



## **AN EVENING FOR THE ENTIRE FAMILY**

**The Filipino Community of  
St Joan of Arc Parish  
celebration of**

### **SIMBANG GABI**

**a Philippine Christmas Festivity  
was held on  
Saturday, December 19, 2009\  
Mass at 5:30 PM**

**Reception and Program will follow in the Auditorium  
immediately after the mass. The Program featured  
Philippine Dances: Folk, Non-Native, Ethnic and Contemporary  
Special Guest: Loyola University Kapwa Cultural,  
1<sup>st</sup> Place Winner of the 2008 Battle of the Bamboo**

**Simbang Gabi (night worship) is a Philippine tradition of celebrating  
a novena of Advent Masses in preparation for Christmas. Simbang Gabi  
in the Archdiocese of Chicago is celebrated by participating parishes,  
each hosting an evening mass. This is the 11<sup>th</sup> year that  
SJA Parish has been hosting Simbang Gabi.**

**Simbang Gabi "night worship" or Misa de Gallo "mass of the rooster" is a Philippine custom of gathering for the celebration of the Eucharist in the pre-dawn. Simbang Gabi is celebrated on December 16 and culminates in the celebration of the Midnight Mass.**

**Simbang Gabi (Advent Novena Masses) is celebrated in the early morning hours, when the roosters crow to announce the coming of a new day (hence, the name Misa de Gallo) for a very practical reason: many Filipinos in the provinces are farmers or fishermen who either begin or end their work at dawn. The missionaries decided that they could gather all the people together at one time, implant Christianity in the hearts and minds of the Filipinos, preserve the Catholic faith and continue the propagation of the Gospels by integrating a distinctly Filipino custom with the needs of Catholic worship. Thus at 3:00 am, the local band play traditional Christmas carols all over town or the sacristan peal the bells and the whole town is up for Simbang Gabi. By 5:00 am the Mass is over and celebration continues with a variety of delicacies in the churchyard for everyone's pleasure. Lighted lanterns (parol) made from bamboo and paper hang on windows and decorate the church.**

**The Filipino immigrants continued this celebration in the United States. Because it's impractical to hold Simbang Gabi at dawn, local parishes celebrate in the evening. Simbang Gabi in the Archdiocese of Chicago is celebrated by participating parishes, each hosting an evening mass.**

