

Kapitkamay

Shinjo Catholic Newsletter



雪の聖母マリア

Every 2nd Sunday of February is our Lady of the Snow Festival at Shinjo Catholic Church. We usually hold this event, starting on the eve of Saturday by praying the rosary around 7 pm inside the church. Followed by a procession to the enshrined Lady of the Snow outside, which is beautifully lined with candlelight. The flames light up the candles at night and the flickering orange illumination in the white landscape creates a fantastic atmosphere that gives you a warm feeling, making you forget the cold weather. After the prayer, everyone offers flowers to the Virgin Mary on the altar in the snow.

Last February 11-12, was our 11th annual celebration. We are thankful that wonderful weather has blessed us, unlike some years ago where snow was scarce and we just had to make a small altar in front of the church.

We are also grateful to Hon. Bishop Paul Daisuke Narui S.V.D. for gracing us with his presence and traveling all the way from Niigata just to celebrate this occasion. Rev. Fr. Sri Waluyo for constantly helping us grow spiritually closer to God by visiting us and praying with us every 1st, 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month. Sr. Uchihara, for coming all the way from Yamagata to share the Liturgy of the word every 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month. Through her kindness and hard work, people around the community have understood our faith and some have even joined us in celebrating the Mass.

We are also pleased with all the Filipinos, Vietnamese and Japanese brethren who come and pray with us every Sunday as we celebrate the Holy Mass.

The Lady of the Snow celebration actually started when Fr. Kenji Honma was still our presiding priest. And it was his vision and encouragement that drove us to pursue the continuation of this event. Today we are happy that we can celebrate our very own event here in Shinjo while appreciating the opportunity to live in an area where it snows. With the help of all the staff members, we make this celebration happen every year, enjoying the sumptuous meal prepared by Eles Kutsuzawa, Marlene Horigome, Aida Igarashi and other members.

Hardships and misunderstandings have tried to get into us, but with the grace of God, we have overcome past trials and we stand stronger and united in God. The Christian life is not without trials, but God provides the grace necessary for enduring them. And because of God's abundant goodness, kindness, and love for His children, we don't have to feel discouraged or walk away from His plan. With divine help, we can shift our attention from our situation to God.



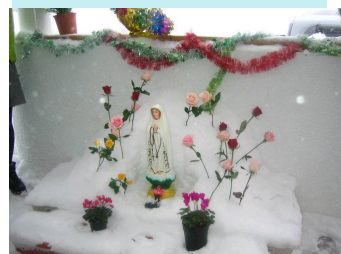
Lady of the Snow



Mrs. Saito Etsuko,
Mrs Sasahara
Keiko, and Sr.
Uchihara Wasa



Huyen Family



The 1st 雪の聖母マリア by Fr. Kenji Honma



On February 12, the Shinjo Catholic Church was blessed with the attendance of its parishioners on the sixth Sunday in ordinary time and was also graced by the visit of Hon. Bp. Paul Daisuke Narui, S.V.D., who celebrated the Holy Mass along with Rev. Fr. Sri Waluyo on this day.

Before Mass, a video montage of the recent earthquake in Turkey and Syria on February 6 was shown and the congregants reflected on the great damage and were encouraged to include the lives lost in this sad event into their prayers. As of this writing, the death toll from the earthquake was at more than 33,000 and about 1.3 million people were displaced as a result of their homes being destroyed. In today's Holy Mass, we learned that in the midst of all the suffering that people had to experience in disasters and calamities such as this one, we go back to the words of the late Pope Benedict XVI in reference to the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami who mentioned that in spite all these, God is by our side. We are also encouraged to pray for those who are going through troubles in their lives.

The Holy Mass was followed by a talk between Bishop Narui and the parishioners with the focus on improving the church in Shinjo, involving the local community and recognizing our calling as Christians to spread the Good News. One of the points discussed is the organizing of various events during spring or summer such as barbecue and picnic gatherings where people outside the faith can participate and find new friends in their local community as well as welcoming visitors from throughout the diocese and beyond to share our faith and be able to support each other as a part of the larger community in the Niigata diocese.

Parishioners celebrating their birthdays on the month of February received blessings from Bishop Narui in today's Holy Mass.

After the Mass and the talk with the Bishop, a gathering with the church community for the February birthday celebrants took place. With the blessing of Fr. Waluyo, people have been catching up over food and showing care and thoughtfulness for each other in a community we have all been praying to continue growing through God's Grace.

By Jon Ivan Pinsan



My name is Joshi Hashimi, the President of Shinjo Catholic Church. As for me, this is not an easy job. This is a big responsibility, since I didn't know what my duties and responsibilities would be, especially to the community. But I have to take the risk, as well as the task that was given to me. It is really a big challenge for me. From the start, trial and error as well. Then, the Covid 19 spread and the masses were suspended and there was no time to meet and talk to anyone. But now that the pandemic is still there and nobody knows when it will end, we have to see to it that our faith and hope in Almighty God is still intact in our hearts. This year, the masses continue and almost every Sunday we have masses in our community. The parishioners start to come to attend mass. Hoping and praying for more parishioners to come.

Thank you so much especially to our Parish Priest Fr. Waluyo and also Sr. Uchihara for their untiring support and to all the officers and staff of the community. God bless us all.

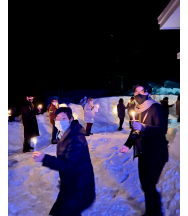
By Joshi Hashimi



The Rosary and the lighting of candles



The Procession



Prayers at the Altar in the Snow



Offering of Flowers



Pictorial After the Prayers





Dinner and Breakfast



February 12th Sunday Mass





After the Mass Pictorials



Conversation with Bp. Narui



Gathering and small celebration





Farewells



Psalm 94:18

When I thought, "My foot is slipping," your
steadfast love, O LORD, held me up.

HOW PRECIOUS TO ME ARE
YOUR THOUGHTS, GOD!
PSALM 139:17