



SPU Manila INTER-OFFICE BULLETIN

Vol. VIII No. 89

3 January 2017

... AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Classes resume today after a short Christmas break. As the school operations start to grind, we take a moment to look back at some Christmas and year-end activities.

Institutional Christmas Program 21 December 2016 Fleur-de-lis Theater

The Institutional Christmas Program, which had the theme, "Feliz Navidad: Christmas around the World," was participated in by all sectors of the school community.



During the program, Sr. Ma. Evangeline Anastacio, SPC, University President, delivered the following inspiring Christmas message:

We live in a troubled world. Every day, we read in the papers about fighting, about war and turmoil. Innocent people are being killed; families have to leave their land because they are no longer safe in their own country. People are hurting, not only physically but even emotionally and psychologically. We hear about Christians being persecuted for their faith. Terrorism exists in many parts of the globe. Right here in our country, every day we hear about cases of extrajudicial killings, and despite the fact that government leaders are claiming that there is peace, many still live with anxiety, and people are losing hope. We, ourselves, have our own share of disappointments, tragedies, maladies, and heartaches in our lives.

Is it possible to celebrate Christmas in such a troubled world?

The situation at the time when Jesus was born is not far from the realities that we see in our world today. The prophet Isaiah writes that the light that was coming into the world came to a people shrouded in darkness. There was gloom; there was distress (Is.9:1-2).

At that time, Mary and Joseph were forced to leave their hometown of Nazareth and had to take a hundred mile arduous trip to Bethlehem. At that time, there were no highways and no cars; Mary and Joseph were forced to walk several days over hills and valleys, through desert and streams. Theirs must have really been a very dark and laborious walk.



And when they arrived in Bethlehem, as the gospel tells us, there was no room for them in the inn. All that they had was a filthy stable where animals were kept, and there was where Mary gave birth to Jesus, wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger (Lk 2:1- 7). In the conditions surrounding Jesus' birth, we see the Son of God born amidst utter simplicity and poverty. Poverty was not the only source of darkness; a few days after Jesus was born, there was the threat of persecution by King Herod; and so Mary and Joseph had to flee to Egypt with the Baby Jesus because they were in danger (Mt 2:13).

Such were the dark realities during Christ's birth. But was this not, in fact, predicted by the prophecies in the Old Testament? Did not Isaiah say, "For behold, darkness will cover the earth; and deep darkness the peoples"; but He also said, "The people who walk in darkness Will see a great light; Those who live in a dark land, the light will shine on them." (Is. 9:2)... "But the LORD will rise upon you and His glory will appear upon you." (Is. 60:2)

When there is light all around us, we cannot appreciate the beauty of the stars. But when there is total darkness, that is when we can see how beautiful the stars are.

Henri Nouwen, a Jesuit spiritual author, writes, "The world lies in the power of the evil one. Indeed, the powers of darkness rule the world. We should not be surprised when we see human suffering and pain around us. But we should be surprised by joy every time we see that God, not the evil one, has the last word. By entering into the world and confronting the evil one with the fullness of Divine goodness, the way was opened for us to live in the world, no longer as victims, but as free men and women, guided, not by optimism, but by HOPE."

Is it possible to celebrate Christmas in our troubled world? Oh Yes!

Jesus, in fact, came as our light in our darkness. He is, in fact, our HOPE in the midst of uncertainties. As John wrote in the Gospel, "And the light shines in darkness; and the darkness overcame it not." ([John 1:5](#))

Christmas reminds us that Jesus is our Emmanuel, our God with us. Jesus is the LIGHT that never leaves, us. He is the constant light that is here to stay. No matter how dark and troubled our world may seem, it can be restored back to life when the glorious light of the Son of God shines into our hearts.

And so, as we wait for Christmas day, with the advent song writer, we pray, "when darkness closes in, when courage fails and hopes grow dim, Lord Jesus, come. Clear the shadows from our sight; set our troubled world aright. Fill our eyes with radiant light, Lord, Jesus, come!"

My Christmas wish for all of us is this: May we bring the love, joy, peace, hope, and the light of Jesus to our family, our relatives, our friends, and even to those who are not our friends. May we share the love of Jesus with everyone we meet. We may not be able to solve all the problems in our world. But as we carry the light of Jesus within us, we will create tiny sparks in our community... and thus bring light to our world.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you and your loved ones!

Following are some pictures of the lively Christmas program:



Feliz Navidad!



**Institutional Christmas Party
21 December 2017
Second Floor Ballroom
HRMTC**

In the afternoon of 21 December 2017, all the Sisters and lay administrators, faculty, staff, and maintenance personnel gathered in the Second Floor Ballroom of the HRM Training Center.

The party opened with a prayer led by Angelica Gonzalez, Opening Remarks by Dr. Marichen Dychangco, and Roll Call by the emcees, RC Bignotia and Loti Abad.

Before the contest presentations, Dr. Elizabeth Ramos explained the criteria for judging, and the hosts introduced the judges—Dr. Wynna Medina, Mrs. Sherry Lara, and Mrs. Monette Martinez.

The presentations centered on the corporal works of mercy. In the end, the following were adjudged winners:

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| Most Original | "Give drink to the thirsty." | Non-Academic Personnel. |
| Most Creative | "Shelter the homeless." | College of Education/Senior HS |
| Most Relevant | "Give alms to the poor." | FAMASS and Security |
| Most Audience Impact | "Visit the prisoners." | College of Business/Mgt. |

Best Concept Execution
Most Heartwarming
Most Entertaining

"Bury the dead."
"Visit the sick."
"Feed the hungry."

Academic Non-Teaching
College of Arts & Sciences
Colleges of Nursing & Music

Highlight of the program was the medley of songs rendered by the SPC Sisters. The number featured the foreign Sisters singing Christmas carols in their native languages.



ALUMNI NEWS

PAULINIAN AUTHOR'S BOOKS HIT NO. 1 ONLINE

When it rains, it pours.



Angelina Tan, BS Psychology 1980, who has made a career in writing, continues to reap successes online.

Courting Pippa is #55 Paid in Kindle Store on Amazon Canada, #1 in Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Romance > Romantic Comedy, #16 in Books > Romance. *Scorched* hit #1 on Amazon, Canada. *When Angels Dare* also hit #1 on Amazon Canada.

