

The story tells of a man, close to the age of 65, called Ebenezer Scrooge. He is as 'kiam siap' as ever, unwilling to share, unwilling to give and therefore unwilling to receive, never without thinking that strings lie behind that gift. On the fateful night of Christmas Eve, a ghost appeared to him, named the Ghost of Christmas Past. The Ghost showed Scrooge how he spent his Christmases over his whole life, from a child being abandoned, to a young adult like us, joyous in the local bar, to the man he became at last, stingy and selfish. It had agonised Scrooge. The night ended, and the next came. The Ghost of Christmas Present appeared. The Ghost showed him how he is despised even within his own family, which was explained by his rejection in coming to the party at his nephew. The Ghost then showed him the family of his worker, which suffered in poverty and a sick child that is left with no longer than a few years without treatment. The worker, despite how badly paid and treated, still stands up for him when his wife tries to talk bad about him. Scrooge, seeing this agony, begged the Ghost to let nothing happen to the child, for he is innocent. Obviously, nothing could be done. The next night came. Scrooge feared this Ghost like no other. He knew he deserves death. He begged the Ghost to let him go, for he has learnt his mistakes and will make amendments for it. However, it was no use and a grave showed his death date which was eventually on that same Christmas. Boom, he fell onto the floor of his apartment. He woke up, he realised that the Ghosts had done it all within one night and it was still Christmas. He changed miraculously, was grateful for the first time after a few decades, from selfish to selfless. He gave the largest turkey to a poor family, hugged his housekeeper, sang carols, and most importantly, went to spend Christmas with his family. That sick child, thanks to Scrooge, received treatment and survived to become a fulfilling adult.

Don't worry! As long as we have Christ with us, within us, we won't become Scrooge. Just as the story, the Ghost can be used as a figure for Christ (the Holy Ghost), for He will constantly remind us of the good and pains of the world, and most important of all, why are we here on earth, our Mission. When we lose it, the Ghost will come and pull us back. That Ghost is forever protecting us like no other for we are His children, we are His Body and Blood and we are His.

God has brought us once again to this Advent season and is reminding about the Spirit of Christmas which is the birth of Christ and the salvation of the world. The Ghost appeared to Scrooge as Christ appeared to us, reminding of the joy of the world, of the true meaning of Christmas. It also showed, when we need Christ the most, He will appear to us in a way unfathomable to us.

So what does this mean for youths today?

More and more youths today are following the footsteps of Scrooge, they from innocent, joyful children and become selfish, scrupulous adults. From my limited experience, I began to find out that there is an increasing number of youths who are pessimistic, thinking that many people are out to no good, having an ulterior motive. They constantly think that when a person does a good deed to you, that person must have something to gain. Indeed, if a person is doing it out of good will, he or she will gain something even richer than that of Warren Buffet's wealth. That is happiness, conscience and love, which are things that even the richest of the rich cannot purchase. This pessimistic wall must be torn down. I believe, if you are not out to harm another, why would others harm you? Do unto others as you wish others do unto you. Each year we celebrate Christmas which serves to remind us of the reason why Christ came to this world.

As Catholic youths, we need to learn how to place Christ into the centre of our heart, as our compass, guiding our lives into the direction of righteousness. There is still time for us, to play a part in being Christ's hand to lead others into the Light. What does Christmas mean to you?

- Sunset Mass**
5.30pm
- Rosary**
4.40pm
- Sunday Masses**
8.30am (Mandarin)
11.00am (English)
2.00pm (Cantonese) Chapel, 3rd Floor
4.20pm (English)
- Weekday Masses**
7.20am
5.30pm

- Intercessory Prayer**
7.15pm (Eng, Thu, Adoration Chapel)
- Infant Jesus Devotions**
5.30pm (Thu, followed by Mass)
4.00pm (Sun, followed by Mass)
- Divine Mercy Devotions**
Fri, after 5.30pm Mass
Sun, 12.30pm (Mandarin)

- Sion Adorers - Holy Hour**
7.45pm - 8.45pm (Sat, Adoration Chapel)
- Hour of Mercy (Adoration Chapel)**
3.00pm (Daily)

- Counselling at SPP**
Family Life Society Counselling every
Monday 11.00am - 2.00pm and 6.30pm -
9.00pm. Call 6382 0688 for appointment

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sts.petempaul@pacific.net.sg
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We welcome literary contributions to The Apostles. Please email your submission to spptheapostles@gmail.com. You can also download The Apostles at: <http://sppchurch.org.sg/downloads.html>

The Lighter side of The Apostles

the beagle with yellow slippers



Luke 1:39-45 At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear! But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Blessed is she who has believed that what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished!"

