



# MISSIONARIES OF THE POOR

## CHRISTMAS NEWSLETTER 2018



# MOP MISSIONS



MARCH 30, 2018: STATION OF THE CROSS  
from KTHS to St. Ephraem's Chapel,  
Bethlehem Home.



MAY 22, 2018: Prayer and Convoca-  
tion of the Finally Professed Brothers  
in Jamaica, Africa.



JUNE 28, 2018: 5 Brothers  
took their Final Profession of  
Vows in Naga Mission, Philip-  
pines.



JULY 8, 2018: 5 Novice Brothers  
took their First Profession of  
Vows in Uganda Mission, Africa.



JUNE 23, 2018: 3 Brothers took their  
Final Profession of Vows in Kenya Mis-  
sion, AFRICA.



August 18, 2018. MOP Sisters Opening  
Ceremony of their Convent in Kampala.



# EVENTS 2018

SEPTEMBER 17, 2018: Thanksgiving Mass for the 79th BIRTHDAY of FATHER RICHARD HO LUNG, in Corpus Christi Chapel, Jamaica.



Medical & Dental Mission, in Nazareth school, Naga Mission, Philippines.

3 Newly Professed took their Vows in Naga Mission, Philippines



October 28, 2018. Special Adoration in Memory of Bros. SURESH AND MARCO.

NOVEMBER 2 - 4, 2018: LAITY RETREAT, 27 Volunteers Attended for Prayers in Mt. Tabor. Jamaica





# CHRISTMAS WITH THE POOR

BY: Kuya Joey and Ate Christy

Temecula, California



I was first introduced to Fr Joseph Ssali, regional superior of MOP Philippines, by our friend Vic Arbo in Naga City, Philippines in February 2014. Fr Joseph took me to the Divine Mercy apostolate, and to my surprise I was struck by what I saw in the children's section. I couldn't believe that there were children of all ages, also adult men and women, who were in that situation and yet were happily being taken care of by wonderful people of God, the Missionaries of the Poor Brothers who, I found out, were from different parts of the world. They volunteered to serve the Lord and made vows of poverty, chastity, obedience and free service to the poorest of the poor.



The residents were with physical disabilities, some had mental and some both mental and physical disabilities. Fr. Joseph told me the story of each child, their family situations, how they got to MOP, what the Brothers did to care for the abandoned, orphaned, neglected, unloved children of God. That same day, I made an overseas call to my wife, Christy, and told her that she had to come to MOP Naga to see for herself the life of those people who were being cared for by MOP. She told me for some reason she already started packing and putting goods in a courier package to be sent to MOP Naga mission even before I called her and told her about the situation of the residents at the apostolate. My wife and I came back to MOP Naga during Holy Week of 2014 and again in December 2014.

A Christmas party for the religious Sisters and Brothers was held at Naga mission and sponsored by MOP in December 2014. I could tell that all the religious communities who joined in that party had a good time. They deserved that happiness after all they hard work they did to serve Our Lord through their apostolates.

Thankfully, we were able to attend the Silver Jubilee celebrations of the MOP Naga mission from September 22 to 26, 2018. It was an exciting week of stirring talks and inspiring reflections of the trials and achievements of the MOP in their first 25 years in the Philippines.



## THIS CHRISTMAS

*Remember that the greatest gift you  
can ever own is not found in the shops  
or under your Christmas tree.*

*It is found in the hearts of your  
loving family and your true friends.*



For the first time we made a trip to MOP Jamaica from October 30 to November 6, 2018 to attend the retreat at Mt. Tabor. It was the best gift we ever had for our spiritual life. It was a very challenging retreat and we give thanks to Fr. Ho Lung and the Brothers for that wonderful experience. We also had a chance to work at different centers for the poor in Jamaica, and we were again amazed at what the MOP Brothers and Sisters are doing to serve Our Lord by taking care of the poorest of the poor. We were so happy to see some of the Brothers we met at the Naga mission now joyfully serving Our Lord in Jamaica.

During our retreat, Fr Ho Lung exhorted us to live a simpler life, away from the demands of modernism, and the materialistic world, and to enjoy the beauty of humility! Being with our special brothers and sisters at the centers for just a few days seems inadequate to feed our soul, but we were so grateful to the MOP Brothers for giving us the opportunity to serve the Lord through the special people who reside in all the centers.

To us, Christmas is not only giving material gifts, but also sharing our talents, helping someone in need, feeding the poor, caring for the sick, and you can fulfill all this when you volunteer to work in any of the missions of the Missionaries of the Poor.



