



# ANG BINHI

Ang Binhi" (The Seed) is the official newsletter of the Catholic Filipino Australian Chaplaincy of Brisbane

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## Feast of the Immaculate Conception

December 8th 2008, Monday  
6:30pm Rosary, 7:00pm Holy Mass  
at Our Lady of Fatima Church,  
350 Mortimer Road, Acacia Ridge



Every 8th of December is a big day in the Philippines, liturgically or spiritually, because our country is entrusted to the care and protection of the blessed Virgin Mary, the patroness of our land. Let us therefore, as Filipinos, converge at our Lady of Fatima Church in Acacia Ridge to joyfully celebrate the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception. December 8 is actually a holy day of obligation for Filipinos. We therefore put the scheduled rosary and mass in the evening to accommodate everyone after their work.

- Fr. Marce Singson

[www.bnefilaustchaplaincy.org.au](http://www.bnefilaustchaplaincy.org.au)



by Fr. Marce Singson

One of the traditional values that has remained strong and integral in Filipino life whether it be in urban or rural, whether it be in the Philippines or in Australia is the love for celebrations. We celebrate with great delight every milestone in our life birthdays, weddings, anniversaries, graduations, promotions, burials, etc. We celebrate important liturgical seasons too, like Lent and Christmas. Filipinos celebrate the longest Christmas in the world from December 16 (*simbang gabi*) until the Three Kings.

*Simbang Gabi* (Dawn mass) is unique to Filipinos because the Philippines is the only country celebrating Christmas nine days earlier than the rest of the Universal Church. The Catholic Church in the Philippines received an "indult" or a special permission from the Vatican to celebrate nine days novena mass before Christmas. The mood of the *simbang gabi* celebration is already festive, not Advent. The priest wears white vestment, not purple. Gloria is sung, and Christmas songs are also sung.

Filipinos living outside the country always bring with them this unique spiritual tradition of celebrating *simbang gabi*. And this is the main reason why I drew a timetable in the Archdiocese of Brisbane for our *simbang gabi* celebrations to be scattered in different parishes from north (Caloundra-Sunshine Coast) to south (Gold Coast), and from east (Wynnum) to west (Esk).

The challenge of inviting or bringing Filipinos to *simbang gabi* or nine-day novena mass before Christmas is to go back to the original meaning and value of the celebration as a time for preparation for Christmas. This preparation calls for a deep reflection in order to remember the mystery of the Incarnation (God became man) celebrated at Christmas. The nine days *simbang gabi* are a time to look into ourselves to see areas in our lives that need to be changed, so that we can welcome Christ more fully into our hearts. It is a time to look at the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary who was always ready for the stirring of God's grace, who promptly responded to God's call to be His witness of love and service to the community.

**DISCLAIMER:** The views expressed by the authors and contributors in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Chaplaincy. While reasonable efforts to ensure that no misleading claims are made and the contributing staff have tried to make the information as accurate as possible, they accept no responsibility for any loss or inconvenience sustained by any reader of this newsletter.

## Gifts Unwrapped

Spreading joy this Christmas need not be expensive. There are small things in life that give joy to others. As the saying goes, "perhaps some of the best gifts have no ribbons or wrappings at all." Sharing kindness and love are gifts unwrapped and without ribbons. They are tied with the joy-givers' heart strings. I am referring to acts of thoughtfulness like listening, praising, encouraging, sharing time, showing care and concern, smiling and laughing.

In this world, there are worriers who add to the gloom in life. Fortunately, there are also joy-givers around us who share joyful news as well as warm encouragement to others. Joy-givers overflow with joy no matter what the circumstances are since real joy comes from that deep bubbling up spirit inside us. Many of us refer to worriers as pessimists people who forget to laugh. On the other hand, joy givers are commonly known as optimists people who laugh to forget. Especially at this difficult times, of global financial crisis, we need joy givers to refresh our battered spirit. We need people who will exert their strength to pull up others from the dark pits of discouragement. In other words, we do not need people who are pushing us down. We need people who can encourage us to enjoy life. We need people to excite us and sustain our zest for life.