ADVENT PENITENTIAL SERVICES
Appended is the schedule for the City District Advent Penitential Services. All sessions will begin at 8.00 pm.

- Thu 17 Dec 09 (English)**
- Sat 19 Dec 09 (Mandarin, 1.30pm):**
Church of Sts Peter & Paul
- Fri 18 Dec 09:**
Church of St Michael
- Mon 21 Dec 09:**
Church of St Teresa

Parish Priest
Rev Fr Anslem Phang OCD
Asst Parish Priest
Rev Fr Joseph Koh OCD
Provincial-Delegate
Rev Fr Thomas Lim OCD
Parish Secretary
Ms Martha Loh, Ms Jannie Lui

Church Donations
Please make you cheque payable to :
(i) Church Of Sts Peter & Paul -for contributions/donations for on-going maintenance of our Church or parish projects and Mass offerings;
(ii) Church Of SPP Building Fund - for contributions/donations to our Church building fund;
(iii) Carmelite Fathers for contributions/donations to the Carmelite Friars (SPP), OCD Missions, Frairs Formation.

Information is correct at time of publication.



- INFANT JESUS CHRISTMAS NOVENA 2009**
- Our SPP Church will be celebrating the annual IJ Christmas Novena from 16 Dec to 24 Dec 09. The programme is as follows. Mass will follow immediately after each novena session. All are welcome.
- Wed 16 Dec: 5.30 pm**
- Shepherd of God
 - Thu 17 Dec: 5.30 pm**
- Preacher of the Word
 - Fri 18 Dec: 5.30 pm**
- Guardian of the Truth & Leader of the Community
 - Sat 19 Dec: 5.00 pm**
- Comforter of the Sick & Dying
 - Sun 20 Dec: 4.00 pm**
- Baptizer of the Catechumen
 - Mon 21 Dec: 5.30 pm**
- Minister for Confession & Repentant Sinners
 - Tue 22 Dec: 5.30 pm**
- Supporter of Holy Matrimony
 - Wed 23 Dec: 5.30 pm**
- Celebrant of the Holy Eucharist
 - Thu 24 Dec: 5.00 pm**
- Promoter of the Infant Jesus (No Mass)
 - Fri 25 Dec: 11.00am**
- Christmas Day & Baptism of Infants

Pauline Catechism
Finish Strong

http://www.tangle.com/view_video?viewkey=636b82f2760f6870af12

How many times do we fall on our spiritual journey? Each time we fall, do we have the strength and hope to get back up or do we give up easily? Hope that this video clip will inspire you to persevere in your pursuit of holiness and success.



YOUR BODY, MY BODY
Father Anselm Phang

One of the talks at the recent Kenosis Living Spring retreat was on meditation. The participants were invited to slow down their pace of life and allow the body, mind and spirit to experience rest. During the session, everyone came into contact with peace; recharge and lucidness. The Lord blessed and healed them.

The Lord knows the limitations of our human body but he also knows the mystery of it. The Scriptural texts for this Advent Sunday of love require us to be grateful for the limitations and to appreciate the mystery of the human body.

For instance, when we pray or meditate, it is possible to be distracted by other things in life. Straightaway, we label our prayer as distracted prayer and we can feel lousy about it. Actually, these distractions are landmarks of our prayer. It's like you didn't know you were in the vicinity of somewhere you had wanted to go, until you see that landmark.

Similarly, these distractions remind you that you have arrived at a level of prayerfulness and it is time to go deeper. People used to perceive distractions as limitations to their prayer and so they stop there; hence failing to discover the mystery of prayer. "Brothers and sisters:

When Christ came into the world, he said: "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but a body you prepared for me; in holocausts and sin offerings you took no delight. Then I said, 'As is written of me in the scroll, behold, I come to do your will, O God.'

