

# Liwanag Tanglaw



International



## The Poinsettia

Like the Christmas tree, the wreath, and presents left by Santa, the poinsettia flower has earned its place among the holiday season's favorite decorations. The bright red star-shaped flower invites everyone to partake in the festive home's gaiety. And like the other ornaments that have come to adorn Christmas, the poinsettia flower has its own story to tell.

The poinsettia plant is not native to North America. It is naturally found along the Pacific coast of Mexico. In 1825, the flower that grew by the roadside caught the eye of US ambassador to Mexico, Joel Roberts

Poinsett, who then made some cuttings that he brought back to his South Carolina home. Since then, the plant has been named the "poinsettia".

A charming Mexican legend made the poinsettia flower a part of Christmas tradition. According to the legend, a large manger scene was set up at a chapel in Mexico. With all the festivities, gaieties, and pa-

rades going on, the children from all around town became eager to bring baby Jesus the best present. Among the children were Pepita and Pedro, cousins who wanted to bring expensive presents, too. But because they belonged to poor families, Pepita's heart was filled with sadness rather than joy.

"I am sure, Pepita, that even the most humble gift, if given in love, will be acceptable in His eyes," said Pedro consolingly.

So the two cousins gathered twigs from the roadside and fashioned them into a bouquet that they laid at the foot of



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## Kindness

Bro. Midelfio Nibungco

We do our best to perform acts of kindness. But hardly do we give any thought to showing them off. An act of kindness, after all, is meant to extend gentle and loving deeds or words from one to another without expecting anything in return. It is never meant to be self-serving.

But there may be times when making a spectacle of your kindness so it doesn't go unnoticed might be useful, especially when the spectators happen to be your kids. By becoming your children's role model, it will become easier for them to conjure their own acts of kindness.

And when our children learn to practice kindness, more than half of the goal to our individual happiness will already have been achieved. So in a way, we do, after all, get something in return — that of a better world.

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Volume 28, Issue 2

December 2007

East Coast

Next Sesyon:

**December 29 –  
Saturday, 5:00 p.m.**

Pag-diriwang sa pag-silang sa laman ng Jesus, ang Kristo; Pag-gunita sa pag-silang sa ispiritu ng Fundador ng Espiritu ng Katotohanan. Gaganapin sa tahanan nina Bro.Vid at Sis.Beth Silverio.

35 Constable Lane,  
Levittown, NY 11756  
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West Coast:

Maaring tumawag kina:

- Bro.Louie & family:  
(619) 264-4251
- Sis.Fia Zabat Swartz:  
(619) 656-3138
- Sis.Amor &  
Bro.Salvador Pia:  
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or Fax (619) 421-  
5240.



### **The Poinsettia ...** *Continued from p.1*

the manger scene.

As other children erupted in laughter at Pepita's and Pedro's poorly improvised gift, the twigs suddenly blossomed into bright red petals that looked like stars. Everyone present

was struck in awe by the flowers' beauty. Ever since then, the poinsettia flower, as it later came to be known, became a favorite Christmas decoration.

In all likelihood, the story is folklore. But the

thing is, come Christmastime, people do all sorts of fanciful things with the sincerest wishes of keeping everyone's spirits bright. What better way to celebrate the birth of Jesus than gathering around our loved ones and promising that

this Christmas will be more joyful than the last.

*Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all!*



### **Kindness ...** *Continued from p.1*

#### **Kindness Counts**

*Loving ways to raise a compassionate child in a me-first world*

By Mimi Doe

One of the most common questions parents ask me is, "How, in this materialistic, competitive world can I raise kind children?" My answer is to begin by being a kind adult. When your child sees you going the extra mile to help a friend, carrying someone's groceries, making a meal for a new family that just moved in, or inviting people into your life who aren't exactly like you, he will naturally see this as the right way to live.

We are mirrors for our kids: When children observe your examples of kindness, they'll know where to begin. One day, I mentioned that I had a tummy ache, and my 8-year-old dashed up the stairs to run a bath, turn down my bed, and lay out my favorite nightie. You know who had treated her tummy aches in just such a way.

Kindness is a quality that isn't often rewarded in our schools, so we must make

a strong effort to acknowledge it at home. Kids are naturally empathetic from an early age: As newborns, they cry when they hear another baby crying; they offer their favorite doll to the friend who has scraped his knee. We tend to expect our young children to grow out of this compassion and become self-absorbed. "Oh it's the terrible twos," we say. "Kids just can't share at this age." What if we shifted our expectations and saw our kids as truly caring beings? Boys in particular are often rewarded for being clever or assertive, but not often for showing compassion.

