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AND GO FORWARD

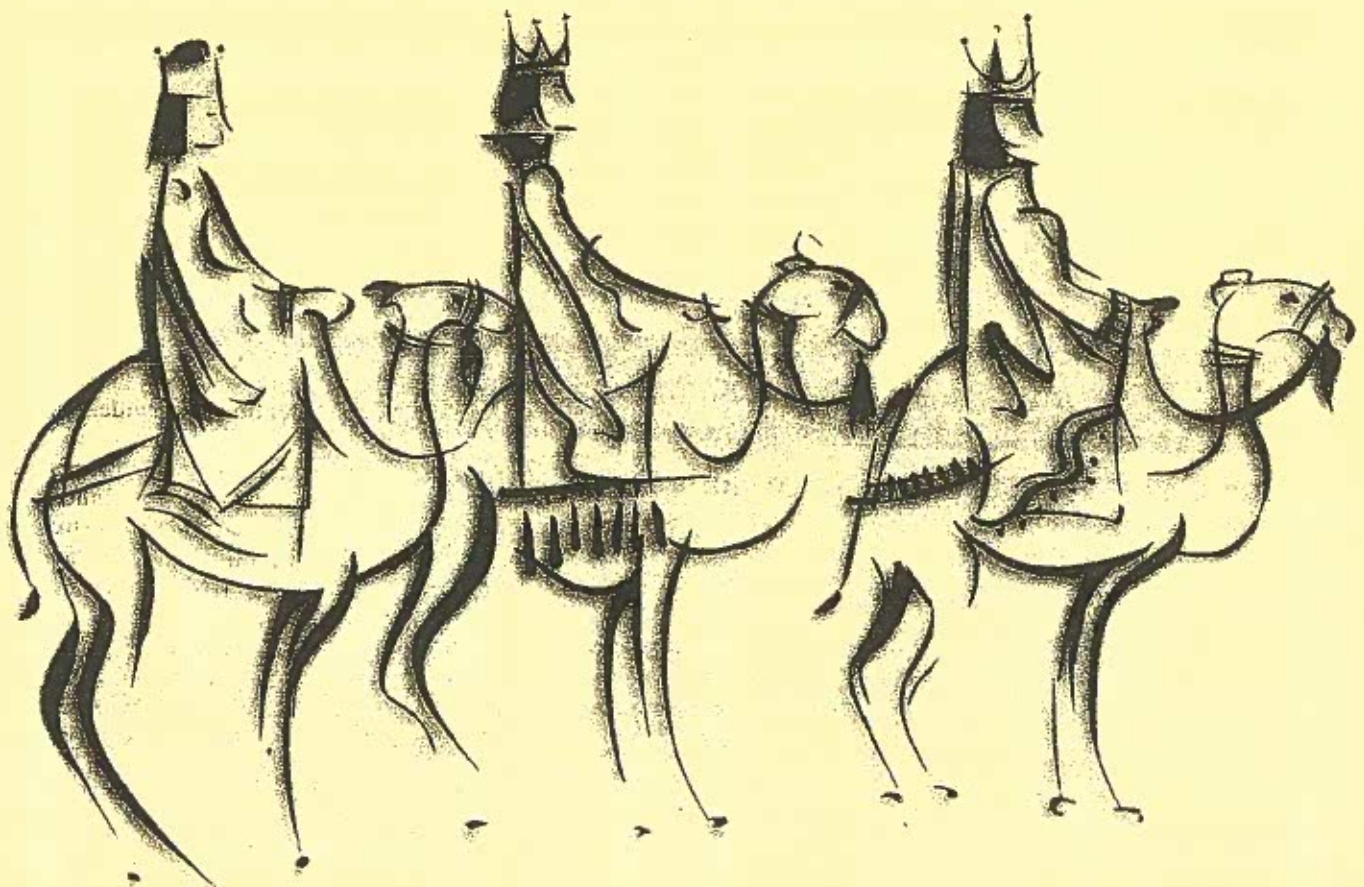
# filipino mirror

The Migrants' Newspaper

Vol. 4 No. 4

The official quarterly organ of the  
Bayanihan Center for Filipino Migrants-Denmark®

December 2000



## Wiser in the New Millennium



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## Message of Thanks

We sincerely thank our relatives and friends  
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who won the title of Miss Photogenic  
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Season's Greetings.

*Cora & Mario Magpantay*

## filipino mirror

the official organ of the  
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31 October 2000

Dear Mr. Dicap,

With reference to our letter dated 24 October 2000, enclosed for information is a copy of the Address to the Nation of H. E. Mr. Joseph Ejercito Estrada, President of the Republic of the Philippines.

With my best wishes and warmest personal regards.

Sincerely yours,  
(Sgd.) ERLINDA F. BASILIO  
Ambassador

## TOWARDS COMMON GROUND

30 October 2000

## MY COUNTRYMEN:

The current political crisis has had a serious impact on our national economy and undermines our unity as a people. If unabated, this situation may lead to a further fall in the value of the peso, the closing of factories, economic misery and social unrest. The fall of the peso has largely tracked the decline of other regional Asian currencies, as well as the Euro which has fallen from 1.17 dollars to about 83 cents. While we are not alone in this respect in the last two weeks the peso has fallen about two percent (2%) faster than its regional currency counterparts.

The Vice President, who recently decided to leave her cabinet post has stated that the current decline in the value of the peso is due to a lack of political confidence rather than to particular monetary policies. I fully agree. The reason for this lack of confidence is that financial markets perceive political instability. They have increased their bets against the peso, driving down its value. Foreign investors are nervous, causing them to put their plans on hold, or to find other places of refuge in the highly competitive global economy.

This is a problem to consider not only in the boardrooms of Makati but also in the households of all our people. I have heard the message of disappointment from the streets of Makati. Just as I have heard the voices of support and encouragement from so many others.

As your President, I have a unique responsibility to all of the people. To safeguard your economic welfare and protect your future. This responsibility I swore before God Almighty and the Constitution to discharge. I intend to meet that responsibility. Tonight, after the most serious reflection, I am announcing the following decisions:

**First.** I will reach out to our people, powerful and powerless alike. I will seek the counsel of our political leaders, past and present, and forge a consensus on how best to resolve our crisis. For that purpose, I will convene immediately after the holidays the full membership of the National Security Council, including former Presidents Corason Aquino and Fidel Ramos, and Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

We will undertake sweeping reforms in government, and I am designating Interior Secretary Alfredo Lim to oversee their immediate implementation. In this capacity, Secretary Lim will likewise seek the counsel of key Philippine sectors, from the business community to civil society. To the religious, his experience as pro-active law enforcer will be most relevant to the current situation.