"First he says, "Sacrifices and offerings, holocausts and sin offerings, you neither desired nor delighted in." These are offered according to the law. Then he says, "Behold, I come to do your will."

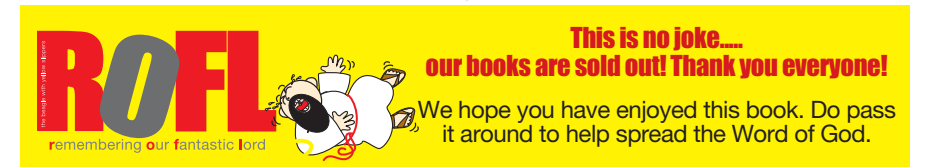
He takes away the first to establish the second. By this "will", we have been consecrated through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." (Heb 10:5-10)

From the Letter to the Hebrews 10: 5-10, the author reminds us that the all important will was accomplished through the body of Jesus Christ.

We are not to despise the body or worse, we are not to hate the limitations of this body. We remember how God's love for us was embodied by the Christ incarnated in flesh. And God's plan of salvation was revealed through the ultimate offering of Christ. So what has this plan got to do with me?

The Gospel (Luke 1:39-45) today features some of the most humble people on earth. Elizabeth, Zechariah and Mary were appropriate instruments in this plan of salvation. We can emulate these humble instruments and request to be humble if we sincerely wish to be part of this wonderful plan.

In life, we cannot afford to just cope with its challenges. We have to harness the limitations of our bodies and ride on the power of God's love. Our bodies are made whole in God. Let us make our bodies into the dwelling places of God by doing the will of God. Let us listen to him with our bodies.



**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
(20 DECEMBER 2009)**

READINGS: Sunday Missal (Year C): Pg 42
Responsorial Psalm: "God of hosts, bring us back; Let your face shine on us and we shall be saved."
Prayers of the Faithful: Page 45

Readings for the Week:

Mon 21 Dec – Sat 26 Dec 09
 Mon : Song 2: 8-14/Lk 1 39-45
 Tue : Sam 1: 24-28/Lk 1: 46-56
 Wed : Mal 3: 1-4,23-24/Lk 57-66
 Thu : 2 Sam 7: 1-5,8-12,14,16/Lk 1: 67-79
 Fri : Christmas Day (refer to Sunday Missal)
 Sat : Ac 6: 8-10; 7:54-59/Mt 10: 17-22

REFLECTION

'Of all women, you are the blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.' 'Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.' Mary recognises the undwelling presence of God in her life with great faith. Her 'yes' to God is an affirmation of her tremendous faith in believing that God will not fail her despite the uncertainty of her future. Her obedience to God, transforms her fears and anxiety to God's peace and joy in her heart.

Do we recognise the undwelling presence of God in our life? Or do we feel that God is always so distant when we are challenged with uncertainties and difficult moments? Blessed are you if you see and recognise the Lord with the eyes of faith like Mary. God intervenes and reveals himself in the simplicity of our life when we often do not recognise because our lives are too complicated and our society too complex.