A busy mother I know is making an effort to acknowledge her young son's kindness. She recalls, "I went with the second grade on the bus to the zoo last fall, and Michael sat next to a classmate who uses a wheelchair and is mentally impaired. I was amazed at how helpful and considerate he was, and I was quick to compliment him when we got home."

Kindness, empathy, compassion, and love grow from appreciation and respect, and in turn create more of both. Instead of comparing kids and foster-

ing competition--"You have the best voice in the choir"--it would help to applaud their thoughtfulness. For example, you could say, "I liked the way you complimented Amy's painting."

In an achievement-oriented culture, we may focus more on grades and sports victories than on values of the heart. Take the time to acknowledge kind actions as having true worth.

We can weave kindness into our everyday lives, for example, by creating a "kindness board" and posting it on the fridge. Each time a family member does something kind, he or she can write it on the board when it's acknowledged.

#### **Try These Random Acts of Kindness**

Ask your kids to come up with their own list of everyday opportunities to show kindness. Some ideas to get them started:

- Smile at the bus driver.
- Compliment at least one person a day.
- Hold the door for the person behind you when you come in from recess.
- Pass on to someone

- else a book you loved.
- Offer to walk a neighbor's dog.
- Help someone find something he or she has lost.
- Recycle magazines to the local library.
- Help a younger sibling with homework.
- Sit with the kid who usually sits alone on the bus.
- If kids are speaking unkindly about someone, take a stand against it.
- Bake an extra batch of cookies and leave them on a neighbor's doorstep.
- Hug somebody who needs it.

Remind your children they can make a difference each day. They can touch other people's lives through simple efforts: a smile, a nod, a shared laugh, a kind word, a whispered prayer.

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*Mimi Doe is the award winning author of five books including "10 Principles for Spiritual Parenting" (Harper-Collins) and "Busy but Balanced." She is the founder of [www.SpiritualParenting.com](http://www.SpiritualParenting.com) where her free newsletter goes to over 50,000 parents.*



**A Piece of History:**

**“Brothers” and “Sisters”**

The year was 1961 and Bro. Jimmy was president of Ang Tanglaw. After the morning sesyon on Sundays, classes and a meeting were held in the afternoon at Templo Sol. One class, a bible study conducted by My Ding, prepared future sesyon speakers. Another class, chaired by Mr. Cuartina, supplemented the morning teachings with knowledge not found in the Bible, Allan Kardek’s spiritualism, for example. Bro. Jimmy presided over the Ang Tanglaw meetings.

When the afternoon classes and meeting were over and everyone had gone home, Bro. Jimmy stayed behind to consult with Lola. He did this on his own and regularly went to Lola’s house beside Templo Sol, which today is also the home of her daughter, our Tita Baby. Mostly, Bro. Jimmy discussed activities planned by Ang Tanglaw.

On one such afternoon, Lola sat in her living room facing the front door. Bro. Jimmy walked in and sat across from her.

Lola said, “Jimmy, advise the members of Ang Tanglaw to address one another as ‘Brother’ and ‘Sister’.”

The following Sunday, Bro. Jimmy made the announcement to Ang Tanglaw. As far as Bro. Jimmy remembers, there was no reluctance among the members -- only eagerness -- in trying out the new form of address.

Today, Bro. Jimmy remembers that Sunday afternoon with Lola. We are created by one Almighty and so in the truest sense, are brothers and sisters. Through the simple use of a few chosen words, a bond signifying humility and compassion naturally forms between the speakers in a practice that dates back forty-six years when we began calling each other “Bro. This” and “Sis. That”.

They’re little things. But they can mean a lot.



**The Ideal Prayer Before Going to Sleep**

*This prayer is part of Tita Baby’s message at Templo Sol on November 4, 2007.*

Lord, help me clean my thoughts  
and purify my heart  
and clear my conscience,  
as I receive your blessings of peace and contentment

Let my spirit be directed to all that is Godly,  
as my tired body rests,

I have faith that my spirit shall bring to my body,  
all the goodness it has gathered during the night  
which shall make my day  
a happy, creative, abundant adventure.

Good night, Lord.



*Bro. Ed and Sis. Lota Cantada’s garden - Chesapeake, Virginia*

**A Moment of Silence**

**Bro. Genauro Reyes**

Bro. Genauro Reyes of Imus, Cavite passed away on September 22, 2007. He was born January 27, 1917. He worked at Clark Air Base for 35 years until retirement. He loved to play table tennis, sent his children to the colleges of their choices, and in his soft-spoken voice was always eager to oblige when asked for personal favors.

Bro. Genauro is survived by his wife, Biana, and his four children.

