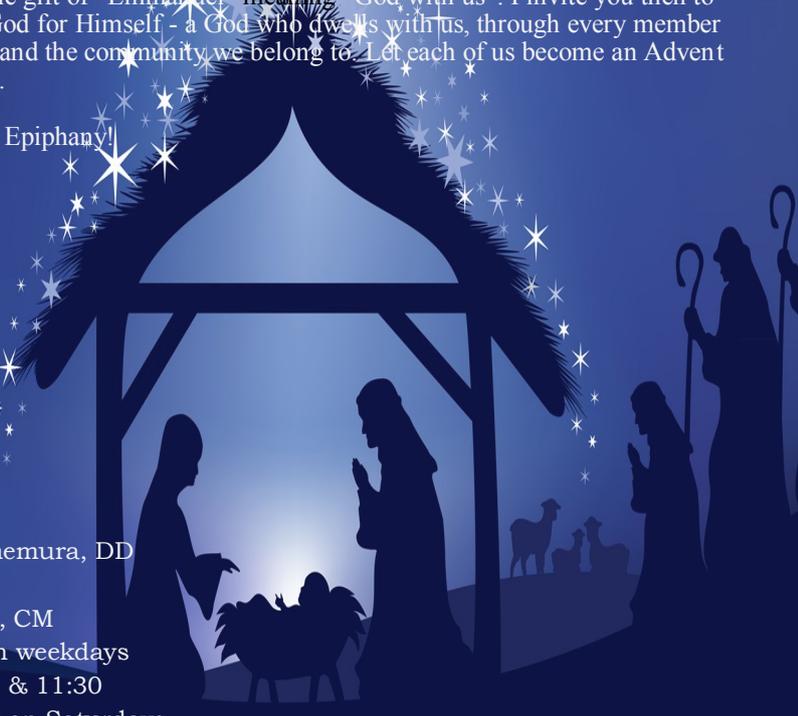
We also thank the various groups who are devoting their talent and time to provide our community with Christian formation and care by sharing the gospel and gospel values with the young and old, permanent members and guests on tour. These groups are the Sunday School catechists, the Bible Study group, the Intercessory Prayer Group, The *Visita Domiciliaria* or the Block Rosary Group, the Couples for Christ Ministry and the SHCFC (Sacred Heart Catholic Filipino Community).

Stemming from this volunteerism, we see a community of different languages and backgrounds coming together and engaging each other inside and outside the church. We don't only see business card exchanges and a series of mundane hellos after worship, but we see relationships being forged, people bonding and becoming friends. As one Catholic community, we hope that our efforts will help us move away from certain old habits of talking about each other toward a habit of talking to each other, engaging each other more, and becoming individual harbingers of 'glad tidings' to one another. Let us, as a community, gather round the manger recreating the scene in Bethlehem that brought all people of good will together, to praise and adore the Lord who made His dwelling among us.

By the time you receive this newsletter, we will be halfway through the season of Advent. Advent comprises the four Sundays preceding Christmas when we prepare our hearts to receive the gift of "Emmanuel," meaning "God with us". I invite you then to spend the remaining days of Advent in true thanksgiving to God for Himself - a God who dwells with us, through every member of our family, our circle of friends, the persons we encounter and the community we belong to. Let each of us become an Advent of God's loving presence to others, most especially the needy.

Wishing you all a Blessed and Happy Advent, Christmas and Epiphany!

*Fr Roed Desamparado*



Bishop of the Diocese	: Most Rev. Raphael Umemura, DD
Parish Administrator	: Fr Keisuke Suzuki
Parish Assistant	: Fr Roed Desamparado, CM
Mass Schedule (Japanese)	: Daily Mass at 07:00 on weekdays
	: Sunday Mass at 07:30 & 11:30
	: Sunday Mass at 18:00 on Saturdays
Mass Schedule (English)	: Sunday Mass at 09:30
Mass Schedule (Spanish)	: Sunday Mass at 14:00 on the second Sunday of every month (except August)

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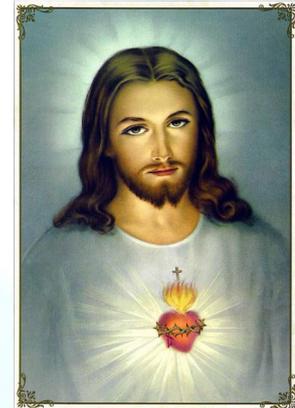


MAY THE **CHRIST** OF  
**CHRISTMAS**  
BE WITH YOU



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## Prayer of Consecration To The Sacred Heart Of Jesus - Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque



I give myself and consecrate to the Sacred Heart of our Lord Jesus Christ, my person and my life, my actions, pains and sufferings, so that I may be unwilling to make use of any part of my being other than to honour, love and glorify the Sacred Heart. This is my unchanging purpose, namely, to be all His, and to do all things for the love of Him, at the same time renouncing with all my heart whatever is displeasing to Him. I therefore take You, O Sacred Heart, to be the only object of my love, the guardian of my life, my assurance of salvation, the remedy of my weakness and inconstancy, the atonement for all the faults of my life and my sure refuge at the hour of death.