**Second.** Secretary Lim is hereby authorized to investigate the legitimacy of the acquisition and ownership of the five of six houses that newspaper reports have linked to me, with the view of causing their forfeiture in favor of the state if the evidence so warrant.

**Third.** In order to stop any speculations of fund diversion, conflicts of interest or undue influence on the part of any member of my family, I have asked that they divest themselves of board memberships and

other interest in all fund raising groups including foundations and other non-profit organizations.

**Fourth.** I am well aware that public perception of cronyism is high. To my knowledge every contract entered into by this administration has passed thru the economic coordinating council, or the NEDA, and has been properly evaluated. But the adverse public perception needs to be overcome most forcefully. Therefore from hereon, all telecommunications frequencies will be allocated only through public bidding.

Moreover, there is a perception that Executive Order 59 will create a monopoly in port services. Thus, E. O. 59, which involves the further rationalization of port services and facilities in government ports, is hereby revoked.

In addition, we will implement a pro-active air liberalization policy and advance the dates of opening up our skies to foreign carriers on a country-by-country basis. This may hurt Philippine Airlines in the immediate term, but as we grow to become a transport hub in the region, all will be benefited. Industry and tourism will flourish.

Finally, duty free shops and outlets which have been utilized for smuggling activities and violate the terms of their operation will be closed. Henceforth all smugglers will be dealt with most severely.

**Fifth.** There have been expressions of concern about my personal relationships even during the electoral campaign of 1998. My life is an open book. The people voted for me despite that personal record. But a President's first responsibility is to the nation. All other considerations, including that of my family, will be subordinate to this principle.

**Sixth.** Since our economy is now facing its most serious challenge, I will reorganize, empower and strengthen further the Economic Coordination Council (ECC). I take this opportunity to extend to Vice-President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo the hand of reconciliation to work together again, in the interest of the nation, and serve as the Chairperson of the ECC. Should she accept this offer, I will relinquish the chairmanship of this council and give her a free hand.

**Seventh.** In a few months, our country will hold nationwide elections for Congress and all local officials. I assure everyone that all steps will be taken to ensure the integrity of the electoral process.

Finally, I will support to the fullest the efforts of the Secretary of Finance and the Commissioner of the Bureau of Internal Revenue to reform and reorganize the B.I.R.

My personal fate as your President will be determined under the constitution, through the voice of the people. This is what it should be. For in democracies, the people must rule. The power and authority of the constitution emanate from the people - from ALL the people - not only in those with the loudest voices of the largest resources.

Fifteen years ago, at a time of far more serious problems, our people united to vindicate a martyr. To overthrow a dictator and to establish a constitution that will govern their aspirations. The 1987 Constitution, ratified during the administration of former President Corason Aquino, established a framework of law to ensure democracy and to regulate political differences.

That constitution was meant to be - and must remain - the guiding spirit for our democracy. It belongs to all Filipinos regardless of economic status, party affiliation and political persuasion. This is the same constitution that now guarantees the freedom of speech by which our people today express their sentiments, for me or against me.

This is the same constitution that protects the freedom of the press and allows media to freely report, for me or against me.

This is the same constitution that ensures the freedom of

## BAYANIHAN CENTER TURNS 4

At the fourth anniversary-cum-Christmas celebration of the Bayanihan Center for Filipino Migrants-Denmark held on 2 December at Sønder Boulevard, there were more than enough namedroppers to fill up this column, including Fr. Patrick J. Sheils, CSsR., Chaplain of the Filipino Community.

Dubbed *Bayanihan Årsfest & Julefrokost 2000*, the bash saw the gathering of the more

than 30 BCFM members whose confidence and support were gratefully acknowledged by the Bayanihan Center Pres. Marc. R. Dicap.

The spiffy guests-members enjoyed the sumptuous Danish Christmas buffet prepared by culinary expert Leonor V. Kristensen, the exchanging of gifts, the karaoke portion, and the ballroom and disco dancing that followed.

Highlighting the simple yet meaningful affair was the induction of the 2001-02 BCFM Board of Directors elected during the general assembly held last 12 November at the Filipino House. The new set of officers, who took their oath of allegiance before Fr. Carroll Parker of the Oblate of Mary Immaculate, is composed of Marc. R. Dicap (President), Cezar B. Palad (Vice President), Violy Magat-Poulsen (Secretary), Leonor V. Kristensen (Treasurer), Luz

Continue on next page



Mar. R. Dicap



assembly and association that secures the right of those who protest, for me or against me.

This is the same constitution that you asked me to respect when I was pushing for amendments last year. I listened to you then. Now, I ask you to accord the same respect for the processes enshrined in this same constitution.

In the last two weeks, there has been a campaign to force my resignation as the President of the Republic. This campaign has included allegations of financial wrong-doings, a bill of impeachment in the House of Representatives, and protests in the streets.

I will not resign. I will answer all the charges point by point at the proper time. Let the impeachment process take its due course.

That process is authorized by the constitution as the legitimate act that would overturn the vote of the entire electorate. I ask our people to allow me to enjoy the rights accorded to me and my office by this constitution.

The constitution is not a document of political convenience for favored groups. It also affords the people who elected the President the right to have its mandate fulfilled.

Under the 1987 Constitution, the powerless sit in the same temple of democracy as the powerful.

## MY COUNTRYMEN:

We stand at a fateful moment.

Our nation has held elections since an autocrat was replaced by a democratic constitution. So far, we have passed the test of political maturity.

But our democracy remains young, and fragile, and liberty must not be replaced by license. No one sector - neither the President, nor the wealthy, nor the press - may dictate to the vast majority of our fellow citizens, all of whom have equal voices under our Constitution.

Tonight, I extend my hand to all of you, to seek your cooperation in halting further damage to the economy and in finding a common ground. Our country must be placed above personal or political interest. Together we can move our country ahead and build on strong economic fundamentals and national unity.

But all this must be done within the framework of the constitution. We cannot allow anarchy or violence in our cities and streets. Law and order must prevail to protect all our citizens. And the self-inflicted damage to our economy, and our country, must end.

It is time to find a common ground and unite. That time is now.

May the almighty be with us in these critical times.

Maraming salamt po. ❀



A. Diño (Assistant Secretary-Treasurer), Isabel M. Malacas (Auditor), Pat D. Valenzuela and Deng A. Valera-Larsen (Public Relations Officers), and Cho T. Baldon, Nora R. Dicay and Oscar Trinidad (Project Coordinators).

