

**PRESIDENT FERDINAND ROMUALDEZ MARCOS JR.'s
SPEECH AT THE CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY**

Kalayaan Grounds, Malacañang
November 25, 2023

[00:00:01]

Good evening, everyone. Welcome to the Palace for our Christmas celebration, which, unfortunately, the weather did not cooperate with us. But we're Filipinos and we do not let a little rain dampen our Christmas spirit. [applause]

And how can we deny now that it is Christmas? We are talking about lighting a Christmas Tree. We are giving the awards, recognition for the parol makers. And what really just caps it off is Jo Mari Chan here singing his Christmas songs. [applause]

Christmas in the Philippines --- we have gained the reputation around the world for celebrating Christmas with more fervor than most other countries. And I think that that is a good thing because I think all of us Filipinos, we take Christmas as a time for reflection and a time to spend with your friends, your family, your loved ones and of course, to watch the children because as far as I'm concerned, Christmas is really for the children. And so we watch the children.

And it brings us the innocence that they bring to these festivities really. The expression I'm tempted to use is it blows out the cobwebs in your brain and in your heart and gives you a fresh start for the next year.

So, I'm very, very happy to welcome you all here and to get the Christmas the formal— kasi Pilipinas September pa lang may Christmas carol na sa radyo. But with the formal start of the Yuletide season, and I suppose what is left now is for me to wish you all a very Merry Christmas. [applause]

[00:02:15]