Be then, O Heart of goodness, my justification before God the Father, and turn away from me the strokes of his righteous anger. O Heart of love, I put all my confidence in You, for I fear everything from my own wickedness and frailty, but I hope for all things from Your goodness and bounty.

Remove from me all that can displease You or resist Your holy will; let your pure love imprint Your image so deeply upon my heart, that I shall never be able to forget You or be separated from You.

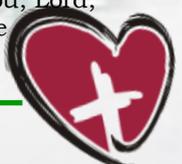
May I obtain from all Your loving kindness the grace of having my name written in Your Heart, for in You I desire to place all my happiness and glory, living and dying in bondage to You.

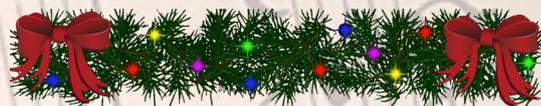
Sweet Heart of Jesus, make my heart like unto Thine! Amen.

### A Christmas Prayer

*(to be prayed daily till Christmas)*

Jesus, Light of the World, as we celebrate your birth, may we begin to see the world in the light of the understanding you give us. As you chose the lowly, the outcasts and the poor to receive the greatest news the world has ever known, so may we worship you in meekness of heart. May we also remember our brothers and sisters less fortunate than ourselves in this season of giving. Thank You, Lord, for the gift of Your love. May we be a shining example of that love to others. Amen





## Evening of Carols : Our Christmas Fellowship

December 7<sup>th</sup> turned out to be a red letter day in our parish - figuratively and literally speaking too - as the entire congregation and especially those singing on the altar turned up in a Christmas red to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, as one parish community.

The Evening of Carols program is the brainchild of Fr Roed. As soon as he proposed it at the ICC meeting, the council members seized it and we went ahead planning it. This was to be an evening where all the different communities or ministries in the parish got together in their respective groups to sing carols along with the entire congregation. It was also the first time ever that the international community invited the Japanese choir to sing at an international community event.

That evening saw six choirs singing and we thank them from the bottom of our hearts for their whole hearted participation in the program. The Japanese Choir singing in Japanese (led by Takahiro Murata and directed by Keitaro Matsumoto), the French choir singing in French (directed by Philippe Guerin), and the International Community Choir, the International Children's Choir and the Bible Study Worship Team, the latter three all directed by Gilbert Espineli, our regular choir director. Besides this, the impressive Filipino Choral Ensemble were also specially invited to sing in Tagalog at the program. Each choir was delightful in their own way and brought a new dimension of language, music, culture, beauty and worship to the evening.

As the evening progressed, our choir director Gilbert, dazzled the Congregation transforming it from a concert based program to a sing along program. I saw a church packed to capacity with members from all communities, each choir joyfully singing for the congregation, people humming, clapping and singing along with all the choirs, the children amazed to hear the applause they received. Throughout the evening, a sense of unity and of bonding among all those present prevailed and for the first time, the parish community at Sacred Heart Cathedral became one! The most glorious moment of all was when all the choirs assembled on the altar to sing that all time favourite "Silent Night" together, each choir singing in their own language. Truly a historic and memorable evening!

After the carol singing, the fellowship continued in the basement over a potluck dinner where there was such a crowd around the buffet table laden with dishes, that it proved to be a challenge just getting to the table! Santa climbed down the chimney next, as all the children rushed to him for goodies and photographs. They were followed by all the adult parishioners who also wanted pictures with Santa. Thanks to David Laffite for playing Santa Claus. As he told us later that day, that after many years of marriage he had just discovered the easiest way to have women flock around you - not with charm or flowers but by just playing Santa :)

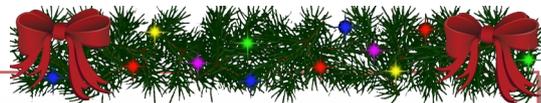
We thank all our parishioners for coming and being a part of this program. It was your presence that made it the success it was and we are happy to have a new tradition to continue in the years to come. To God be the glory!

*Karen Gomez*



Photographs : Arpee Reyes Garcia





## Charity Bazaar

Our church charity bazaar held on October 25 and 26 was a success. We prayed for good weather and God sent us beautiful sunshine those two days. Hence, we were able to carry out all our tasks and meet our targets for the Bazaar.

Apart from the other stalls, the International Community put up three adjoining stalls near the read exit of the parking lot. In the first stall, an array of assorted mouth watering western baked goodies and sweets including French and Spanish delicacies along with Indian snacks were sold. In the second and third stalls, a variety of food courses, mainly authentic Filipino dishes and native cakes were prepared and beautifully displayed.

It was really fun to see a huge crowd of spectators and parishioners lining up to pick up something for their lunch and dessert. Much to our surprise, all our food was sold out by noon on both days. The bazaar has always been a wonderful experience of camaraderie especially due to the fact that we are working together for a common cause. The proceeds, of course, were donated to the Church and to the ICC Welfare Fund (which uses the money to sponsor various international activities and takes care of the needs of the international community).

We again would like to take this opportunity to extend our heartfelt thanks to all the donors of the western baked goods, the volunteers who came forward to help, the Filipino, Indian, French and Spanish communities for their tremendous support and generosity without which the bazaar booths of the international community would have not been a success.