BCFM Pres. Dicay ended his short speech by saying, "Unity in Diversity. Let us all work hand in hand regardless of what organization we are affiliated with." ❀



CLOCKWISE L-R: Leonor Kristensen and Cezar Palad; Nora Dicay, Marc. Dicay, Baby Jumawan and Tessie Nielsen; Elena Olsen, Nanette Fernando, Aurea Svendsen, Trine Jensen and Leah; Elena, Claire, Leah, Mila, Trine, Tessie, Vivian, Isabel, Maura; Seated: Deng, Nora, Baby, Nanette and Renelyn.

**BRINGAS IS FAD PRESIDENT**

In an interview, incoming FAD Pres. Ma. Paz Bringas disclosed that her party's victory was attributed to the fact that there was no other party to contend with for the 28 October FAD elections.



Ma. Paz Bringas

Though proclaimed unofficially, the party, which is composed of Ma. Paz Bringas (President), Teresa Barbaso (Vice President), Helen N. Roth (Secretary), Estellita Torres (Treasurer), Remedios Cuenca (Assistant Secretary/Treasurer), Cecille Schondel (Auditor), Corazon Magpantay (Business Manager), Urduja Hollopainen (PRO), and Aurora Eres, Lita Nuñez, Elena Olsen, Lumen Olsen, Rose Olsen, Mila Roda and Aida Vasquez (Board of Trustees), will be inducted on 9 December during the FAD annual Christmas celebration.

"I want to involve the whole community," said Bringas who spelled out "unity" as

her primary objective. Bringas, who supports Schondel's proposal of completing the FAD Office with necessary office equipments through financing, also stated

that "...revision of the FAD Constitution and By-Laws and launching out of a cultural showcase dubbed *Luzviminda 2002*, are two special projects I have in mind." ❀

**VJ IN MUTYA NG PILIPINAS UK**

Out of the fourteen candidates in the *Mutya ng Pilipinas UK-2000* pageant held at the Camden Palace, London on 19 November, our very own Geeta Vij was proclaimed first runner up and crowned *Mutya ng England 2000*. Geeta also won the title of *Miss Friendship*.

The 20-year-old beauty, the daughter of Stish and Rosalia Vij, currently resides in Southam, Warwickshire and studies Law in London. ❀



Geeta Vij



**TIDBITS:** ABOVE: Annbritt & Oscar Trinidad celebrated their Copper Wedding Anniversary last 21 October with a dinner reception at Lygtemagerstien Locale. Oscar also turned 50.

BELOW L-R: Bang Dicay, Filipino House entrepreneur and spouse of BCFM Pres. Marc. R. Dicay, plotted her 60th birthday celebration with a dinner-dance reception at Roade Mellemvej Locale on 16 December. ROSTAN'S Manager Rosemarie Magno will reach a milestone of her life on 27 December. She will be 50.



*Season's*  
GREETINGS

from  
Mila Frederiksen  
& Family

Sending you wishes  
for a very  
Merry Christmas!

from  
Edith Andreasen & Family

Violy Magat tied the knot with Anders Poulsen last 23 September. A simple reception followed at Sønder Boulevard, Copenhagen. Elena & Tom Olsen and Editha & Oscar Silao celebrated their Silver Wedding Anniversary on 25 November and 11 November respectively with a renewal of vows at a mass officiated by Fr. Patrick Sheils, CSsR, at St. Anne Church in Amager. Susan & Cirilo Sanchez will play hosts to the 18th birthday celebration of their daughter Karina on 16 December at Kurvenagerstien, KBH Nicklas, son of Filipina Uy-Barreta & Andy Beraqui, was baptized at St. Anne Church on 7 October. Megan was born to Josephine and Mark Clifford Dicay on 17 November.

Rolando Jarin joined his Creator on 24 October at the age of 60.

**BAYANIHAN BIRTHDAY CELEBRANTS**

- October  
5 - Deng Valera-Larsen  
11 - Nida Valenzuela  
13 - Edith Andreasen  
31 - Baby B. Jumawan

- November  
11 - Nenita Fernando  
13 - Clarita de Leon  
15 - Linda Broch  
20 - Isabel Malacas  
- Felix Palitang

- December  
5 - Tessie Nielsen  
6 - OSCAR TRINIDAD, 50  
12 - Venus v. Johnsen  
14 - Cleofe Valenzuela  
15 - BANG DICAY, 60





# All you need to know about Philippine Christmas

By JAYSON B. BRIZUELA



**H**ave you ever felt somewhat deprived of white Christmases, snowmen, real and not plastic mistletoes and other western ideas of Christmas? As a child, did you ever wonder how Santa could come tumbling down the chimney with his gifts since the closest thing that your house has to a chimney is a rusty water spout? Indeed, there are many good things about western Christmases, but there are as many, if not much, much more beautiful things about Philippine Christmases than you've ever cared to realize. Perhaps, that is exactly what renowned authors Reynaldo Gamboa Alejandro and Maria Yotoko Chorenge had in mind when they co-authored *Pasko! The Philippine Christmas*, a colorful and informative if not enlightening and inspiring book showcasing Philippine Christmas at its best. The sights, the lights, the people, the food, and even little trivialities about the season, tell not only of how we spend our holidays. They also bring to fore our culture and our heritage as a Christmas loving people. Below is an excerpt from the book.

The Philippines with 7,107 islands (actually, 7,108 at low tide) has perhaps as many Christmas traditions throughout the country. There are strange rituals unheard of by many, familiar customs everybody knows, and forgotten practices remembered only in

reminiscences of a rich cultural past. Here are some of those quaint customs:

**COLACION.** The *colacion* of long ago was an observance of penitential fasting for the Visayans. Children over 12 years old joined adults in *colacion* which meant fasting from all types of food on Christmas Eve. For the elderly, a light supper consisting of root foods such as *gabi*, *camote*, *balinghoy*, *tam-is* was allowed. As the family quietly gathered around the dining table, a family storyteller narrated Biblical tales.

**DAIGON.** The *Daigon* was a Visayan Nativity drama comparable to the Tagalog's *Panunuluyan*. The re-enactments varied in different Visayan regions but it was believed that the most elaborate ones were in Capiz, Panay Island, and the most lengthy ones in Negros Island.

*Daigon* was a four-act religious tableaux. The first was the

"Anunciation" when the archangel Gabriel appeared to the Virgin. The second depicted Mary and Joseph seeking shelter at the inn. The third showed angels heralding the Savior's birth to shepherds. The fourth was the Nativity itself.

**PANAWAGAN.** The *Panawagan* was a Nativity pageant in Kawit, Cavite, where the actors wore ancient garments and roamed the inland rivers in boats. The last boat carried Mary and Joseph who stepped ashore at designated places to search for a room, in vain.