Her daughter, Sis. Lulu Lorenzo, remembers her father’s last days:

“Tatay always put other people first. I asked him before he died what was hurting because I could see the pain on his face. All he said was, ‘Nothing.’”

Bro. Genauro’s family extends thanks for prayers offered in his memory.

Bro. Genauro was truly devout in our faith.





## How to Stay Healthy at Christmas

*8 Ways to Reduce Holiday Stress & Enjoy Christmas Naturally*

By Laurie Pawlik-Kienlen

**I**t's easier than you think to stay healthy at Christmas. Here's 10 tips for reducing holiday stress and staying physically, mentally and emotionally healthy at Christmas.

Staying healthy at Christmas and reducing holiday stress involves your mind, body, and soul. For some quick and easy ways to make your holidays happy, read 65 Ways to Reduce Holiday Stress.

**Stay spiritually grounded.** To stay spiritually healthy at Christmas, stay in touch with God or Buddha or the Universe – whatever grounds you. Take time to breathe deeply and say a



prayer, or just sit on a park bench and reflect on this season of your life.

**Get fresh air.** The more active you are outside, the more energy you'll have. Getting fresh air will oxygenate your brain and energize your body – so go tobogganing, sledding, skating, snowshoeing or walking. Staying healthy at Christmas means taking your kids for a hot chocolate or Slurpee after you throw snowballs or toss a Frisbee in the park.

**Plan ahead.** Do as much as you can in advance: buy Christmas gifts online, bake cookies or sauces and freeze them, write Christmas cards early. To reduce holiday stress, avoid doing everything at the last minute of your party or dinner.

**Start new traditions.** Get out of the Christmas rut by letting go of old holiday traditions and starting new ones. Instead of competing to give the “best” presents, show your love in other ways. Instead of stuffing yourself with turkey and mashed potatoes, eat slowly and lightly. Instead of fighting with your mom or brother, let go of old arguments and don't even think about starting new ones.

**Take time out.** Treat yourself – and your mom or sister – to a day at the spa. Or make a spa afternoon or evening at home; give yourselves manicures, pedicures, massages and facials in preparation for big holiday events. Pampering yourself is a great way to reduce holiday stress.

**Get enough sleep.** To stay healthy at Christmas, make sure you're getting the amount of sleep you need. Make time for naps or sleep-ins on the weekends. Be creative, and nap

in the car or at the office if you need to.

**Get enough light.** If you struggle with Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) or the winter blues, make sure you're getting enough light, even if it's indoor. Consider buying a light box and or researching natural ways to lighten the winter blues. This will reduce your holiday stress and improve your mood.

**Do what you love.** To stay healthy at Christmas, remember what you love to do all year round and make time for it. Sing, dance, read, write, walk, paint – do whatever makes you feel emotionally healthy. Let go of guilty feelings and others' expectations, and stay tuned to you.

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*Laurie Pawlik-Kienlen freelances for a variety of magazines, newspapers, & websites. Her articles may be found online at Psychology.Suite101.com.*

## What Happened to Santa?

Written by Sis. Videlfia P. Carpio when she was 8 years old.  
(From the Kennedy Elementary School Newsletter.)

**O**h, no! Santa is stuck in the chimney! Yoo hoo, reindeer, I have something for you. That's it. Come on. PUSH! PUSH! I called all the people. PUSH! PUSH! I told people in cars and vans to come to my house. Drive! PUSH! Then I called 911. PULL! PULL! Then the police asked me if I did that. I did not do that! I'm innocent! I called the airplanes. The airplanes rushed in! They broke the house and they also broke the chimney. Santa was out of the chimney. Ho-ho-ho! Here is your gift, young lady!



## Coming Sesyons

**Marso 8 – Sabado,  
5:00 p.m.**

Pag-diriwang sa anibersaryo ng pag-angat sa kalagayang relihiyon ng Institution. Gaganapin ito sa tahanan ng mga kapatid na Bro.Sixto at Sis.Norma Roman, sa 860 Colonia Road, Elizabeth, NJ 07208. (908) 354-5060

**Mayo**

Pag-diriwang at pag-alaala sa pag-silang sa laman ng KGG na Gran Superma, Dr.Rosa Pena Tongko, at gayon din ang kapanganakan sa laman ng ating Gurong Ispirital, Dr.Vicente Morales Zabab. Makipag-alam kay Bro. Jun Nibungco para sa tamang petsa at lugar. (352) 728 4107

## We Welcome Submissions!

**Send** your contributions, articles, essays, photos, and birth, birthday, and death announcements to:

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## Join Our Discussion Group!

To join Liwanag-TanglawIntl discussion group on YahooGroups online, send e-mail to Bro. Ed Nibungco at:

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