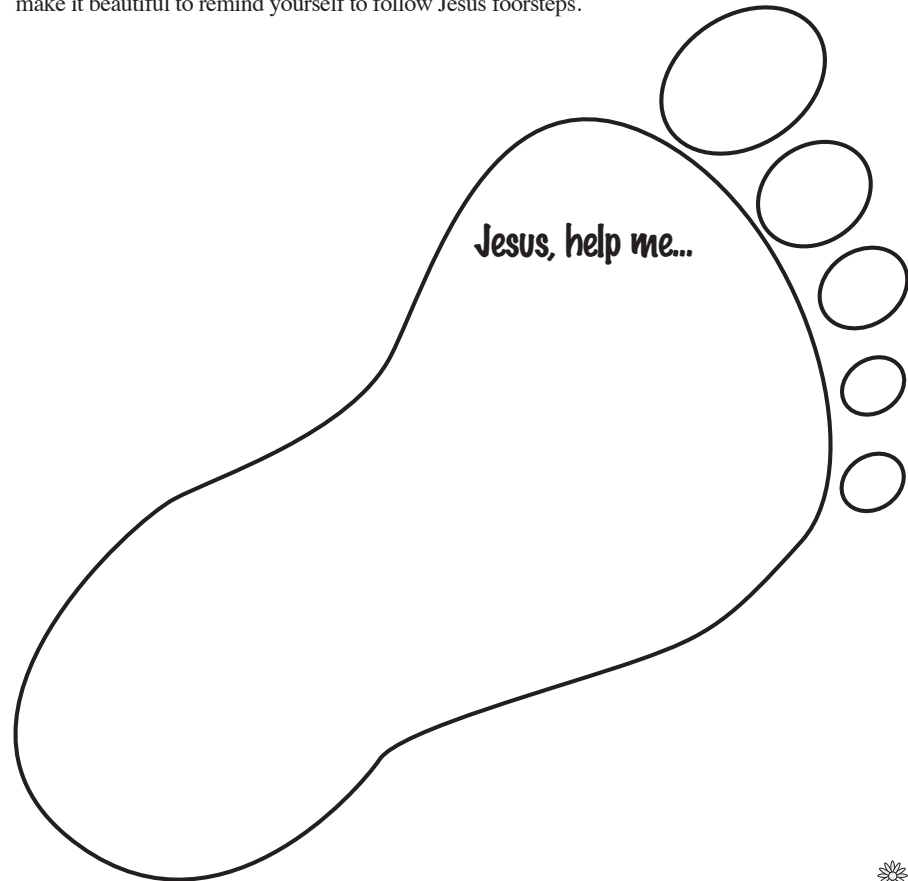
How often do we obey and accept the will of God with joy and peace? Many a times we are so full of fear and useless anxiety that we let our thoughts and own desire hinder God to intervene and make decision for us. We are so afraid to move out of our comfort zones because of the uncertainty of the changes that we have to make in our lives if we are to follow the will of God.

Let us pray with joyful hope in seeking the undwelling presence of God more earnestly in the simplicity of our life? Let not our hearts be like rocks that are harden more and more with materialism and modern technologies that we fail to create a space for God in our lives.

In this last week of advent, as we get into the busy season, may we encounter God with joy, peace and hope with the true advent faith in our soul, heart and mind and to share these gifts of Love and Peace with our family members, our community especially the less fortunate in our society and all around us. - *Lectors Ministry*

Kids Corner - Let us learn from Mary our Mother and her obedience to God ☐ I am the handmaid of the Lord, let what you said be done to me.☐

Write on this footprint, what would you like to offer to follow Jesus footsteps. For example: Jesus, help me to be obedient and not make my parents angry. You may want to color the footprint and make it beautiful to remind yourself to follow Jesus footsteps.



the little flower

A 'Holy Day' - written by Y.C. Tan

An old millionaire was going to die. Before he died, he said to his beautiful young wife, "Please promise me that you'll arrange the most elaborate funeral for me, bury me in the most exclusive and high class cemetery, erect a grand monument for me, place a full page obituary in the newspaper to inform everyone that a rich man has died and most importantly, I want you to put all my money into the casket with me because I need them even after I die." His wife wept bitterly and promised him the moon and the stars. Shortly after the old millionaire's last breath, the young widow, called a reputable funeral provider and arranged a funeral according to the old millionaire's wish. Barely after the burial, the beautiful young widow called her best friend to plan for a trip to Paris for a shopping spree. However, her best friend said mockingly, "You've obediently put all that old man's money into the casket with him, haven't you? Can you afford to shop with me?" Then, the young widow replied, "Yes, I've obediently banked in all his cash into my account and put a big fat cheque into his casket. He'll get all his cash if he walks to the nearest bank to cash it!"

It was another Saturday but this time, there wasn't any work and there was no Breaking of the Word. In other words, I was free to do whatever I wanted! I thought of making it a 'holier' day! The itinerary of my little 'holy day' started with a simple breakfast with my husband. At 11am, I attended the Memorial Requiem Mass for the late Rev Fr. John Mary Chin, though I didn't have the slightest clue of who he was! After which, I attended the Hour of Mercy at 3pm, followed by Sunset Mass at 5:30pm and my day ended at 8:45pm with the Sion Adorers.