**POSADA.** The *Posada* was the Nativity drama in the northern provinces. Mary and Joseph walked the lonely streets alone, accompanied only by the parish priest. It was customary for people to stay home, leaving the streets empty. After repeatedly being turned away, Mary and Joseph were led to a barn with hum-

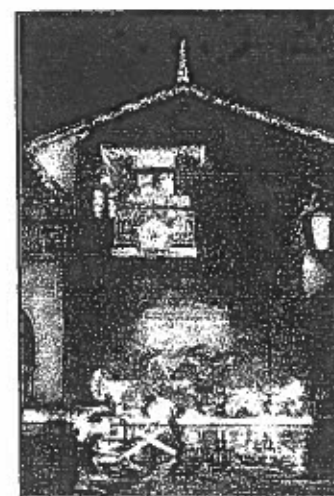
ble manger and some farm animals like chickens, goats, sheep, cows.

In the 1940s before the World War, the Nativity *posada* was once a popular drama among the Ilocanos of northern Luzon. Today, with its non-observance, the *posada* is just a sentimental memory.

**PAKAON.** *Pakaon* was another quaint Visayan tradition where a family invited a select couple (not necessarily mates) and a boy (not necessarily their son) who represented Mary, Joseph and Child Jesus. They were invited to lunch at home, but before sitting at the table, the three were requested to first wash their hands. After the ablution, the hosts reverently kissed their hands. Lunch was then eaten in silence.

After the meal, the leftover food was considered sanctified, possessing curative powers. It was carefully collected and fed to any ailing member. Before their departure, the honored guests were asked to wash their hands once more. To bid farewell, the hosts kissed their hands. Alms were also given.

**NIÑO HESUS VISITACION.** In several Ilocandia towns, everyday from New Year until the Feast of the Three Kings, a statue of the Child Jesus (Niño Hesus) was dressed lavishly in heavily embroidered satin or velvet and sprinkled with expensive French perfume. It was then carried by the town's most pious *manangs* (older sisters) to visit the homes in the barrio.



An ancestral house in Batangas maintains the traditional Christmas spirit.

Inside each house, the Child Jesus was placed on the family altar. Family members present sang Christmas carols and other religious hymns, including the "Salve Regina." After the hymns, everyone kissed the statue's cheeks. Alms were also offered. *Manangs* then carried the statue out to the street as a brass band played martial music.

**PLAZA BONFIRE.** Visayans had yet another quaint custom on Christmas Eve. Immediately after

the angelus, a great bonfire was built in the town plaza as church bells loudly pealed. The whole town gathered around the bonfire. Meanwhile, the parish priest, with his acolytes or sacristans and cantores officiated a strange ceremony nearby. The priest held a hollow plate containing the engraved statues of the Madonna and Child which he washed reverently with alcohol and scented with eau de cologne. The priest then bundled up the plate containing the holy images in sheer and flowing raiment, blessing it in the presence of the sacristans and cantores.

**CARNIVAL AND RIGODON DE HONOR.** The western Visayan elite organized a day party for poor children on Christmas Eve. In a carnival-like atmosphere, they treated youngsters to toys, games and food.

In the evening, they had their own party where they dressed in their best clothes - the men in white trousers of *de hilo* (pure cotton) and *camisa de chino* (Chinese-inspired high collared shirts); the women in beautiful gowns of *piña* (pineapple cloth) or

*sinamay* (hemp cloth).

It was customary for them to dance the much-awaited *rigodon de honor* (Spanish dance), after which they waltzed all night till church bells rang just before midnight. The party would stop so guests could attend the *Misa de Aguinaldo*. After church, they returned to the party for *Noche Buena* and more dancing.

**ACROBATS, CLOWNS, WARRIORS.** In present-day Cebu, after the *misa de galla*, carolers smudge their faces with black dye. They dressed like jungle warriors or city clowns and perform acrobatic stunts to delight the early crowd.

**IGE-IGE.** In Bohol, two groups of carolers, one representing Mary and Joseph, and the other representing innkeepers, act in a nine-day pageant called *ige-ige* (December 16-24). *Igehan* means to drive out somebody from one's dwelling. This is barrio Punta Cruz' version of the Tagalog's *Panunuluyan*.

**SNAKE-LIKE RING DANCES.** In Bicolandia towns surrounding the world-famous Mayon Volcano, carolers dress up as *pastores* (shepherds). They serenade the townfolks with Spanish hymns called *villancicos* to the beat of Muslim gongs, Spanish guitars, bandurias and other string instruments. They sing popular American songs like "Jingle Bells" and "Santa Claus is Coming to Town" while dancing in a snake-like formation of Buddhist origin.

**THE AETAS SAMBUAL-AY.** In December, the Aetas of the Mindanao mountains chant the *sambual-ay* (literally, "carol") in the town plaza. Prior to chanting, they plant a tree to which they tie a two-horned animal, like a goat or carabao, to drive evil spirits away. Three little boys wearing *bandanas* on their heads dance



Carolers bring cheer to Filipino homes.

behind the tree, while a young girl rocks a baby doll to sleep. The children represent the Three Kings, Mary and Baby Jesus.

**CHRISTMAS CAÑO.** The Igorots of Sinapaoan and Bantinan, Santa Fe, Nueva Vizcaya celebrate Christmas Eve with a *caño* feast. The chieftain gathers the elders to a palaver. The wealthier clans provide the swine, cattle, rice, *ubi* (purple tuber) and *tapuy* (aged rice wine) for all to share. Rhythmic dancing is enjoyed all night long.

**SELAMAT HARI-RAYA.** In Mindanao and Sulu, Christmas sometimes coincides with the Muslim feast of *Hari-raya* (commemorating *Maulod un Nabi* or the "Birth of the Prophet"). It is a time when all are exhorted to be forgiving. The *Iman* (holy man) showers children at the town plaza with coins and candles and, if he can afford it, he invites everyone to a *pagjamo* (treat). Muslims greet each other *Salamat Hari-raya* (Merry Christmas) and *Assalamu alaikum* (Peace be with you). ❁



Ballet Philippines' *Noche Buena*, the first Filipino Christmas ballet.

When it comes to sea battle, a fleet composed of modern warships, which could unleash superior firepower, has an edge over a small flotilla of vintage battleships. If the latter won convincingly over the former, then it was a miracle, which could be attributed only to divine intervention.

Unbelievable but true, a miracle of this occurred 352 years ago involving a powerful Dutch fleet which tried to invade the islands, and two aging Spanish galleons which valiantly defended Spain's sole colony in the Pacific. The victory was not due to superior military strategy, but was achieved because of the strong devotion of the Spanish soldiers and the local inhabitants to Our lady of the Holy Rosary, better known as Our Lady of *La Naval de Manila*.

