



# Filipino Christmas Songs

Christmas for Filipinos isn't complete without those beloved Filipino Christmas songs. In the Philippines, Christmas is a much anticipated holiday. Everyone looks forward to Christmas. It's the time where the people are most generous. Many events, parties and happenings occur during Christmas time and it is the most festive holiday of the entire year. During earlier months, children look forward to December wherein they get a vacation from school and get presents from their Ninongs and Ninangs (Godmothers and Godfathers). As early as October, Christmas lights are being strewn over every house, on every street. Houses are adorned with Christmas decorations. Christmas songs blast from the speakers of each house and people don't complain about the racket because they, themselves, enjoy the songs.

The Philippines is mostly inhabited by Catholics and consequently, Filipino Christmas songs have spiritual and religious connotations.

On December 16, Christmas celebrations reach an all time high. December 16 is the day when Simbang Gabi (Mass at Dawn) starts. Filipinos wake up at 3 in the morning and go to mass. It goes on for nine days until the Christmas mass. Legend says that if one attends every single Simbang Gabi, they get to wish and the wish will come true. That's why early in the morning, we hear Christmas songs being sang by choirs in nearby parishes and chapels. December 16 also marks the day when children go caroling. It is a tradition in the Philippines to prepare coins because every night, children knock on your door and sing Christmas songs with their maracas and tambourines. Kids go from door to door singing and the atmosphere becomes joyous and festive.

Starting October, Christmas songs are being sung in TV shows, Christmas themed movies come out in the Philippines and everyone starts to shop for Christmas.

There are two types of Christmas songs in the Philippines: the traditional Filipino Christmas songs and the Popular Filipino Christmas songs. Traditional songs are being sung by choirs and children. These are the songs that have transcended time and were created by generations before but are still alive until today. Here are some of those traditional songs:

o Ang Pasko ay Sumapit (Christmas has Come): This song was created by Levi Celerio. It was originally written by Vicente Rubi, a celebrated Cebuano poet, on April 1933 in the Visayan dialect but was translated to Tagalog, the Filipino language. This song is a classic among Filipinos and it speaks of celebrating on Christmas. It encourages people to sing on Christmas, to sing those wonderful songs to spread love because Christ has saved us from sin and has given us salvation to enjoy eternal life with Christ. This song has a catchy tune and is very religious in nature.

o Sa May Bahay ang Aming Bati (Roughly translated to 'Our greetings are addressed to your household'): This is the most popular caroling song for children. This is usually the first song sung by children when they knock on your door. The song's message expresses warm greetings to the Filipino households. It says that if love reigns in everyone's hearts, every single day will be like Christmas. The song also speaks of asking for Aguinaldo. Aguinaldo is a Spanish word that was adapted by Filipinos during the Spanish Occupation in the Philippines. It means a Christmas gift or a Christmas present. When children ask for Aguinaldo, people usually give them money, sweets or treats.

o Mano Po, Ninong, Mano Po, Ninang: This song speaks about pagmamano. Pagmamano is a Filipino sign of respect to elders. This is when a child or a young person touches an elder's hand to his or her forehead. This song speaks of this tradition of giving respect during Christmas day.

o Pasko na naman (It's Christmas again): This song was composed by Felipe De Leon and the song's lyrics was written by Levi Celerio. This is a favorite among carolers. The song is about how time flies and it is once again Christmas. The song says that it was just like yesterday that we celebrated last Christmas and now, it is once again that time of year.

o Sa Paskong Darating (On the Coming Christmas): This traditional Christmas songs conveys the message that Christmas is for children. The singer says that on the Christmas to come, he will give children the things they want most like apples, grape, candies and chocolates.

o Simbang Gabi (Mass at Dawn): This song describes the Simbang Gabi or the nine day novena wherein people go to mass at dawn. It says that the Simbang Gabi is when Christmas truly begins.

There are other popular Christmas songs in the Philippines. These songs are popularized by recent artists and they often speak of love or they convey a romantic denotation. Some examples of popular Filipino Christmas songs are as follows:

o Christmas in Our Hearts: This is an English Christmas song but it was popularized by Jose Mari Chan, a celebrated singer in the Philippines. It was written by Rina Caniza and the singer himself. It speaks of the spirit of Christmas. An excerpt of the song goes, "Let's sing Merry Christmas, and a Happy Holiday. This season may we never forget the love we have for Jesus. Let Him be the one to guide us as another new year starts. And may the spirit of Christmas be always on our hearts."

o Pasko na Sinta Ko (It's Christmas, my love): This is a heart breaking Christmas song written by Francis M. Dandan and sung by Gary Valenciano in 1976. The lyrics of the song describes someone longing for their love during Christmas time. The speaker of this song talks about being left behind and finding no joy in Christmas now that his or her loved one is gone.

o Sana Ngayong Pasko (I Hope this Christmas): This song talks about hoping to see their loved one on Christmas. The author of the song talks about hoping that her loved one will remember her.

Singing at Christmas has been a tradition in the Philippine culture for a long time and its songs reflect the country's beliefs and ways.

ref.: <http://www.christmas-songs.net/international-christmas-music/filipino.aspx>

Look more here: [www.Christmas.FilipinoTraditions.ph](http://www.Christmas.FilipinoTraditions.ph)