We look forward to working with you again at the next Bazaar.

*Josie Lirio and the Bazaar Committee*



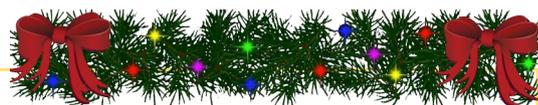
## A Visit From Fr Petilos

Our gratitude to Fr Isagani Petilos from the Diocese of Palo, Philippines for celebrating the English mass on November 30, 2014. In his homily, he shared a fitting message for Advent from first hand



experiences of people of typhoon Haiyan that struck his town in Leyte. He also gave a very enlightening talk after mass in the basement and expressed his appreciation from the people of Leyte for all the help and prayers they received during and after the wrath of typhoon Haiyan!

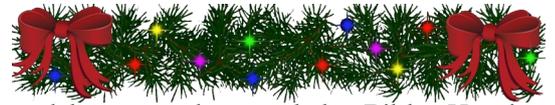
Indeed, Fr Isagani is a true shepherd! We are with you as you continue to help your countrymen recover from their loss and rebuild the community.



## Christmas and New Year's Day Schedule of Masses

- ✠ **December 24** Wednesday (Christmas Eve)
  - 19:30 - Christmas Carols at Futaba School
  - 20:00 - Japanese Christmas Eve Mass at Futaba School
  - 21:30 - English Carol Singing at Sacred Heart Cathedral
  - 22:00 - English Christmas Eve Mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral *(NB : Gates for parking open at 21:00)*
- ✠ **December 25** Thursday (Christmas Day)
  - 07:00 - Japanese Mass
  - 09:30 - Japanese Mass
- ✠ **January 1, 2015** Thursday (New Year's Day)
  - 00:00 - Japanese Mass
  - 09:30 - English Mass
  - 11:30 - Japanese Mass





Welcome to yet another column in 'Heart Beats' to help us read and better understand the Bible. Herein, we shall attempt to give an overview of our own "Holy History" by going through **the "narrative thread" of the entire story, which will prepare us to understand the individual parts of God's plan of Salvation.** This is to basically go through **A Quick Journey Through the Bible, an 8-part introduction to the Bible Timeline learning system which is a resource of The Great Adventure Bible Study Program** put out by the Ascension Press under Jeff Cavins as the general Editor. It is our prayer that this column will help us arrive at the truth, give us those answers to our deepest questions and needs, enrich us and guide us to lead better lives, and in turn teach God's beautiful revelation to others, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

### The Bible Timeline

"To fall in love with God is the greatest of all romances; to seek Him, the greatest adventure..." St Augustine said. And seeking God through His Word is an adventure in itself. I have been privileged to be sharing the Bible Timeline study to the CFC household in Yokohama and in the surrounding areas. The main purposes in attending bible studies are to have a better knowledge of God's revelation of Himself in Scripture and to respond to him in faith and in love for He first loved us and has given us the ability to love him and others freely.

The story starts with Genesis 1-11 and can be called the Early World. "In the beginning", God out of the chaos creates a cosmos by giving form and order. On day one, light and darkness are separated and God saw that it was good. Then the next day God separated the waters and the sky. On the third day God said "Let the waters be gathered in one place and let dry land appear." Vegetation appears and seed bearing plants develop each according to its kind. And as the week goes on the sun, the moon and the stars shine in the heavens. All this is good. The living creatures, fish, birds and land animals come the following day. At the end of the sixth day, God created man in his own image male and female he created them. Then he blessed them and gave them dominion over the animals and the earth. "God saw all that he had made and it was very good". Man has intellect, the ability to reason. He also has free will and the ability to govern through his intellect. He especially has the capacity to love and respond to the love he has received and enter into relationship with other creatures and with his God.

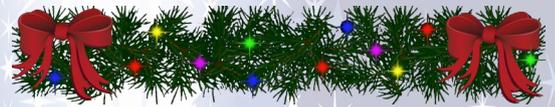
"God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on that day he rested from all the work he had done in his creation" (Genesis 2:3). The seventh day breaks the pattern of repetition found in the previous account of the days of creation. It has no end. The Sabbath day is holy being represented as divine rest. Man is created on the sixth day like the other living creatures but unlike them, he was created for the seventh day so that he can enter into the rest of God and be free to receive the divine life. Number 6 is the number of the beasts as 666 is assigned to the Beast of Revelation in chapter 13. "6" represents imperfection falling short of the perfect number "7". Thus, the imperfect can become perfect on this continuous seventh day. Jesus, Son of the Father (also represented as Number 7) will come in the last days to make all things perfect in Himself.

Why spend time reading that the world was created in six days when science almost certainly points to 14 billion years? A scientific explanation of our origins doesn't tell us much about who we are, about our destiny, about the purposes of our lives. However, reading Genesis 1 can drive home these salient points – that we were created by a loving God in His image and likeness from the dust of the earth, that our bodies will go back to dust but our souls which were specially created by God, will live forever (either with God or without depending on the choices we make in this life) and that we were created to have fellowship with God.

