

The 'Parol'

The most popular symbol of Christmas among Filipinos is a lantern made of wooden sticks and colored paper called the 'Parol'. The original and still most common shape of the lantern is a five-pointed star, symbolic of the star that appeared in Bethlehem when Jesus Christ was born. The word 'parol' came from the Spanish word 'farol' which means lantern or 'ilawan' in Tagalog. The 'Parol' also reminisces the used of lanterns by the farmers and fishermen to light their way to attend the 'Misa de Gallo' (*Simbang Gabi*) which is around four in the morning.

Although the 'Parol' is no longer used as lantern anymore, it remained the most dominant symbol of Christmas in the Philippines and Filipinos around the world. It has evolved in so many different sizes and shapes. They are now made with different materials and are usually used for decorations that are commonly seen hanging on house windows until the Feast of the Epiphany.

'Misang Bayan', the Filipino Catholic community is very grateful to all volunteers who continue to support 'Christmas Parol Making' day held every mid-November for the '*Simbang Gabi*' celebrations.

2019 Diocesan '*Simbang Gabi*' Mass Schedule

Theme: *Magdiwang at Ibahagi ang Salita ng Diyos*
(Celebrate, Live and Share the Word of God)

Dec 15 (Sun 1pm)	St. Jerome Newman Center (795 N 800 East, Logan)
Dec 16 (Mon 7pm)	St Vincent de Paul (1375 E Spring Lane, SLC)
Dec 17 (Tue 7pm)	St. Patrick (1040 W 400 South, SLC)
Dec 18 (Wed 7pm)	The Cathedral of the Madeleine (331 E So Temple, SLC)
Dec 19 (Thu 7pm)	Our Lady of Guadalupe (257 No 700 West, SLC)
Dec 20 (Fri 7pm)	St. Martin de Porres (4914 S 2200 West, Taylorsville)
Dec 21 (Sat 5:30pm)	St. Peter (634 Caveman Blvd, American Fork)
Dec 22 (Sun 5:30pm)	St. Mary (1505 W White Pine Canyon Rd, Park City)
Dec 23 (Mon 7pm)	St Joseph the Worker (7405 So Redwood, West Jordan)

2019 Pasko ng Bayan

Dec 25 (Wed 3:30pm)	Our Lady of Lourdes (670 So 1100 East, SLC)
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2019 Diocesan

Simbang Gabi

Traditional Filipino Christmas Novena of Masses

"Magdiwang at Obahagi ang Salita ng Diyos"

December 15-23, 2019

Diocese of Salt Lake City



Message from Fr. Ariel Durian (Administrator of St Peter Catholic Church, American Fork Utah)

Sa tuwing sasapit and panahon ng Pasko, mga Pilipino'y nagkakagulo. Kasiyahan'y namumutawi sa ating mga puso upang ipagdiwang and pagsilang ng haring isinugo. Kaya naman kahit saang dako ng mundo, saan man may Pilipino, ang diwa nang Pasko ay lagging kumakatok sa puso ko, sa puso mo. Malayo man tayo sa bansang kinamulatan, dala dala natin ang tradisyon kinagisnan.

Simbang Gabi na kinasanayan, patuloy pa rin nating ipinagdiriwang. Isang paraan nang pagbabahaginan ng pananampalatayang ating kinalakihan. Sa saliw ng awiting pang kapaskuhan, mabuting balita ay naging kaganapan. At sa hapag-kainan, ang pagkaing handa'y pinagsasaluhan. Isang pasasalamat sa kabutihan ng kamahal-mahalang Maykapal.

Siyang araw na kasayahan, pagdiriwang ng banal na misa'y biyayang pinagyayaman. Kaya sama sama nang magsi-awit, puso't isipan ay buksang nang sa gayon ang sanggol sa Belen ay manahan sa bawat tahanan ng sambayanan. Kung kaya't lagi itong ipinagdiriwang nang may galak dahil ang Pasko ay para sa lahat. Ang Paskong Pilipino at Pasko nang sambayanan.

Whenever Christmas season comes, we, Filipinos, go like a merry go round. Joy envelopes our hearts to celebrate the coming of his kingdom come. For that reason, in every corners of the world, the spirit of Christmas knocks on our door. We may be away from our native land, we bring in our hearts the heritage of our tradition.

Misa de Gallo, we celebrate with great joy, our way of sharing the faith that touches the very core of our soul. With the joyful songs of this season, the good news of salvation has come to fruition. And on this banquet table, we share God's gifts and blessings. Our way of thanksgiving for the kindness of our Almighty God.

Nine days of celebration, the holy sacrifice of the mass, is an abundant blessing and tradition for us. We sing with our hearts and minds as we venerate the child in the manger and make our home his own. And this is why we celebrate Christmas with Joy because it is a faith filled occasion because it has always been good to us all.

Simbang Gabi

'*Simbang Gabi*,' literally translated as 'Night Mass' is a 400-year-old Christmas tradition of the Philippines - where the yuletide season starts as early as September and lasts until the feast of the Three Kings in January. This is the oldest and the dearest tradition that the Filipinos have continuously celebrated.

This tradition being so special for Filipinos is now being celebrated all over the world. It has also been officially approved by the Vatican. It started when the Spaniards who discovered and colonized the Philippines in the sixteenth century wanted to evangelize the mostly Muslim population who sustained their lives by either farming or fishing. To bring these two populations and their families together, the colonizers gather them very early in the morning at the crack of dawn when the fishermen are coming in from their night trade and the farmers prior to their start of the day. This gave way to a unique tradition of nine early morning celebration of the Mass prior to the day celebrating the birth of Jesus. The gathering of farmers and fishermen became what the Spaniards called "Misa de Gallo" or 'Mass of the Roosters'. After the Spaniards were finally gone, even with the change of trade and occupations of the people, the tradition continued on celebrating a Novena of Masses or simply now known as '*Simbang Gabi*'.

In the United States, many Dioceses and parishes where there are huge populations of Filipinos celebrate all nine Masses as early as four in the morning. Here in our Diocese, with distinct winter weather in the month of December, the time of celebrations may be different but the substance and the practice of the tradition remains the same. It is above all, an expression of the Filipino's filial devotion to Mary, the Mother of God. For nine consecutive days, we join and accompany her, so to speak, as she awaits the birth of her Son.

This year our theme for the Diocesan '*Simbang Gabi*' is "**Magdiwang at Ibahagi ang Salita ng Diyos**" - "**Celebrate, Live and Share the Word of God**". With this theme in the celebration of Simbang Gabi, we share the message of the church to reflect on how we use the Word of God to achieve transformation in our hearts and in our communities.

The Filipino Catholic community is very grateful that we have been allowed to share this centuries old tradition that is uniquely Filipino here in our Diocese of Salt Lake City.

In keeping with the full tradition of '*Simbang Gabi*', we invite attendees to enjoy hot food and snacks after every Mass.