In Proverbs 11:25 of the Holy Bible, we find the following statement of King Solomon: "He who refreshes others will himself be refreshed." One psychiatrist who was consulted by a person as to what to do since he was on the verge of nervous breakdown gave a simple answer: "Look for somebody who is in need and do something to help that person." Probably the psychiatrist is a Bible-believing Christian who applies the Word of God in his medical practice.

Here is a story that I am sure will boost the morale especially those who do not have the power and the wealth of other people. This is a story that is quoted in one of the best selling books of Barbara Johnson, an American lady who has been lifting the spirit of millions of people through her inspiring collections of stories about the life experiences of other people. Living life joyfully that's what her books are all about.

This is the story about a tax assessor who visited a poor minister, to determine the amount of taxes the latter would have to pay. The conversation goes as follows:

"I am wealthy," replied the minister.  
"List your possessions, please," the assessor instructed.  
"First, I have everlasting life." (John 3:16)  
"Second, I have a mansion in heaven." (John 14:2)  
"Third, I have peace that passeth understanding." (Philippians 4:7)  
"Fourth, I have joy unspeakable." (1 Peter 1:8)  
"Fifth, I have divine love that never faileth." (1 Corinthians 13:8)  
"Sixth, I have a faithful, pious wife." (Proverbs 31:10)  
"Seventh, I have healthy, happy, obedient children." (Exodus 20:12)  
"Eighth, I have true, loyal friends." (Proverbs 18:24)  
"Ninth, I have songs in the night." (Psalms 42:8)  
"Tenth, I have a crown of life." (James 1:12)  
"Eleventh, I have a Savior, Jesus Christ, who supplies all my needs." (Philippians 4:19)  
"The tax assessor closed his book and said, "Truly you are a very rich man, but your property is not subject to taxation."

**Merry Christmas to all and hopefully a Masaganang Bagong Taon sa lahat!**

## Where strength comes from

It's a wonderful feeling when there is someone or something guiding you all the time. Working as coordinator for the chaplaincy is gradually changing my life more particularly in the development and growth of my faith. The commitment, the will to help and compassion to others are the things that bring me to a closer understanding of God's relevance in life. I thank God and the people around me. The return is overwhelming as the community is supporting and working together for the benefit of the people.

I learned that the most basic of all values in all modern societies is people helping people and, in the process, helping themselves with joy. People involved in community service have a range of reasons but for most, serving community is a thoughtful act and unselfish work for the welfare of others. Some people may view community service as a hassle or a sacrifice but others may view it as a "good thing to do." Giving back to the community should be something people should volunteer to do willingly. As volunteers, we act out of our own free will. We expect nothing in return nor get compensation for services rendered nor gain any personal interest.

The time I am writing this column is the Feast of Christ the King. A wonderful time to remind and exercise our worthiness and love to others, an opportunity to think of simple things that we are capable of doing like helping others, visiting and comforting the sick and people in need of sympathy. Many sick friends in the community need comfort and assistance, prayers are effective ways to help them carry the loads they are encountering. Too often, people's attitude is: 'If only I'd known earlier I'd helped', later we realise it is too late. We, Christians believe that our human illness requires more: a Saviour.

November 30 is the first Sunday of Advent. Amidst the overshadowing material preparations for Christmas, we also begin our spiritual preparation for Christ's coming by way of the Advent season. This is a time for us to rejoice, renew our hope and reflect upon the period of waiting for our Saviour's coming at Bethlehem. As we await his coming into our lives, let's celebrate Christmas with confidence that He will always give us strength to be present in our hearts.

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One Sunday morning at the church, someone approached and asked me why religious people are not the same. Some lay persons can give free services while others are not. She's jobless, a single mother, has strong faith and she badly needed her house to be blessed. The service has been done and of course she paid the cost as agreed. She has all the reasons to cry but it's hard to pretend. Decision starts and ends from our own hearts and mind, if it is against our will why accept a deal and later on regret. We lose nothing if we ask, for we all know the Lord listens to our pleas and hears the cry of the poor.

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What a wonderful wedding ceremony I attended during the weekend. A true love story of a young couple which I thought happens only on movies and books nowadays. True love makes a big difference in real life. After eight years of relationship, one has to be wounded and one has to sacrifice to carry on and be together for the rest of their lives. The power of love prevails again as the two gifted with strong faith, became one when they state their personal vows in the sacred bond of Holy Matrimony. A true gift to their parents which they now inherit. As Matthew said "A sound tree cannot bear bad fruit nor a diseased tree produce good fruit". Congratulations to the parents and newly wed children for staying on their faith, continue serving the Lord and help building our community.