ATE CHRISTY AND KUYA JOEY ARE MEDITATING UPON THE WORDS OF GOD DURING LAITY RETREAT IN MT. TABOR, MISSIONARIES OF THE POOR, JAMAICA.

Jesus is the reason for the season! May the spirit of Christmas be within our heart and mind. May we share our blessings with the needy and especially the poorest of the poor.

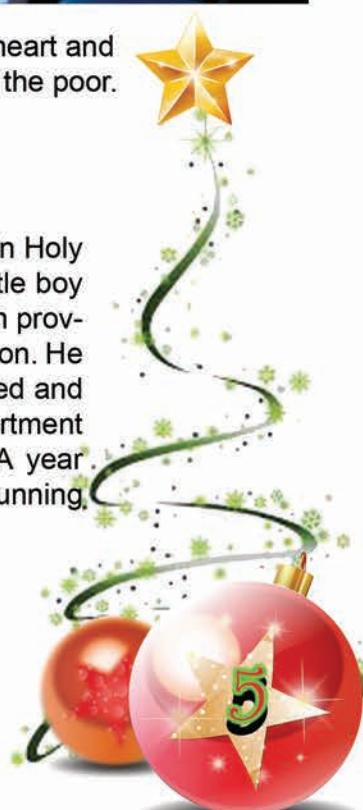
Merry Christmas and a blessed New Year to all!



**BEFORE**

**AFTER**

During our visit to MOP Naga mission in Holy Week of 2015, we met John Paul, a little boy who was found at a market in Sorsogon province, a few hours drive from Naga mission. He was found abandoned and malnourished and was brought to MOP Naga by the Department of Social Welfare and Development. A year later we came back and found him running around the children's center full of joy. TO GOD BE THE GLORY!





# Christmas

**By: Brother Joseph Ssali, MOP**  
*Novice Master*

**Dear Friends in Christ,**

When we look at our world today, we see so much suffering, hardship and pain. There is much poverty, corruption, and terrorism: a veritable moral climate change! The dark, foreboding thrall of violence, the struggles of nations and the never-ending lines of refugees underscore the suffering which is so present in our human condition. We can't help but become anxious and restless, and even when we do experience peace, our wounds and bitter memories haunt us.



Yet in the midst of this suffering and confusion we sense that there must be something more to life. The Lord comes to us again and again as a tiny baby: Christmas is here! For believers, the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem represents the victory of light over darkness, joy over sadness, hope over despair, love over hatred, peace over conflict, order over chaos, forgiveness over revenge. Indeed, his birth each year ushers a profound goodness into our world.



Celebrating Christmas - the greatest event in human history - should indeed bring us joy, but it should also remind us of the realities of the world in which we live, a world in which so many live in indescribable poverty and misery. As the scriptures attest, there was no pomp accompanying the birth of Jesus, but rather a stark simplicity and a profound peace. Likewise, our celebrations should recall the love and joy denied Jesus but offered nonetheless by a merciful God.

Christmas should make us more welcoming towards others, especially the poor and needy. Scripture reminds us "Do not neglect to offer hospitality, for by doing it some have entertained angels without knowing it" (Hebrews 13:2). Let us then make room for the hungry and neglected, even those who have gone astray, as a way of making room for Jesus at Christmas.



# *is here!*

God's mercy takes flesh in the person of Jesus and in that event we learn that God dwells among us - especially in the poor and in those on the margins of society; in many who will spend Christmas alone, many who are suffering in mind and body, and in the homeless multitudes at this most special time of the year. Christmas is a time of joy because God has not deserted us. The light shines in darkness, never to be overpowered, because the gift of Jesus' earthly life enables us also to become signs of his presence in the lives of others.

When Jesus was born, the angels appeared to the shepherds and proclaimed "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests" (Lk. 2:14). When we welcome Jesus, embrace him, hear his word, accept his teaching, and see his presence in our fellow human beings, a peace that only God can give, becomes truly ours.

May we, like Mary and Joseph, listen for God's direction in our lives and be open to God's promptings so that we may experience the presence of Christ at Christmas. May we share that Christmas gift with others daily by word and deed: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Let us heartily rejoice, but also be heartily giving, so that we might reflect the great goodness of God, and others may catch the joy we feel. Let us continue to share our lives with the poor, remembering that in loving and giving, life acquires its full meaning. God's kindness is never wasted - each act takes root in every bit of love sown.

A merry Christmas and a grace-filled New Year to you all!





**MERRY CHRISTMAS  
AND  
HAPPY NEW YEAR**



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