Based on the account of Fray Joseph Fayol, a Spanish friar belonging to the Order of Mercy and chief chaplain of the Royal Chapel of Incarnation in Manila, only two antiquated galleons, *Encarna-*

# THE ROSARY... A PRAYER OF HEROES

*cion* and *Rosario*, were what was left of the Spanish armada at Manila Bay to defend the islands from the Dutch invaders. Before the battle, Dominican priests embarked on the ships and exhorted the defenders to take the *Nuestra Señora del Santissimo Rosario* as their patron saint. The troops recited the rosary and litanies everyday on bended knees before the Virgin's image, capped with an act of contrition during the six-month expedition, which began on March 3, 1646. After their six months' maritime patrol and three sea combats, the two old warships limped back to the port of Manila and gave "humble thanks to the Blessed Virgin of the Holy Rosary for their safe return."

On September 15, 1646,

another galleon, *San Diego*, was added to the two and set sail from Cavite. After more than two weeks of patrolling, they finally encountered three Dutch battleships which bore down on the Spanish flagship separated from her two escorts. After a total of six encounters, which saw the Spaniards fought heroically to defend Manila and the Catholic faith from the Protestant aggressors, the latter was vanquished, with all its ships sunk and many men's lives lost.

What was unusual about the account of Fayol was "that despite the three Spanish warships' estimated 2,000 cannon shots as against the Dutch's 5,000, the Spaniards only lost 14 men and comparatively few were wounded.

To honor their protectress, the Spaniards celebrated a thanksgiving fiesta in honor of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary and had a procession and veneration in "fulfillment of their vow made to the Virgin of the Rosary to continue its celebration from hereon." Thus began the annual devotion to the Blessed Mother, which has become known also as "Our Lady of *La Naval de Manila*."

According to Esperanza Gatbonton's *A Heritage of the Saints*, long before the Virgin's association with *La Naval*, the image of the Blessed Mother and her Son drew devotees to Sto. Domingo Church in Intramuros. Fire razed the church to the ground in summer 1603, but left the religious icon unscathed. Soon

after, the Dominicans built a new stone church with a rich and well-gilded altar where the holy image was enshrined.

The image of Our Lady of the Holy Rosary was commissioned in 1593 by Spanish Gov. General Luis Perez Dasmariñas, who gifted it to the Dominicans to replace their wooden image of the Virgin. A Chinese artisan, who later was converted to Catholicism, carved the image, supervised by Spanish Army Captain Hernando de los Rios Coronel whose life was touched with grace which made him enter the priesthood later.

Archbishop Dominic Tang came to the Philippines and delivered one of the most poignant talks on heroism. He talked about life in prison in a godless society, how he survived and prevailed. "In that prison I discovered an insight. It is not what you lost, but what remains that matters. My faith. So I prayed the Rosary four times daily for 22 years. This saved me..."

Bishop James E. Walsh was jailed for twelve years also in a godless country. Having been released in 1970 he wrote a letter to a priest stating that "My great support during twelve years of imprisonment was the Rosary. I had no religious books and could not obtain any, so it was impossible for me to celebrate the Mass or recite the breviary. What to do under this condition? I fell back on the Rosary. It can be said on your ten fingers as easy as if you

had the beads. To say the Rosary, one needs nothing but time. The Rosary ministered to my deepest need: communicating with God in prayer. The Rosary seemed to be made for any person in trouble."

Ninoy Aquino, on 19 June 1973 in Fort Santiago where he spent years of solitary confinement, talked about the efficacy of the Rosary. "The mysteries of the Rosary started me on my meditation. Suddenly, Jesus became a live human being. His life was to become my inspiration. Here was God-man who preached nothing but love and was rewarded with death. Then it dawned on me how puny to save mankind from eternal damnation." Ninoy was also praying the Rosary minutes before he was assassinated.

In a concentration camp in 1941, a Catholic priest volunteered to take the place of a man condemned to die of starvation. Together with nine others, Maximilian Kolbe entered bunker 11 where they would be locked in until hunger and thirst claimed them. This bunker was destined to become like no other torture chamber in the camp where howls of torments, curses, screams, groans of despair and inhuman agony could be heard. But the men in bunker 11 were praying the Rosary. Under Maximilian's calm guidance, the prisoners turned to the Blessed Mother and this kept them from becoming like animals. Maximilian Kolbe was later canonized as a saint.

Blessed Damien de Veuster, a priest who himself died of leprosy and brought God's love to Molokai, used to visit the cemetery at night to pray his Rosary: "My pleasure is to say my beads and meditate in that unending happiness many of the dead lepers are already

enjoying."

On 2 June 1978, Cao Nahn, a Dominican seminarian in South Vietnam, together with 27 other Vietnamese, secretly boarded a fishing boat to flee from their country. Their destination: the Philippines. Before leaving, they knelt down on the seashore, prayed the Rosary and implored God's guidance in the darkness of that uncertain night. After six night afloat, they came across 18 ships which were unwilling to take them aboard. Finally, at midnight of the seventh night, Cao was praying the Rosary when he saw a small fishing boat's light. He shouted for help but the boat's owner simply looked with a blank gaze. "Where are we?" Cao asked, but the man could not understand him. Remembering his Rosary, he waved it at the man and asked him: "Are you Catholic?" This time, the man smiled and answered: "Yes." Cao Nahn knew they were already in the Philippines.

Truly, the Rosary is not a prayer for weaklings; it is a prayer for heroes. Until now, we celebrate October as the month of Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary. A tested weapon, the Holy Rosary is recited everyday to mark our devotion for saving the country from foreign aggressors. ✿

By Rev. Fr. Rolando V. de la Rosa, O.P., Philippine Panorama, October 29, 1995

**MARVELOUS...** same! Privileged positions in the kingdom. They approached Jesus privately to swing the deal. Apprehensive and jealous men, it would take the death of Jesus to knock this jockeying for position out of them.

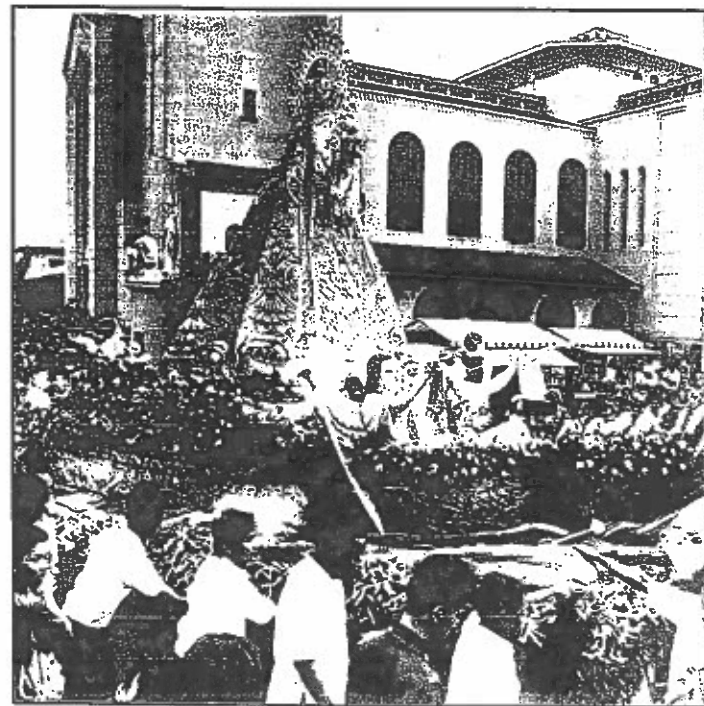
The Gospel gives us the account of the "washing of the feet at the Last Supper" to teach us lessons of humility and service.

