

## Seventh Filipino Ministry Annual Gala

The Filipino Ministry of the Archdiocese of San Francisco held its Seventh Annual Gala last October 15 at the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption in San Francisco. **“Heal the World”** was the theme chosen for the event to honor the Blessed Virgin who appeared in Fatima, Portugal a century ago and imparted her message of peace and healing to the world through the three shepherd children. It was also meant as a message of hope for unity in diversity across the United States and around the world. More than 400 enthusiastic guests filled the Cathedral’s Patrons Hall led by Archbishop Salvatore J. Cordileone and Bishop William J. Justice. The guests included several priests, deacons, parish lay leaders and representatives from various ethnic groups in the Archdiocese along with civic and community leaders from San Francisco, San Mateo and Marin County.

The Annual Gala promotes fellowship with all the faithful in the Archdiocese of San Francisco and brings to the forefront the unique gifts of faith Filipinos bring to the local church, vibrantly expressed in their cultural celebrations and devotional practices. This year’s event featured the talent of the **“Filipino Ministry Youth and Young Adult Choral Group”** and the **“Barangay Folk Dancers.”** The program showcased the Filipinos’ love for music and dancing and how their cultural festivities are interwoven in their Catholic faith.



*Photo above shows the members of the Filipino Ministry Consultative Board and Advisory*

# 10<sup>th</sup> Simbang Gabi Commissioning and Simbang Gabi Schedule

The Filipino Ministry of the Archdiocese of San Francisco is gearing up in preparation for the **10<sup>th</sup> *Simbang Gabi* Commissioning** on December 5, 2017 at 7:30 pm at the Cathedral of St. Mary of the Assumption.

His Eminence, Cardinal William Levada will be the principal celebrant for Mass. The Commissioning Mass ushers in the ***Simbang Gabi*** (Novena of Masses) in preparation for Christmas in more than 40 parishes in the Archdiocese of San Francisco. The Commissioning service is a 'sending forth' blessing to spread the light of Christ through prayerful anticipation of His coming at Christmas. Parish leaders are commissioned to be the light in their respective parish and community. At the Commissioning, parish leaders (carrying an array of colorful lanterns called "parol" in the vernacular), are presented to the principal celebrant and they are asked to reaffirm their readiness to spread the light in their community. The parol lanterns are then blessed by the principal celebrant. Reception and fellowship follow immediately after the Mass.

*Simbang Gabi* is one of the best-loved and most celebrated religious traditions in the Philippines. It is a time of spiritual preparation for Christmas and is an effective way of countering the commercialization of Christmas. *Simbang Gabi* also relationships among family members and parishioners and serves to unify parishes in the Archdiocese.

The programs and activities of the Filipino Ministry are developed and implemented by the Filipino Ministry Consultative Board (FMCB) under the leadership of Fr. Eugene Tungol, Vicar for Filipinos. The Advisory team is responsible for oversight of the implementation of the various programs.