Attending a Memorial Requiem Mass was something new so I was a little lost and even took the wrong Missal Book. Still, it was an unforgettable experience because I've learnt so much from the late Rev Fr. John Mary Chin's spiritual life story and was touched by his complete trust, obedience and faith in God. May he rest in peace.

The Sunset Mass was a beautiful one, not just the splash of purple here and there but I felt so privileged to be able to witness with the Church parish, the beginning of a new church liturgical year with the First Sunday of Advent. It's like marking a new milestone in my journey of faith. Amazing!

The Gospel prophesizes that we will be saved and stand in confidence before Him. But we have to "Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man." (Luke 21:36) The words 'vigilant', 'strength' and 'pray' caught my attention.

Undoubtedly, I could spot such qualities of vigilance, strength and unwavering prayers in late Rev Fr. John Mary Chin's spiritual life and also in many of our Lord's obedient and faithful followers, including those whom I saw praying so fervently during certain devotion time. I pray that our Advent journey will begin with a fresh resolution to walk in the paths of our Lord and for a readiness to set aside 'prime time' for daily prayer.

Events in our Parish

MASSES FOR CHRISTMAS - The following are the times for Christmas in our SPP Church -

- Thu 24 Dec:**
9.00 pm (Mandarin)
Midnight (English)
- Caroling in Church at 11.00 pm.
- Fri 25 Dec:**
8.30 am (Mandarin)
11.00 am (English). **NO Evening Mass.**

WATERCOLOUR ART EXHIBITION - Welcome to "Encounters" - an Art Exhibition displaying recent artworks and efforts of 19 students. The opening ceremony will be held on Sat 19 Dec 09 at 3.00 pm by our parish priest, Fr Anselm Phang, OCD. Exhibition timing: Sat 19 Dec - 1.00 pm to 7.00 pm; Sun 20 Dec '09, 10.00 am to 7.00 pm. All are welcome.

SPP ENGLISH PRAYER GROUP - Prayer for Priests, Religious, Seminarians and New Aspirants on 17 Dec 09 (Thu) at 7.15pm to 9.00pm at the Adoration Chapel. There will be NO Intercessory Prayer on 24th. Dec. (Christmas Eve) and 31 Dec 09, (New Year's Eve). Intercessory Prayer will resume on 7 Jan '10 (Thu) at 7.15pm to 9.00pm.

MASSES ON NEW YEAR'S DAY - Mass times at our SPP Church on Fri 1 Jan 2010 will be at 8.30 am (M) and 11.00 am (E). NO evening Mass. We celebrate the Solemnity of the BVM Mother of God, on that day.

MASS FOR THE FAITHFUL DEPARTED - As Christmas Day falls on Fri 25 Dec 09, the mass for the faithful departed will be celebrated the following week, that is, on Wed 30 Dec 09.

CCD - Registration for 2010 catechism classes has been extended to 31 Dec 2009. You may get the application from from the Church secretary. This registration is only applicable to NEW students.

DAILY PRAYER - Our SPP Church prays the Lauds led by the Carmelite Friars every weekday morning after the 7.20 am mass. All are welcome.

INFANT BAPTISM - will be held at the 11.00 am Mass on Christmas Day, Fri 25 Dec 09. A briefing session for parents and godparents will be conducted on Fri 18 Dec 09 at 7.30 pm in Meeting Room 8 (2nd storey).

COUNSELLING SERVICES - Family Life Society (FLS) is making its counselling services available at our SPP Church every Monday from 11.00 am to 2.00 pm and from 6.30 pm to 9.00 pm. Lay Counsellors trained by FLS will be available to provide a listening ear and help to those in need. Parishioners may call 6382 0688 (weekdays from 9.00 am to 5.00 pm) to make an appointment. Website: <http://www.familylife.sg/>

We also welcome literary contributions to our weekly newsletter (articles, observations, book reviews, etc). Please email to spptheapostles@gmail.com. Thank you.