How deep this is in our nature: ambition, competitiveness, fear of someone stealing a match on us, getting one over us! This happens at every level. This is how our world works. If you have power, then people show you honor. The opposite can go against the grain. Jesus wants to show His divine way of leading us. If you are His true brothers, you'll have a treasure far greater, far longer-lasting than any earthly title or position.

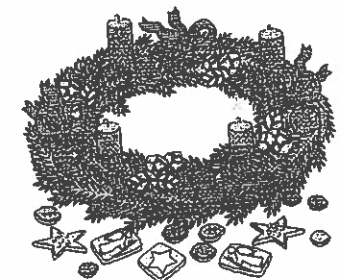
In a management interview today, the candidate will be anxious to check out the perks that go with the job: promotion prospects, access to senior management facilities: lease of a Mondeo or a BMW, and an all-leather swivel chair behind the mahogany desk. But these things pass. What lasts? Millennia of years ahead, and our few years here on earth as a preparation for eternal years of happiness that the Lord promised to those who love Him.

In Mark's last account of a miracle story, the great writer tells us about Bartimaeus, a blind beggar. He realized his dependence on Jesus and called out with deep faith, "Jesus, son of David, have pity on me." "What do you want Me to do for you?" Jesus asked. "That I might see again," the blind man said. He did see, not only with the eyes, but divine sight was given in abundance to his heart and soul, for he left all and followed Jesus along HIS WAY.

May we get closer to our Lord this coming Christmas season and into the New Year, and for as long as we are here on earth, so that we can FOLLOW IN HIS WAY. For this we should pray daily. For this we should gather weekly at church to witness and live our FAITH and COMMITMENT to God, our family and community. HAPPY NEW MILLENNIUM YEAR... as we meet along THE WAY! ✿



## Maligayang Pasko at Manigong Bagong Taon



Pagbati mula sa Pamunuan ng

### DAMAYAN

FLORANTE CUEVAS      TERESA BARBASO  
Chairman                      Vice Chairman  
PABLITO FERNANDO & JOY FRØRUP  
Secretaries  
ANTONIO BASCARA  
Treasurer  
PAT & CLEO VALENZUELA  
OIC, Educational Committee



**A**ng Platform of Filipino Migrant Organizations in Europe ay nagpadala ng pangalawang delegasyon sa Pilipinas noong 14-18 Agosto. Nais ibahagi ng inyong abang lingkod ang Press Statement na ginawa ni Nonoi Hacbang, Tagapangulo ng CFMW ng Netherlands at ng nasabing delegasyon:



## Samu't Sari ni Diko

PAT D. VALENZUELA

### PLATFORM Second Delegation to the Philippines

We represent the Platform of Filipino Migrant Organizations in Europe, a network of 75 organizations in 14 European countries. Platform was established during the Europe-wide Conference of Filipino migrants in Athens, Greece in 1997. It stands for the 500,000 Filipinos living and working in Europe. In their name, Platform carries a Filipino Migrant Agenda which was framed during the same Conference. We have come to the Philippines for the second time with two urgent and priority objectives:

- o To ask Congress to enact the bill granting overseas Filipinos the right of suffrage.
- o To strongly urge the Philippine government to uphold and protect the rights and welfare of overseas Filipino workers. Specifically, we would like to see our embassies and consulates transform themselves into pro-active and effective centers of service and assistance to Filipino migrants.

In the last five days, together with our Philippine-based partner NGOs, we met with members of Congress, government agencies concerned with international labor migration, church organizations and selected embassies. Our meeting with members of the Committees on Labor, Foreign Affairs and the Subcommittee on Overseas Workers of the House of Representatives yielded commitments to work for the enactment of the bills on

- o The right to vote by overseas Filipinos.
- o Anti-trafficking in women and children.
- o The amendments of R.A. 8042 (The Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act of 1995).

At the Senate, we encountered skepticism. The distinguished senators doubted if clean and honest elections were all possible overseas, and if Filipino organizations in Europe were qualified, ready and able to ensure clean and honest elections.

We understand the concern for clean and honest elections. Like our compatriots here, we aspire for the institutionalization of electoral reforms towards this end. We are ready to do our share to ensure clean and honest elections abroad. But clean and honest

elections cannot be achieved overnight. Guns, goons and gold have yet to be fully eliminated from the Philippine electoral politics. Yet Filipinos in the homeland have not been deprived of their right to vote.

Thus, we wish to remind our senators that the 1987 Constitution assures us of our right to vote. The continuing denial of this constitutional right underscores the absence of political will on the part of the government.

As to our second objective, the outcome was disappointing. The DFA, together with the POEA and OWWA, failed to substantially address our concerns at the policy, structural and self-delivery levels. Further, we were disturbed by the tendency of some officials to minoritize the human rights violations, abuse and violence experienced by the overseas workers, and by the oft-repeated "Report to us any incident of abuse of Filipino migrants." We have done so in the past and received no action. Hence our demand that our embassies and consulates operationalize the policy contained in R.A. 8042 that the State shall give primordial importance to the promotion of the rights and welfare of overseas Filipinos. For them to become centers of service instead of indifference and inaction. And abuse in some cases.

We realize the government has no comprehensive and coherent program to address the structural causes, mechanisms and consequences of Filipino out-migration. In this context, the challenge to promote the rights and welfare of overseas Filipinos in Europe and elsewhere becomes even more urgent. We know we are not alone. Our week-long visit enabled us to renew and strengthen our ties with partner-organizations that share our aspirations and struggle. Together, we shall intensify efforts until we gain our constitutional right

to vote. Together, we shall continue to engage the Philippine government for pro-active, relevant and gender-sensitive policies, programs and services that will protect the rights and welfare of overseas Filipinos, and provide economic options other than overseas work.