*"Almighty Father, we thank you for the strength that you have given us to do good work. Wherever this strength comes from, we follow after God's heart."*

# NEWS around the Brisbane Chaplaincy

## BRISBANE CHAPLAINCY NIGHT



CFACB Coordinator Efren Altez, announced the winners while Mabel Duncan (Secretary) assisted in the raffle draw.

The chaplaincy once again attributed the success of the annual fundraising to the continuing support of the Filipino community. Our sincere thanks to the people who attended the Sept. 6<sup>th</sup> event, contributed raffle prizes, organized foods and entertainment and to those who helped in selling raffle tickets. The winners of raffle draw are: 1. First prize: Ticket No. 2203 - Edith Wilson of Clear Island Waters (return air fare ticket to the Philippines donated by Best Friends Travel), 2. Second prize: Ticket No. 1819 - Josie Gow of Southport (return air fare ticket to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), 3. Third prize: Ticket No. 2705 - Larry Aujero of Mt. Tarampa Qld (return air fare ticket to Melbourne). Various consolation prizes were also given during the night.

## ROSARY CRUSADE



Youths offering flowers to Our Lady of Fatima

On October 31<sup>st</sup>, the culmination of the month of the Holy Rosary was celebrated at the Our Lady of Fatima Church in Acacia Ridge. Filipinos and few other ethnic communities gathered and attended to pray the rosary together as a community and celebrated Holy Mass for our Patroness, the Blessed Virgin Mary. The conclusion was highlighted by the involvement of the children who lead the rosary. The Our Lady of Fatima Choir in association with local parish community organized the yearly devotion. The group in turn thanked all devotees who participated and offered flowers to Blessed Virgin Mary.

## ALL SOUL'S DAY

All Soul's Day Mass is an annual event of the chaplaincy. As individuals and community believers, Filipinos once again gathered at Our Lady of Fatima Church on November 1<sup>st</sup> to pray for our departed ones. It was reminded by the chaplain during the homily that we pray not only for those family members and relatives who passed away but also for those poor souls in purgatory who have forgotten to pray for by their loved ones. The Sorrowful Mystery was recited before the Mass for all souls in purgatory who are still suffering while preparing themselves for their entrance into heaven.

**Why pray for the dead?** Father Marce prepared a booklet as guideline for the traditional 9-day novena for the dead that would last for at least 30 minutes. This is in response to complaints from some Australians and some Filipinos that time for prayers were too long. Please visit chaplaincy website to download a copy.

## ARCHDIOCESE OF BRISBANE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Recently, the Archdiocese of Brisbane offered financial assistance of any projects to the youth of the ethnic communities. Fr Marce gave the opportunity of this assistance to the Youth of Christ who in turn submitted their planned project to the archdiocese. May our Almighty Father continually bless our youth so this grant can be used to their different activities more especially in developing spiritual life and improving the vision of the groups' worship.

## FSW SPIRITUAL ASSISTANCE

With more new Filipino Skilled Workers arriving in Australia, the chaplaincy has accommodated Mr Vic Ablan, a Philippine government Labor Attache to organize a visit and talk to all Filipinos with 457 visa. Through the Brisbane Consulate Office, he visited the Ipswich community during its regular monthly mass on October 25 at Eastern Heights and other parts of Brisbane. Plans and programs are being studied to implement and help stop the moral issues affecting Filipinos in the community.

## NEW AUSSIES

Father Marce Singson is now a real Aussie. He took his oath as an Australian during the ceremony held at Logan Entertainment Centre on October 1st. In a different citizenship ceremony in Melbourne, our former chaplain Fr Dom Flores SVD finally decided to become an Australian forever on September 30th. Both have now many privileges like we do, they were also endowed with some tasks to do - to participate in nation and people building. Congratulations Fr Marce and Fr Dom!

## PRAYERS ASKED

For the recently deceased:  
Elvira Tumaneng, Magdalena Udarbe.  
For those who are unwell: Loy Castaneda, Lilia Manalac,  
and to all who we at the chaplaincy are not aware of.