Moreover, for those unwilling to unite the creation story with the scientific account of evolution, there are many theories on the subject but I shall focus on this one. "A thousand years in your sight are like a day that has just gone by, or like a watch in the night", says Psalm 90:4 and each creation day in the Bible can also refer to a thousand years instead. However, dwelling on that takes away us from the moot point of it. 'The Catechism of the Catholic Faith' maintains that, "the world and all things which are contained in it, both spiritual and material, as regards their whole substance, have been produced by God from nothing'. (Canon 5)

What does this account of creation tell me about God? What does Genesis 1 tell me about the nature and purpose of the world and the things around me, around us? What does it mean to be created in God's image? What does "male and female he created them" add to our understanding of the image in which we are created? Why is worship inscribed in the order of creation and why does it matter? A continuous reading of Scripture along with consulting 'The Catechism of the Catholic Church' will lead us on that exciting journey of discovery, wonder and joy.





## A Spiritual Christmas Crib

*The following directions show you how to build a spiritual crib in your heart for Christ. Use it to put Christ into your Christmas in a real, living way. Read the thought indicated about Christ's first crib. Practice it during the day. Do this daily during Advent and make your heart a worthy crib for Christ on Christmas Day. While this is meant mainly for children, adults too can incorporate the same.*

**THE STABLE** : Frequently during the day offer your heart to the little Infant Jesus. Ask Him to make it His home. Sweet Jesus, take my heart and make it meek and pure.

**THE ROOF** : See that the roof of the stable is in good condition, so that the Infant Jesus is protected from rain and snow. This you will do by carefully avoiding every uncharitable remark. Jesus, teach me to love my neighbor as myself.

**CREVICES** : Carefully block every crevice in the walls of the stable, so that the wind and cold may not enter there. Guard your senses against temptations. Guard especially your ears against sinful conversations. Jesus, help me to keep temptations out of my heart.

**COBWEBS** : Clean the cobwebs from your spiritual crib. Diligently remove from your heart every inordinate desire of being praised. Renew this intention at least three times today. My Jesus, I want to please You in all I do today.

**FENCE** : Build a fence about the crib of your heart by keeping a strict watch over your eyes, especially at prayer. Sweet Jesus, I long to see You.

**MANGER** : Fix the best and warmest corner of your heart for the manger of Jesus. You will do so by abstaining from what you like most in the line of comfort and amusement. Dear Mother Mary, use these sacrifices to prepare my heart for Jesus in Holy Communion.

**HAY** : Supply the manger of your heart with hay, by overcoming all feelings of pride, anger or envy. Jesus, teach me to know and correct my greatest sins.

**SOFT STRAW** : Also provide your manger with soft straw by performing little acts of mortification; for instance, bear the cold without complaints; or sit and stand erect. Dear Jesus, who suffered so much for me, let me suffer for love of You.

**SWADDLING CLOTHES** : Prepare these for the Divine Infant by folding your hands when you pray, and praying slowly and thoughtfully. Jesus, help me love you more and more.

**BLANKETS** : Provide the manger of your crib with soft warm blankets. Avoid harsh and angry words; be kind and gentle to all. Jesus, help me to be meek and humble like You.

**FUEL** : Bring fuel to the crib of Jesus. Give up your own will; obey your superiors cheerfully and promptly. Jesus, help me do Your will in all things.

**WATER** : Bring fresh, clean water to the crib. Avoid every untruthful word and every deceitful act. Dearest Mary, obtain for me true contrition for my sins.

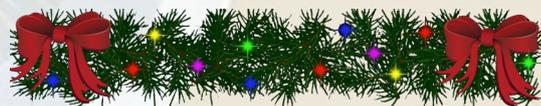
**PROVISIONS** : Bring a supply of food to the crib. Deprive yourself of some food at mealtime or chocolate as a treat. Jesus, be my strength and nourishment.

**LIGHT** : See that the crib has sufficient light. Be neat and orderly about your person; keep everything in its place in your room. Jesus, be the life and light of my soul.

**FIRE** : Take care to have the crib of your heart warmed by a cozy fire. Be grateful to God for the love He has shown us in becoming man; behave with grateful respect towards your family members and relatives. Jesus, how can I return Your love; how can I show my gratitude to You?

**THE OX** : Lead the ox to the crib. Obey cheerfully without making excuses and without questioning. I will obey for love of You, Jesus.





This new column features a well-known saint (whose feast is usually observed within the current calendar months) along with the established Catholic devotional to the saint. It is our prayer that this column will lead you to a stronger prayer life with the communion of all the saints.

### **St Francis Xavier : Apostle of India and of Japan** (1506 - 1552)

Born in the Xavier Castle in the Navarre region of what is now Spain in 1506, Xavier began his adult life as a scholar in France. With encouragement from his friend Ignatius of Loyola, Xavier devoted himself to religious service, then became one of founders of the Jesuit order. After his ordination to priesthood, Xavier was appointed, at the earnest solicitation of John III, King of Portugal, to evangelize the people of the East Indies. He left Rome on 16 March 1540 and reached Lisbon in June. Here he remained for nine months giving many admirable examples of apostolic zeal.



