

SOLEMNITY OF THE LORD'S BIRTH • DAY MASS
DECEMBER 25, 2015

Pasko Sa Aming Nayon ***(Christmas in our Town)***



FIRST READING (Is 52:7-10); RESPONSORIAL PSALM (*Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6*)

SECOND READING (Heb 1:1-6)

GOSPEL READING (Jn 1:1-18 or Jn 1:1-5,9-14) “To those who did accept him / he gave **power to become children of God**, / to those who believe in his name, / who were born not by natural generation / nor by human choice nor by a man’s decision / but of God...”

THE FOCUS: **The Mystery of Incarnation**

REFLECTIONS

“The bells sway and scatter out of too much joy,” goes the Cebuano carol: *Mikaransay ang lingganay, ug mikagay sa tumang kalipay*. We never tire hearing the carol in the yearly baranggay Carol contest. Joy flutters in this contest the night before the Christmas eve, a joy that even starts to bud as we anticipate the Misa de Gallo.

When the carols from the Church waken us up, the Bukidnon morning fogs make us troop to the *Simbahan* in groups. The elders go directly to the assembly; the youngsters pass through their peers, and the group swells when we congregate in the plaza which lately has become the setting of our *Simbang Gabi*.

This is the time to see classmates who come back to our town after spending a semester and a half or years in the lowlands. Or the high school studes just continue their yesterday’s or last night’s bonding. We display our cardigans or imported sweaters. Who cares if they are from UK, *ukay-ukay*? They are branded anyway! The Church beside the plaza blooms with *parols* of different sizes from the high school beside it or the *baranggay* communities’ lantern contest.

Yes, the Basic Ecclesial Communities (BECs) in our parish take pride in sponsoring masses, in singing, and even announcing how much mass collection they have when it is their turn to serve. Yes, somehow, there is an aire of

excitement to work together, contribute something for the community. There is a reason for celebration that cannot be measured by the expensive gifts, or the costly food of lavish parties. Each person somehow feels inside the throb of joy grow, bursting!

True, as believers of Jesus, we feel within us the Joy and Light He brings. He is God, and in the fullness of time, He decides to dwell among us. He feels the cool winds of this sun-kissed plateau, the lush greeneries, the heavy rainfall. But He also experiences the hunger our workers feel in the midst of banana and pineapple plantations. He understands our political and social crises. And my mind cannot fathom how a great God decides to reach out His hand to us frail human beings. And we respond to this offer; we acknowledge this gratuitous act of solidarity with humanity. And we are proud to be children of God. This is God’s choice first. And so we draw out from this rich consolation of profound gift of love and life when adversities come our life. And this is also the reason why we celebrate Christmas, that we keep on reminding ourselves: that the evil in this world, the pangs of hunger, the pain of injustice, the pricks of greed will be overcome by us because He empowers us as He “pitched his tent,” sending his Advocate among us.

A BLESSED CHRISTMAS! (The Editor)