Nais ko ring ibahagi sa ating mambabatang migrante ang kabuuan ng talumpating binigkas ni Ma. Fe Nicodemus, *Kakampi Chairperson*, sa Kongreso noong ika-6 ng Agosto:

Dalawang taon na po ang nakakalipas nang kami ay unang humarap sa Kongresong ito, noong araw ng inyong pagsisimula bilang mga mambabatas. Mula noon ay patuloy na kaming naghihintay na matupad ang pangakong inyong binitiwang para mapahusay ang kalagayan namin at ng aming mga kaanak sa ibayong dagat.

Malapit na naman pong magsara ang Kongresong ito pero tila ni isang batas para sa mga migrante ay wala pa kayong naipapasa. Wala pa rin po yata sa inyong mga kalendaryo ang mga nakasalang na panukala para sa amin.

Nais ko pong ipaalala sa inyo na sa ngayon ay halos pitong milyon na ng ating mga kababayan ay nasa labas na ng bansa. Kumakatawan po ito sa halos sampung porsiyento ng ating kabuuang populasyon.

Halos dalawampung porsiyento po ang kontribusyon ng mga migrante sa ating ekonomiya. Mahigit pitong bilyong dolyar ang kanilang naipapadala sa bawat taon. Hindi po ito biru-birong mga pigura lalo na't ating isasaalang-alang na isa sa bawat limang Pilipino ay umaasa o bumabahagi sa kitanang ito

*Sundan sa Pahina 28*

# Noon at Ngayon ni Nene

## Mga Alamat ng Bauang, La Union

**N**oong unang panahon sa munting nayong malapit sa ilog ng Bauang, La Union ay naninirahan ang isang magsasaka, si Lakay Sensyo, at ang kanyang maybahay na si Baket Ilyon. Mayroon silang sampung anak, limang lalaki at limang babae.

Sanhi ng kahirapan, mindali ni Lakay Sensyo na ipakasal ang kanyang mga anak na babae sa mga batang magsasaka ng nayon.

Si Meliang ay labinlimang taong gulang pa lamang nang unang mamahikan si Gorio, isang 26 na taong gulang na magsasaka, na nakatira sa hindi kalayuan sa dampa ni Lakay Sensyo. Palibhasa ay musmos pa ang isipan, walang inatupag si Meliang kundi ang paglalaro at pamamasyal kasama ng mga kaibigan. Walang-wala pa sa isip niya ang pag-aasawa.

Sa pangalawang pamamahikan ni Gorio, si Meliang ay nasa itaas ng puno ng duhat. Iniladlad niya ang harapan ng kanyang maluwang na damit at doon niya inilalagay ang mga pinanguhang duhat.

Nang makita ni Lakay Sensyo ang pagwawalang-bahala ng anak ay galit na galit niya itong sinigawan, "Meliang, bumaba ka riyang ito ipagluto mo kami ng pananghalian!"

Nang bumaba si Meliang ay namataan niya ang isang kalabasang nakalawit sa baging at ito ay kanyang pinitas.

### Ang Unang Pinakbet

Pinitas din niya ang bunga ng punong ampalaya at tinipon niya ang iba pang mga gulay na nasa kusina: sitaw, okra, sili, talong at kamatis. Naisipan niyang ilutong lahat ang mga ito kasama ng kalabasa. Naalaala niyang may natira silang inihaw na dalag na nakatago sa basket na nakasabit sa bubungan. Ito ay inihalo niya sa kanyang nilutong mga gulay.

Samantala, si Lakay Sensyo at ang grupo ay lasing na sa iniinom na basi at gutom na gutom na. Nang oras ng kaniin, inubos nila ang lahat ng niluto ni Meliang. Si Gorio ay labis na nasarapan sa nilutong gulay at hiniling niyang iyon din ang iluto sa araw ng kanyang kasal.

Lahat ng mga panauhin sa

**N**oong unang panahon sa munting kaharian ng Bauang ay may naninirahang isang magsasaka at ang kanyang maybahay. Bagamat salat na salat sa buhay, ang mag-asawa ay matulungin at may mabuting kalooban. Sila ay naghihikahos, na sa tuwing uulan ay nababasa sila dahil sa ang kanilang bubong ay maramign butas.

Isang gabing umuulan, kumatok sa kanilang pintuan ang isang maysakit na lalaking dayuhan. "Maawa't mahabag, ako'y nauuhaw," wika ng dayuhan. Hindi lamang pinainom ng mabait na mag-asawa ang dayuhan. Siya ay pinakain at inalagaan, subalit siya ay namatay.

Bago nalagutan ng hininga ang dayuhan ay ipinagbiling niya sa mag-asawa na ilibing siya sa bukid na kaaararo pa lamang. Sinunod ng mag-

### Ang Unang Tabako

asawa ang habilin nito.

Makalipas ang tatlong buwan, napansin ng magsasaka na sa pinaglibingan nito ay may tumubong mga halamang may malalapad na dahon. Ipinasya niyang bunutin ang lahat ng halamang ligaw na tumutubo sa kabukiran. Subalit isang tinig ang kanilang narinig na pakiwari nila ay tinig ng dayuhan:

"Huwag mong papatayin ang mga halaman. Alagaan mo sa akin at balang araw ikaw ay yayaman."

Kaya inalagaang mabuti ng mag-asawa ang mga halaman na tulad ng pag-aalaga nila sa dayuhan.

Isang gabi, sumakit ang tiyan ng babae. Hindi malaman ng magsasaka ang kanyang gagawin. Naghanap siya ng

buong Ilokandia na dumalo sa kasal ay nagustuhan ang putaheng gulay. Itinanong nila kung ano ang pangalan nito. Buong pagmamalaking sumagot si Gorio, "Pinangat ni Baket," na ang tinutukoy ay ang asawa.

Hanggang ngayon ang "pinangat ni Baket" ay niluluto sa maraming tahanan at inihahanda sa mga pagdiriwang at kapistahan.

Ang pangalan ay pinaiksi sa "pinakbet".

Spinner Fred Santos of the Eagle Bowling Club was chosen as one of the eight members of the team that represented the Københavns Bowling Union in the annual Old Boys competition held at Odense Bowlinghal last 21-22 October.

In the said event, the KBU succumbed to the JBU who successfully ran-off with the championship trophy by sealing the victory with a very slim margin of only one point.

Though winding up second in rank, the KBU brought home the Old Boys Revolving Trophy for collecting the highest number of pinfalls.

Aside from the KBU and JBU, the other participants were the Fyns Bowling Union (FBwU) and the Sjælland Bowling Union (SBwU).



Fred Santos

own father, Lito Gales of the Magic Strikers.

In the *Piger Par* event of the same tournament, Anne Gales together with Mary Beth Jacolbe grossed a total pinfalls of 1510 coping fifth in rank. There were fourteen participating pairs.