The patron saint of missionaries and one of the co-founders of the Society of Jesus, St Francis Xavier sought religious converts throughout Asia during the 1500s. Born Francisco de Jasso y Aspilcueta, he was the sixth and last child born to Dr Joao de Xavier and Maria d'Aspilcueta. Much of his life was spent tending to missions in areas such as India and Japan. He was 46 when he died on China's Shangchuan Island on December 3, 1552. Francis Xavier was beatified by Pope Paul V on 25th October 1619, and was canonized by Pope Gregory XV on 22nd March 1622. Pope Pius XI proclaimed him the 'Patron of Catholic Missions' and his feast is celebrated on 3rd December.

On 7 April 1541, he embarked in a sailing vessel for India, and after a dangerous voyage landed in Goa, on 6 May 1542. He cared for the ill in the Royal Hospital and preached salvation on the streets to Hindu, Jewish and Muslim souls. From Goa, he sailed to Cochin, the Malabar coast and as far as Malacca and Japan. The miracles attributed to him took place during these journeys, where he allegedly turned casks of seawater into fresh water for sailors, and brought a boy back to life after he had fallen overboard.

Xavier's eyes, however, were now fixed on a land reached by Europeans only five years ago: Japan. His conversations in Malacca with Anjiro, a Japanese deeply interested in Christianity, had shown that these were a cultured and sophisticated people. On August 15, 1549, a Portuguese ship bearing Francis, the newly baptized Anjiro, and several companions entered the Japanese port of Kagoshima.

Xavier's first letter from Japan, which was to be printed more than thirty times before the end of the century, revealed his enthusiasm for the Japanese, "the best people yet discovered." He grew conscious of the need to adapt his methods. His poverty that had so won the Indians and Malays often repelled the Japanese, so he abandoned it for studied display when this was called for.

In late 1551, having received no mail since his arrival in Japan, Francis decided to return temporarily to India. After working about two years and a half years in Japan, gaining 2,000 Christians in five communities, he left this mission in charge of Father Cosme de Torres and Brother Juan Fernández, and returned to Goa, arriving there at the beginning of 1552.

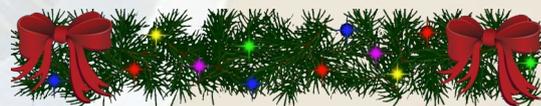
From Goa, with the help of friends, he arranged for a commission to visit China, obtained from the Viceroy of India and in April 1552, left Goa.

At Malacca, the party encountered difficulties because the influential Portuguese disapproved of the expedition, but Xavier knew how to overcome this opposition, and in the autumn he arrived in a Portuguese vessel at the small island of Shangchuan near the coast of China. While planning the best means to reach the mainland, he was taken ill, and as the movement of the vessel aggravated his condition, he was removed to the land, where a rudimentary hut had been built to shelter him.

In these wretched surroundings, he breathed his last. Xavier died on December 2, 1552, at the age of 46, on the island of Shangchuan while waiting for permission to enter China. His incorruptible body is preserved in Goa, India.

*Continued on next page.....*





The body of St Francis Xavier, which miraculously defied the laws of nature of turning into dust, lies till this day in a silver casket in the Basilica of Bom Jesu in Goa, India. The decennial exposition of the sacred relics of St Francis Xavier is currently being held in Goa (from November 22, 2014 until January 4, 2015). The relics will be kept open for veneration of the faithful for 44 days.

It is truly a matter of wonder that one man, in the short span of ten years, could have visited so many countries, traversed so many seas, preached the Gospel to so many nations, and converted so many to the one true faith. The incomparable apostolic zeal, which animated him, and the stupendous miracles, which God wrought through him, has no equal elsewhere.

Let us earnestly seek his intercession especially for Japan and India that many more souls may come to know and love Christ for whom he set forth his perilous journey. May the zeal of St Francis Xavier, inspire and enthuse us to march forward in proclaiming the Kingdom of God in and through our very being and way of life.

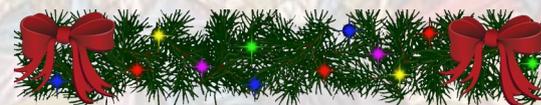
### **Prayer to St Francis Xavier:**

Almighty and everlasting God, we thank you for your servant Francis whom you called to preach the Gospel to the peoples in Asia. Inspired by the example of Francis, we pray to you for the courage to be missionaries, reaching out and leading others to Jesus. Like St Francis, may we help those in need, may we bring Christ to all those we meet. Amen. Blessed Francis Xavier, pray for us.

*Sr Helen Poovakot*

## Sacred Tradition

*This new column focuses on Catholic Tradition*



### **How did the tradition of having a Christmas Crib or a Nativity Scene start ?**

The most familiar and important Christmas display for us Catholics is the Christmas Crib. It is the only Christmas symbol that truly reflects the nativity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, leading us to ponder on the mystery of God becoming man.