## News from Ipswich Sub-Chaplaincy



The above photo shows the new Ipswich Chaplaincy officers. (Front row) left to right: Nena Drew (Treasurer), Fr. Marce Singson, (Chaplain) and Leony Salter (Vice Coordinator). (Back row) left to right: Thelma Woodman (Coordinator), Elve Cottrell (Asst. Treasurer) and Eden Rolfs (Secretary)



### The new Ipswich Chaplaincy Choir Members

Front row – left to right: Jill Pollinori, Carmen Smith, Minda Muirhead, Leony Salter, Babie Graham, Tiffany Brady, Eden Rolf, Rowena Sabuero, Danilo Ligsay and Thelma Woodman. Back row – left to right: Benedict Dela Paz III, George Nicanor, Marvin Hassan and Fred Abarra. Nena Drew, Elve Cottrell and Norma Damn are not in the photo above because they were busy in the church when the picture was taken. Our new chaplaincy choir leaders are Fred Abarra and Tiffany Brady

Last Saturday night, November 22, 2008, the Ipswich Chaplaincy hosted for the first time a Live Band Christmas Concert led by Mr Fred Abarra and all the fabulous singers who performed for the night & also our very own choir singers Tiffany Brady & Rowena Sabuero. It was a fantastic night followed by a disco. Filipinos, Australians and all the other ethnic communities loved dancing and couldn't get enough!

On behalf of The Catholic Filipino Australian Chaplaincy of Ipswich (CFACI), I would like to thank all the sponsors especially Jean Ester R Mills, owner of Best Friend in Calamvale who donated two door prizes; also Eden Rolfs, Elve Cottrell, Nena Drew, Carmen Smith and Helen Hale. I also would like to thank everyone who donated for our carolings: Eden Rolfs, Babie Hekie, Minda Muirhead, Jessie Mielat, Romel Ferares, Selbino Bonto, Rico Bremon, Lando Abaho, Resty Alcaraz, Abel Picadizo, Jaime Yco, Jessie Lapid, Cristopher Rodriguez, Jun Basco, Ziggy & Lynlyn Baron, Jean Ester Mills, Leony Salter, Michael, Simplicio, Arman, Alfon, Blues, Victor, Marlon, Charlie, Domer and Joel.

The proceeds of this concert go towards purchasing our musical equipment for the Ipswich Chaplaincy Choir.

Without the valuable and generous support of everyone, our fund raising for our Charity Fund would not be a success. Maraming Salamat sa inyong lahat and God Bless!



Performers at the Ipswich Christmas concert, November 22. Photo from left to right: Helen Hale, Elve Cottrell, Thelma Woodman, Jill Pollinori and Babie Graham.

Hatred paralyses life; love releases it.  
Hatred confuses life; love harmonises it.  
Hatred darkens life; love illumines it.

- Dr Martin Luther King Jr

Ang Binhi Newsletter is published every three months - it's our way of reaching out and keeping you updated with current happenings and future community events in the chaplaincy. We encourage everyone to share their thoughts, experiences and activities by sending us a short article to [mail@bnfilaustchaplaincy.org.au](mailto:mail@bnfilaustchaplaincy.org.au). You never know, what you may be keeping could be a treasure to others. For more details please visit our website at [www.bnfilaustchaplaincy.org.au](http://www.bnfilaustchaplaincy.org.au)

By: Sally Petterson



*Caboolture Chaplaincy officers and friends during the Brisbane Chaplaincy Night.*

The Caboolture Chaplaincy Officers had the pleasure of having a "light moments" evening with our beloved Chaplain, Fr Marce on 30 August 2008. Jo Camilleri had kindly offered her home for the event. There were lots of fun and giggles as we shared our favourite Filipino dishes and each one shared unforgettable experiences. It was truly an enjoyable evening.

The Chaplaincy Officers also had the opportunity to attend the Brisbane Chaplaincy Night on 6 September 2008. The Caboolture delegation for the event was of a significant number. Thanks to Jo Camilleri, Bing May, Ludy Fuller and Rosie Newell for inviting our "kababayans" to support the annual event of the Brisbane Chaplaincy.