Events around our Parish

CHRISTMAS RESIDENTIAL RETREAT - "After studying both the theory and practice of leadership for more than 35 years, I have found that Jesus of Nazareth is the greatest leadership role model of all time." Ken Blanchard, Co-Founder of Lead Like Jesus and Co-Author of The One Minute Manager. Join the "Lead Like Jesus Christmas Residential Retreat" which will be held at LifeSprings Canossian Spirituality Center, 100 Jalan Merbok from Sat/Sun 19-20 Dec 09 (with Sunday Mass). Contributions: Residential (air-con room twin-sharing): \$260/person. Residential (fan single room): \$ 250/person. Meals & refreshments will be provided. For registration, call 64662178 or email: lifsprng@singnet.com.sg Website: http://www.life_springscanossian.com/ Registration by 13 Dec 09 (max 40 participants). Contact Brenda at lifsprng@singnet.com.sg or Tel: 6466 2178 for registration pack.

CATHOLICISM 101 - Why is scripture important to Catholics? Why is Jesus important? Wondering where to get an introduction to Catholic Teaching? SPI will be offering an introductory level course 'Catholicism 101' designed for those who are curious about Catholic belief. It will be held at 55 Waterloo Street, Level 8 Auditorium from 7.30 pm - 9.30 pm on Thursdays, beginning 4 Feb 2010. Call 68583011 for more details. Application forms are now available at our SPP Church Secretariat. Registration closes 14 Jan 2010.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION COURSE (MPC) - For couples intending to get married - First Quarter Course starts 28 Feb 2010. Allocation of places is on a first-come-first-served basis. Application forms obtainable in church office or website: www.catholic.org.sg/mpc. Enquiries: John & Joan @ 9848 2864 or email: marthasohsk@yahoo.com.

ME GIFT - Shopping for gifts for your spouse, parents, married siblings and best friends? ME Singapore has a gift idea for married couples - the gift of the Marriage Encounter Programme. Enjoy the gift of a 44-hour enrichment programme that has changed the lives of many couples who've attended it. You can present to your loves ones a ME gift voucher for them to "redeem" at any time within the next 12 months. From now till 31 Dec 09, the vouchers are offered at \$25 each - a 50% savings from the usual \$50 to cover the registration fee. Visit www.marriage-encounter-sg.org for more information and testimonials from "satisfied customers". To buy a gift voucher, contact ME Registration couple at 9670 5390 or register@marriage-encounter-sg.org.

CULTURAL EXHIBITION 2009 - Welcome! Free Admission! China-Singapore Religious and Cultural Exhibition 2009 Suntec City Convention Centre (6th floor) 16-22 Dec 09 (10.30 am. to 8.30 pm. daily) Exhibitions! Seminars! Performances! Art! Calligraphy! And more! For details: www.china-singapore2009.com

so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to the others.

Roman 12:5

同样，我们众人在基督内，也都是一个身体，彼此之间，每个都是肢体。
罗马书 12:5

The Church of Saints Peter & Paul Thanksgiving Mass



**Hurry!!
Get your
tickets
TODAY!**

31 December 2009
1730hrs
reflection / healing / mass
2015hrs
dinner / countdown
Venue
Church of Sts Peter & Paul

Dinner price is at \$40 per person *
\$30 for youths 16 years old and below

For more information and ticket sales, please call or email to:

Emily: 9127 7266,
email: emily_yeo_86@yahoo.com.sg

OR Tricia is 9823 3922,
email: tricia_yeo@hotmail.com



What is Christmas without a little party? Well, look no further as ARISE brings you Christmas with the Stars. Come 26 Dec, 6.00pm-10.00pm, our Praise & Worship room will be transformed into a glamorous stage for any of you aspiring performers to show us your skills in our starry talent show. For the rest of you, come decked as a star and you may just win a prize for your efforts. There will also be an exciting gift exchange and a fabulous dinner banquet under the stars. Tickets are priced at \$5 and may be purchased from Marie 9106 4427 Tricia 9823 3922 or any of our ARISE committee members. A yuletide celebration with food, presents, and tons of fun, Christmas with the Stars will be a party not to be missed! (Do bring a gift valued at \$5 for the gift exchange if you are coming!)