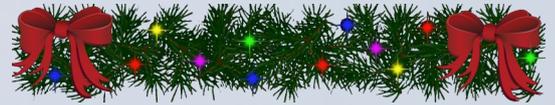
The first Christmas Crib or Nativity scene was introduced by St Francis de Assisi in 1223 in Greccio, Italy. A landed friend offered Francis and his brothers a hilly property in Greccio to be used as a hermitage. Weeks before Christmas Day, St Francis told his friend that he wanted to transform one of the caves of the property into a Bethlehem scene. Francis told him in these words: **“If you desire that we should celebrate this year’s Christmas together, go quickly and prepare what I tell you; for I want to enact the memory of the Infant who was born at Bethlehem and how He was bedded in the manger on hay between a donkey and an ox. I want to see all of this with my own eyes.”** His friend prepared everything that St Francis requested. There was a living ox and a donkey and a manger filled with hay. There was also an altar placed at the side to celebrate Mass. The cave in Greccio became a new Bethlehem.

On the evening of December 24, people began to arrive in great processions carrying torches and candles to light up the night and celebrate Christmas Mass with St Francis. Those who came were charmed at the sight of the manger with the donkey and the oxen. Then St Francis delivered a sermon about the birth of our Saviour Jesus Christ. It was also said that a great light filled the assembly when St Francis stretched his arms into the manger and lifted out a baby. He held out the baby to the crowd saying: “My brothers and sisters, behold the Saviour of the world.” St Francis’ wanted people to truly see and experience a God who became poor for us. It was a strong message for the people, including us.

This idea of making a crib spread throughout Europe and eventually to the whole world after the death of St Francis in 1226. Like the people who gathered around St Francis at Greccio, on that special day, may we also be impacted by bringing the nativity scene closer to our hearths and our hearts.

*Fr Roed Desamparado*





## Nokogiriyama – “Saw Tooth Mountain”

The festive season is now in full swing in Yokohama with beautiful lights and decorations throughout the city and Christmas music playing in all the shops. With the festive cheer come the festive crowds however...and it can be exhausting!! Which makes December the perfect time to get out of the city to enjoy the beautiful, natural surroundings we are blessed with in Japan! Add to that the mild climate and crisp clear days at this time of the year and you have the ideal backdrop to an escape from the city.

Nokogiriyama – “Saw Tooth Mountain” – in the southern tip of the Boso Peninsula in Chiba is the perfect destination for a day trip during winter. Used as a stone quarry during the Edo period when stone was hauled from Chiba to build foundations on the marshland on which Edo was built, Nokogiriyama has a very distinctive profile (hence the name) and offers a refreshing day in the outdoors, enjoying the imposing stone Buddha’s of Nihon-ji Temple and spectacular panoramic views of Tokyo bay.

From Yokohama, the best (and most fun!) way to reach Nokogiriyama is to take the Tokyo Wan ferry from Kurihama – accessed by the Keikyu line from Yokohama station to Keikyu Kurihama and bus / taxi / 20 minute walk from the station to the ferry terminal. Both cars / motorbikes and foot passengers can make use of the ferry. It takes 40 minutes to reach the port of Kanaya on the other side of the bay and from Kanaya, it’s a 15 minute walk to Nokogiriyama, where you can either take a cable car to the temple or follow the trail up for 1 – 1.5 hrs to the entrance of Nihon-ji Temple.

The main attractions of Nokogiriyama are found once you pay your entrance fee (600 yen) to Nihon-ji. It’s hard to miss the 30 m high Hyakushaku Kannon - a relief image of the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy carved into stone and towering over you as you crane your neck and try to get the perfect photo. Follow the path along to reach the Daibutsu and you will pass hundreds of small stone “Rakan” (Buddhist Saint) statues sheltering in caves, and step over massive tree roots before reaching the beautiful 31 m high stone-carved Buddha, built in 1783 and peacefully sitting in harmony with the nature surrounding it. I am sure there are very few who visit and do not come away in awe at the size and craftsmanship of the statue. After taking time to enjoy the detail and beautiful setting, continue down the slope, before winding your way up and down the many stone steps and passing more small Rakan statues to reach the temple exit and cable car back down.

### Tips

☑ Bring a picnic lunch and enjoy it in the shadow of the tallest stone Buddha statue in Japan. There are no restaurants on the mountain or around the temple, so do bring drinks and snacks with you or stop off for lunch before you visit the temple. There is a great kaiiten-sushi restaurant on the right-hand side as you leave the port. Unfortunately there is often a long line outside, but being situated right beside the port does make it worth the wait!

☑ Don’t miss the views from “Jigoku-nozoki”, a small platform jutting over the cliff on the way to the Daibutsu. Translating as “a peek into hell”; the views from this lookout point are definitely more heaven than hell... :)

☑ Spend some time enjoying the expressions on the faces of the hand-carved “Rakan” statues on the path to / from the Daibutsu. Each of them is unique with their own facial expressions and postures...laughing, chatting, scowling, reclining...the attention to detail is exquisite and you can imagine the fun the stone makers must have had crafting them.

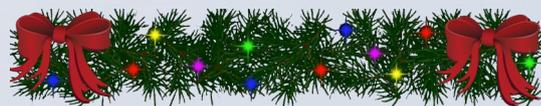
☑ Time your return for sunset and enjoy stunning views of Mt Fuji and the sun setting on the horizon as you make your way back across Tokyo Bay to Kurihama.