Anne Gales



Melissa Maja Holm

Another bowling standout of the quarter is the young Anne Gales of the Sporvejene team. Anne had rolled a six-serie game of 915 pinfalls, winding third in rank and winning a bronze medal in the Denmark Masters Cup, *Puslinger* Division. The tournament was held at Grøndal on 7-8 October and was participated by 29 young keglers.

Anne learned to play bowling at the tender age of eleven, under the watchful eye of her

The Filipino community once again takes pride in one of its budding dancers, Melissa Maja, the talented daughter of Grace and Kim Holm. Melissa competed in the *Point Turning i Disco Hip Hop Free Style* held at Greve Hallen last 7 October and won First Place.

The young Melissa, who has been into the art of dancing for the last three years, had already won for herself three bronze medals. ❀

**PLATFORM...** ng ating mga kamag-anak sa ibang bansa.

Hindi rin natin matatawaran ang kontribusyon ng mga migrante sa pribadong sektor - sa *banking, insurance, real estate, housing at construction, manufacturing, aviation* at transportasyon. Hindi illan ang yumaman at kumita ng biyun-bilyon dahil sa pagpasok sa mga negosyong may kinalaman sa mga migrante.

Pero puro angal at medalya na lamang yata ang natatanggap ng mga migrante. Kung minsan po ay naisip tuloy namin na sa dami ng natanggap naming mga medalya ay lalo yatang bumibigat ang mga pasan naming mga problema.

Huwag po ninyong kalilimutan na kapalit ng kontribusyon ng migrante ay pawis, dugo, buhay, matinding lungkot at pagkawasak ng aming mga pamilya. Siguro naman ay nararapat lang na humingi kami nang sapat na proteksyon, maayos na serbisyo, benepisyo, pagkilala sa aming mga karapatan at angkop na mga proyekto para sa aming sektor.

Naghihintay lamang po na inyong ipasa ang mga panukala na makakatulong nang lubos sa aming mga kamag-anak sa ibayong dagat: ang *overseas voting* na magbabalik sa kanilang karapatan na pumili ng mamumuno sa ating bansa; at ang *amendment*

sa "Organic Act for Migrants" na lalong magpapatibay ng serbisyo at suporta sa kanila. Marami pa po kayong puwedeng ipanukala at ipasang mga batas na makakatulong sa amin.

Marunong po kaming tumawag ng utang na loob. Pero marunong din po kaming magdamdam. Lalong marunong din po kaming bumoto. Nasa sa inyo po ang pagpapasya kung tutuparin ninyo ang inyong mga ipinangako na pangalagaan ang aming kagalingan.

Maraming salamat at magandang hapon sa inyong lahat. ❀

**MY CHRISTMAS...** Now that I have learned the true meaning of Christmas, I have been feeling differently. I know that this is the day of giving, just as God had given His only Son to save the world. Christmas is a gift-giving day, a day in the year that we ought to spread love and hope to everybody, a wish of happiness and good health to all now and the days to come.

And with the advent of this season, allow me and my family to wish you all a very MERRY CHRISTMAS and a joyous NEW YEAR. May the good God bless and keep you always safe and in good health. ❀

### *A Birthday Anniversary Prayer for*

## **Reynaldo Robles**

who will celebrate his 80th birthday anniversary on 17 December  
*May the happiness you share continue  
to flourish year after year.*

**HAPPINESS ALWAYS**  
*from the Bayanihan Center*

## Merry Christmas to everyone!



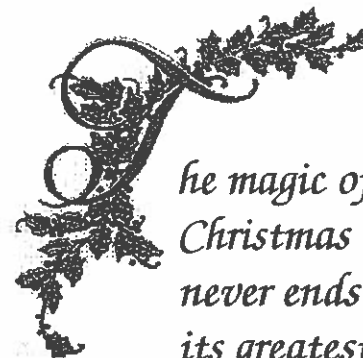
Benigno Ulvera-Larsen

Sons Mat &amp; Manman

It's not the things that can be bought that are life's richest treasure.

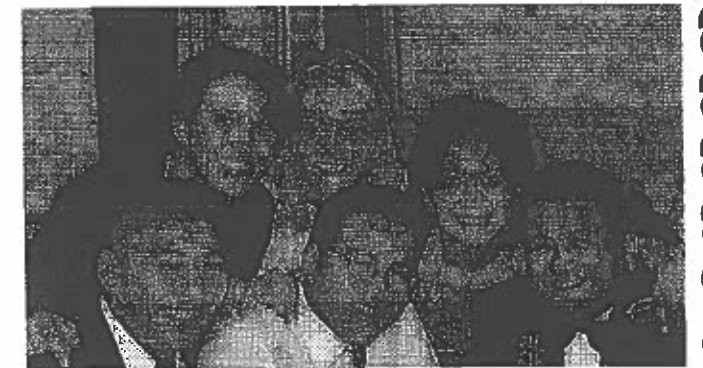
It's just the little "heart gifts" that money cannot measure... a cheerful smile, a friendly word, a sympathetic nod. These are the things that can't be bought with silver or gold, for thoughtfulness and kindness and love are never sold.

Let us be a Christmas and New Year "heart gift" to each other.



*The magic of  
Christmas  
never ends and  
its greatest gifts*

*are family  
and  
friends!*



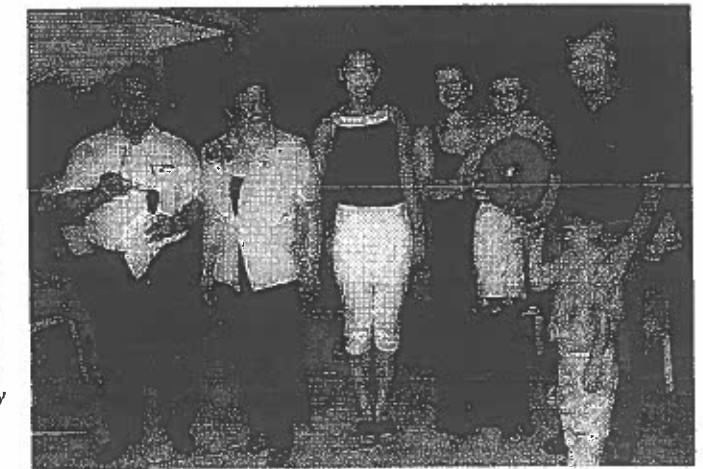
Michael, Nathalie, (a friend Paula), Giovanni &amp; Divina



Divina with Chantal and Jonathan



Marc. and Cade Krystien Dicap



Marc, Bang Dicap, Desiree Jade Hamilton, Jennifer, Christian, Bo, Kevin Romeral