Susan Hughes, the hardworking Secretary of the Chaplaincy organised a picnic on 26 October 2008 to celebrate her son's 20<sup>th</sup> birthday. Jo, Ludy and yours truly attended the event. We were able to catch up with our "kababayans" attending the picnic and brief them of upcoming Chaplaincy events.

Lisa Moore, the dedicated Musical Director of the Caboolture Choir also organised a Christmas Party on 22 November 2008. Jo, Ludy and yours truly were there spreading the Chaplaincy news and danced the night away.

On a more serious note, the Caboolture Chaplaincy donated \$1,000 to help in the building of the "Fr Hannibal Chapel and Children's Centre" in Paranaque, Metro Manila. (Documentation of the project, for example, location site, structural designs, its purpose and other details were submitted to the Chaplaincy).

The 'Fr Hannibal Project' is intended to accommodate the children coming from the Paranaque to Pasay squatter areas who attend the 'Sunday Apostolate' run by the Rogationist Fathers. It also intends to provide education programs to these children including high school and college scholarships to disadvantaged but deserving students.

The Chaplaincy also supported the 4EB Filipino Radio Program by registering as a financial member of the 4EB-FM 98 station. The 4EB is the only Filipino Radio Program in Southeast Queensland. It is indeed a worthy cause to keep the Filipino culture alive in the great Southeast.

We thank all the Filipinos in the Caboolture area for supporting the Chaplaincy. Without their continuing support, the Chaplaincy will not be what it is today! In God we believe, Amen.

By: Mary Ann Boehme



## The Catholic Filipino Australian Chaplaincy Gold Coast Dance Group

The famous *ko-e-a-las* from exclusive girls high school in the Gold Coast has been performing at various community events in Queensland by popular demand. Their own version of *A Do Do* and *Kakabog-kabog* is very popular. They are also well known for their own choreography of Filipino folk dance medley. The dance group coordinator and teacher is Nelly Barretto and members are Chaplaincy officers, choir members and parishioners. Watch out for the group's forthcoming performance of Latin medley at *Paskong Pinoy* on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> Dec from 10am - 4pm Casey Hall Sacred Heart Parish, Fairway Drive Clear Island Waters. For details contact Mary Ann Boehme 0416331233 or email: catholicfilipinoaustralianchapl@yahoo.com.au

## THE 5 FINGER PRAYER

1. Your thumb is nearest you. So begin your prayers by praying for those closest to you. They are the easiest to remember. To pray for our loved ones is, as C. S. Lewis once said, a 'sweet duty.'
2. The next finger is the pointing finger. Pray for those who teach, instruct and heal. This includes teachers, doctors, and ministers. They need support and wisdom in pointing others in the right direction. Keep them in your prayers.
3. The next finger is the tallest finger. It reminds us of our leaders. Pray for the president, leaders in business and industry, and administrators. These people shape our nation and guide public opinion. They need God's guidance.
4. The fourth finger is our ring finger. Surprising to many is the fact that this is our weakest finger, as any piano teacher will testify. It should remind us to pray for those who are weak, in trouble or in pain. They need your prayers day and night. You cannot pray too much for them.
5. And lastly comes our little finger - the smallest finger of all which is where we should place ourselves in relation to God and others. As the Bible says, 'The least shall be the greatest among you.' Your pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself. By the time you have prayed for the other four groups, your own needs will be put into proper perspective and you will be able to pray for yourself more effectively.

# MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT MOVEMENT

By Iggy & Nor Quinto

**It was Cooooo!!!!!!  
Simply awesome.**



That's the best way to describe Saturday's night MEM's gathering. It was nice to see old faces, new faces, young faces and even an apo's face. It was a pleasant big turnout that was very uplifting and heartwarming. Sabi nga ni Sr Necy, "*buhay na buhay ang ating samahan*".

The Family Novena and the Holy Mass went without a hitch until Art Pagaduan (new coordinator) made his speech that rock the church with his now famous 6 C's (coordinator, chaplaincy, Canossa, cool, core group, choir). Art & Rose team includes Telly & Nory Velante as Assistant Coordinators, Iggy & Nor Quinto as Secretaries and Ric & Fe Ambatali as Treasurers. Other members started adding their own version of the "C" words. It might look and sound funny but Art was able to effectively convey his message this way to all the members, to participate and continuously support our movement towards achieving its goal of supporting and enriching couple's marriages.