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## Out And About



☑ On your way back to Kanaya port after your trip up Nokogiriyama, keep an eye out for a beautiful old Japanese house on your right hand side before the entrance to the port. Not immediately obvious from the outside, it is actually home to Café Edomons - a rather unusual coffee shop where you can enjoy freshly brewed coffee and Baumkuchen cake surrounded by old Japanese artwork and antiques, with jazz playing softly in the background. The house is actually 230 years old and you can wander around at your leisure and enjoy your coffee sitting on the tatami or lounging in the living room.

### Getting There

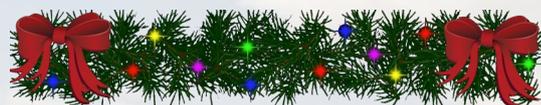
Yokohama – Keikyu Kurihama (Keikyu Line) – 40mins / 430yen one way  
Keikyu Kurihama – Kurihama Port (Bus #7 or #8) – 10mins / 200yen (800 – 1,000yen by taxi)

Kurihama – Kanaya (Tokyo-Wan Ferry) – 40mins / 1,320yen round trip  
Nokogiriyama Ropeway – 930yen round trip

Enjoy Nokogiriyama!

*Caroline Kennedy*

## Your Recipe Space



### Roast Pork Rack with Cranberry Baked Apples

*This classic combination of pork and apples never gets boring*

#### Ingredients :

- \* 1 pork rack, 850g, or 4 pork chops
- \* Sea salt and freshly ground pepper
- \* 3 tbsps olive oil
- \* 4 small apples, cored and halved
- \* 1/4 cup cranberries
- \* 1 cinnamon stick
- \* 2 tbsps butter
- \* 1/2 cup apple cider
- \* 1 tbsps butter extra
- \* 1/2 bunch sage

#### Method :

Season both sides of the rack with salt and pepper for twenty minutes before cooking. Sear it in a heavy pan with olive oil until the rack is well caramelised. Set aside. Preheat oven to 180°C. In a separate pan, add apple pieces, cranberries and cinnamon stick with the butter and cider. Slowly cook until apples are soft and are well caramelised.

Now transfer pork to a roasting pan and place in oven. Cook for 40 minutes. Remove from the oven and let it rest for ten minutes before slicing. In a small pan, melt the butter and gently toss the sage leaves through for two minutes or until crispy. Drain on paper towel. Discard the cinnamon stick and serve, piling the cranberries and juices into the apples' crevices, sprinkling with the sage leaves.

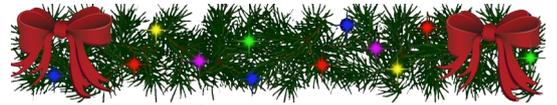
Try this recipe for Christmas lunch and don't forget to drink the leftover cider! *Itadakimasu!*

*Abko Maki*

*“Heart Beats” invites its readers to share their favourite recipes here. If you would like your recipe to be published in the next issue, please email the Editor at [heartbeatssacredheartcathedral@gmail.com](mailto:heartbeatssacredheartcathedral@gmail.com) with your recipe.*



## Christmas Around The World



*Living in an international community can be a blessing in many ways, and here at Sacred Heart Cathedral, we have countless opportunities to get to know and familiarise ourselves with each other, our individual customs and cultures. Here's a glance at how our American parishioners from two different states celebrate Christmas.*

### MERRY CHRISTMAS

I grew up in the American Midwest in the 1970s and 80s. My hometown is Cincinnati, Ohio. Cincinnati has one of the largest populations of German-Americans per capita in the United States (and my great grandparents were German). So I grew up with strong German, Midwestern, and Catholic Christmas traditions.

As long as I can remember, we ALWAYS had an Advent wreath on our dining room table during the four weeks of Advent. Every Saturday night, we would light the next candle. Also, every week night during dinner, my mom would tell me or my sister to set the table and light the Advent wreath.

Also, as kids we had an Advent calendar. Today Advent calendars are commercial with candy in it, ours had beautiful pictures behind each door and my sister and I would fight about who got to open the door the night before the actual day.

Advent was the beginning of getting our house in the Christmas spirit. Another way we got in the spirit was by celebrating St Nick's on December 6. The night before St Nicholas Day, my sister and I would put our shoes by the front door. The next morning we would find our shoes filled with a tangerine, some chocolate coins, a handful of walnuts in their shells, a few quarters, and maybe a pack of M&Ms.

As December progressed and Christmas got closer, Cincinnati would gradually begin to light up with people putting up lights on their houses and Christmas trees in their windows. In more recent years, it seems like Americans like to put up even more lights. Just like in Florida where we just moved from in July this year. Another thing you might not know about Christmas in America is you aren't supposed to put up any decorations before Thanksgiving is over.

At my parents' house, things were a little different, my dad had us wait until December 23 to get a tree and to decorate, he said this was his family tradition growing up but as my sister and I got older we joked the truth was that beloved daddy was being a cheap old German (note: the fresh cut trees got cheaper as Christmas got closer). And dad was quite happy to be referred to as a "cheap old German".

December 23 often was the last day of school before Christmas break. Dad would get off work early that day, get mom in the car, pick us up at school and take us downtown to see the decorated windows in all the department stores (something they don't do anymore in America). We would also visit the Cincinnati Gas and Electric Company where they had a wonderful holiday train display. By dinner time, we headed to a garden centre to buy a Christmas tree and then we went home where we would eat dinner and dad would get down all the holiday decorations from the attic. We would decorate the tree until about 9 pm when we would be sent to bed when mom would get tired too and declare the tree done!

