

Celebrating Christmas Season with People of God, Pekalongan, Indonesia



The Christmas theme chosen by the Indonesian Bishops' Conference and the Indonesian Christian Churches was "Your savior is born today in David's city. He is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:11)

We'd like to share with you our experience in celebrating Christmas with the people of God, Christians and Non-Christians, in Pekalongan and its surroundings.

Our diligent Juniors, Sr. Maria Herlina and Sr. Maria Elfrida, assisted by teachers and SND Associates, distributed Christmas gifts among street children and their parents, who are all Muslim.

The Vigil, Morning and Evening Christmas Masses were celebrated in the festive parish Church and affiliations by our loyal parish priest, Fr. Sheko Suwandi, and his two assistants, Fr. Tri Kusuma and Fr. Maryoto. You must look at the unique crib in the Church which was made of batik cloths and decorated with local plants. The Javanese inscription says: "Merry Christmas." The octave Masses followed, on the feast of the Holy Family we attended the Holy Mass with the families. After the homily there was a ritual to renew the promise: husband, wife, parents and their children. The Mass giving thanks for the year 2016 and welcoming the year 2017 was celebrated at 10:00 pm on December 31. It was followed by a reception and fireworks to welcome the new year. In the morning of the same day, Sr. Maria Rosaline who ministers among the people in the village of Kebon Agung, Pekalongan, hosted a celebration to close the year 2016 and ask blessings on the year 2017. Most of the people in attendance were Muslim.

On Monday, January 2, 2017, the SNDs residing in Pekalongan together with the Associates followed our tradition to host a Christmas party for the elderly in the parish. It began with a Eucharistic Celebration presided by Fr. Sheko and assisted by Bro. Juhas Irawan. The celebration continued in the refectory, where supper had been prepared for them. Some programs were also performed: The Associates' Choir sang beautiful Christmas songs and hymns. A poem was read by one of the elderly and last but not least a door prize was given to everyone who came.

The celebration continued on January 4, when some sisters attended the Christmas and New Year's party with the families of the Armed Forces and the Police Department of Pekalongan and the people of the 17 Christian Churches in our town. The hall was filled with guests and the performances were attractive. Everyone went home with a boxed supper.

The message of the celebration was that today and everyday Jesus comes and stays with us. Lord, God increase our faith, hope and love.