Fellowship and light dinner that followed looks more like a fiesta than anything else. Nandiyan na yon kainan, tawanan, joking and catching up on the latest happenings. And not to forget the latest *siete, siete*. Everybody just seems to be having fun and enjoyment renewing and rekindling their friendship that towards the end, the light had to be switched off to break up the party as it was getting late and time to go home. Ayaw pang mag-uwian.

The new MEM officers had committed to keep the flame of our movement burning. We know that: "*It's a long, long journey so stay by my side. When I walk through the storm. You'll be my guide, be my guide*"

So, together with your husband or wife, you can depend on the MEM's movement to be your **guide** in your marriage life.

We would like to wholeheartedly thank those who attended the occasion to show their support. Special thank you to Lorie and Joe, our MEM choir, Fr. Marce, Sr. Necy, Efren and Nora, Raul and Lina for the projector, and the couples who lead the rosary prayers, mass readers and the offerers. To all those that have forgotten, a big thank you.

For those unable to attend, we missed your presence and we hope to see you in our forthcoming activities:



## Retreat and Christmas Party/Family Gathering

6th December 2008 (Saturday) at Lay Canossian Centre, 169 17 Mile Rocks Road, Oxley  
Time: 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM - Retreat with Fr. Brian Taylor, followed by Holy Mass & Renewal of Wedding Vows. (Homily on Sacrament of Marriage)

Christmas party includes MEM Karaoke Idol fund raising contest, exchange gift (\$20 worth per family), and \$20 per family to cover food and related expenses.

**Christmas Caroling** (house-to-house by appointment) between the period of 13th December to 24th December 2008. All MEM members are asked to participate.

**February 14, 2009 Valentine's Party and MEM Anniversary**  
Chinese Community Centre,  
80 Nemies Road, Runcorn

## Upcoming Events

**Dec. 8, 6:30pm**, Feast of Immaculate Concepcion, Rosary and Mass at Our Lady of Fatima Church, Acacia Ridge.

**Dec. 13, 7:30pm**, Paskong Pinoy at Guardian Angels Parish Hall, 198 Bay Terrace, Wynnum, Qld. 4178

### SIMBANG GABI:

**Dec. 16, 7pm** at St Bernadine's Church, Vergulde St. Regents Park

**Dec. 17, 7pm** at St. Carthage Church, Beaconsfield Terrace, Gordon Park

**Dec. 18, 7:30pm** at St Mark's Church, Cnr Lilac & Eucalypt St, Inala

**Dec. 19, 7pm** at Our Lady of the Rosary, 61 Edmund St, Caloundra

**Dec. 20, 7pm** at Our Lady of Fatima Church, 350 Mortimer St. Acacia Ridge

**Dec. 21, 11:00am, Christmas Mass at St James Church, 165 Old Cleveland Rd. Coorparoo**

**Dec. 22, 7pm** at Sacred Heart Church, Fairway Drive, Clear Island Waters, Gold Coast

**Dec. 23, 7pm** at St Flannan's Church, Handford cor. Beams Road, Zillmere

**Dec. 24, 8pm** at St. Mel's Church, 88 Ipswich St, Esk 4312 and

Christmas Midnight Mass at St Matthew's Church, 172-180 Bryants Road, Cornubia 4130

On 21<sup>st</sup> December, please be reminded that this date should not be missed as the chaplaincy has organised a special Christmas celebration at St. James Church, Coorparoo. Truly Filipino, our Christmas celebration will start with "Panuluyan" (The Inn), a re-enactment of the Holy Family's journey to Bethlehem and portrays the lack of hospitality they encountered along the way, singing carols, followed by Holy Mass and fellowship. This yearly celebration is an occasion to reminisce and appreciate the idea of being together for another year within the chaplaincy and to welcome the birth of our saviour.

**4EB Pinoy Radio, Brisbane 98.1FM**  
**Now playing your favourite Christmas songs.**  
**Tuesdays 9:15-10:15AM**  
**Send your greetings to 0420983188**  
**<http://filipinoradiobrisbane.blogspot.com>**