The next day, Christmas Eve we would bake kuchen, candy, pies and more. When I was small, we did not go to Midnight Mass but by the time I was 12, we would go to Midnight Mass (which actually would start at 11 pm). Also, on Christmas Eve we would finish burning all the Advent candles.

On Christmas day, all our Cincinnati and Kentucky relatives would come to our house. Mom usually made a big turkey. Later, when I got older, we started going to my grandparents' on Christmas Day. When my grandparents died while I was in college, we began rotating between my aunts and uncles' houses each year.

For presents, we would write letters to Santa and sometimes we got one of the things we asked for and sometimes we didn't. We did always get new books and new socks or underwear. I remember some of the bigger presents we got over the years: bikes, sleeping bags for camping, the board games Monopoly and Battleship.

Another thing I like to do on Christmas Day (first with my sister as a teenager and later with Sean) is to go see a movie after Christmas dinner. In the United States, quite often Hollywood will release an Oscar potential movie on Christmas Day. As a movie buff, I always love being one of the first persons in my little circle of friends to see a really great movie. We haven't done this lately though, since we can't take Nora. When she gets bigger, maybe I can take her to a movie on Christmas Day!

During Christmas break from school, we would do things like go see more movies and visit all the other Christmas displays, at one park in Cincinnati they have a live nativity with sheep and goats.

In Cincinnati in December, it is around 0°C most days. Occasionally it would snow, but not very often so if it was cold and sunny, we would also go walking in the woods.

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On New Year's Day, we would go to Mass. After New Year's Day, we would go back to school. Once Epiphany passed, we would take down the Christmas decorations and put the house back in order. I miss those childhood Christmases and being with my parents and my sister (my dad died in 2003 and my Mom in 2007). I will forever cherish the memories.

In recent years, while living in Tampa, Florida, Nora liked to go see Christmas light displays at the Lowry Park Zoo and to just walk around our neighbourhood at night. It is warm there, sometimes on Christmas Day, we wear shorts! The parish we went to would host a Children's Mass at 5 pm on Christmas Eve so we would go to that with Nora. When it was just the three of us on Christmas Day, we went out to fancy holiday brunch but if we had guests, I usually cooked a giant feast (maybe a pork roast or ham). Also, we always have an Advent wreath and I always bake a holiday kuchen on Christmas Eve just like mom taught me.

Sean and I have been married for 21 years now and most of those years, we celebrated Christmas with friends. We have only gone home for Christmas a few times. That is part of Navy life (both as an officer and now as a civilian) and the fact that we have always been living far from home. That being said, I am happy seeing the world, meeting new people and celebrating new traditions. Our little family is looking forward to our first Yokohama Christmas and we are thankful for all the new friends we have made here at Sacred Heart.

*Katherine Kelly*

#### MELE KALIKIMAKA

Christmas in Hawaii is unlike any other Christmas around the world. During this holiday season, the weather is warm and the white sandy beaches beckon. The palm trees along the side of the roads are decorated with Christmas lights. The Santa one sees in the mall has tanned skin, and is wearing an Aloha shirt and flip-flops. Though this is not what one would consider a typical Christmas scene, it doesn't make it any less celebrated.

As soon as the Thanksgiving festivities are over, people start putting up their Christmas tree and holiday lights. Some will watch the college football games and others will begin their holiday shopping. The day after Thanksgiving is called "Black Friday." It is the biggest shopping day of the year. With great bargains and the spirit of Christmas, it is hard to miss.

Christmas parades and school concerts are plentiful during this time. Christmas songs are usually accompanied by a ukulele and hula dancing. A local seasonal attraction called "Honolulu City Lights", is a 50-foot Christmas tree that is elaborately decorated. It is displayed along with a wreath exhibit at the town hall where you can also enjoy live music.

On Christmas Eve or on Christmas Day, people usually attend church services, dressed in Aloha wear. On Christmas morning, presents are opened while families, relatives, and neighbours all gather together to celebrate the holiday season. Some will fly from across the globe, and youngsters come home from college.

Varied foods such as oven roasted turkey and glazed ham to pig roasting in the ground, are all prepared for the Christmas meal. Ethnic foods such as Kim Chi, Adobo, and Chow Mein are all brought to the table. It is a feast for everyone. It is also a time where one acknowledges growth and change, as well as reminisce old memories while creating new ones.

In my family, we make (or buy) a cake with the writing "Happy Birthday, Jesus!" on it. We all then gather to sing "Happy Birthday". At the end, the young ones blow out the candles. This tradition, passed on from my mother in law, emphasize the reason we all come together - to celebrate the birth of Jesus. At the end of the day, the women gather in the kitchen to clean and bond while the men sit outside drinking beer or whiskey while talking. The sound of laughter and jokes are heard throughout the house. The younger children play games and the older ones sing to the strumming of the ukulele.

Even after Christmas Day is over, the tree and decorations remain displayed around the house, until the day after Epiphany.

*Connie Baker*

