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A group of nearly a dozen children put on a re-enactment of Mary and Joseph's quest for a place for Jesus to be born during the tradition of "Las Posadas" at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church on Wednesday. From left, (front row) Kodie Kirk, Maci Morgan, Eva Garcia, Tilarrosa Medellin, Madison Isham, Modesto Schonchin and Arlene Schonchin; (back row) Ezekiel Little, Elaine Tillery, Annette Sargent and Ximenna Ricocornejo.

## Children celebrate diversity with Las Posadas celebration

BY GLEN BROCKENBUSH

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On first glance, it was a celebration of the true meaning of Christmas.

But more than that, Wednesday's traditional "Las Posadas" celebration at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church was a celebration of diversity and the idea of welcoming people regardless of background.

A group of 11 children portrayed a re-enactment of the nativity and Joseph and Mary's quest to find a place to give birth to their child, as is part of the Latin American Las Posadas tradition. As the children walked around the church holding flashlight candles, they knocked on doors and sang songs in Spanish about the plight of Mary, having walked for miles and looking for a place to rest and give birth to her son. Just as Mary and Joseph were finally welcomed in the manger after having been turned away everywhere else, the children were finally let inside the church.

Inside the church, more songs followed, some in Spanish, some in English. The children, along with their parents and other parishioners, prayed the Rosary, again dividing the prayers up between English and Spanish. In between songs

and prayers, Chila Chavez, the coordinator for the event, would interject with prayer intentions and reminders about why they were doing what they were.

The prayer service also touched on the idea of accepting people from different socioeconomic backgrounds. As children and parents alike sang "The Little Drummer Boy," the lyric of "I am a poor boy, too" served as a reminder that while we may obsess over material items and wealth, Jesus was not born into great affluence.

"Jesus came into this world not in silver or gold," Chavez said. "He came in a manger, a stable."

It finished with a singing of "Silent Night," with a verse each sung in English, Spanish and Korean. Afterward, the children processed out of the church and finished the night in traditional Las Posadas fashion, with food and a piñata. Chavez said it was important to not only teach children the importance of the Christmas story, but to teach them about cultural tolerance and diversity.

"We are sharing cultures. We have people from Mexico, Guatemala, Panama and other places," she said. "This is how we celebrate it in Mexico and we want to share it with everyone."

Glen Brockenbush/staff  
Madison Isham and Modesto Schonchin took on the roles of Mary and Joseph, respectively, during Wednesday's Las Posadas celebration and re-enactment at Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church.

