

DC:SD. P:150
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These few days of the Chinese New Year are about the only time in the year when HK takes a break, when the pace of life and work slackens, and the shops close down. Traffic will be heavy, of course, but it's with duty of another kind than service to the dollar. There's an atmosphere - feeling about this time that is light, gay, bright - what many Europeans or Americans associate with Christmastime perhaps. And I don't think that association is accidental at all. For both festivals celebrate birth, something new, a fresh start - and there's always an excitement about that. Because it's life, newly released, or unfettered for a while from the burden of work, able to expand in the enjoyment of relationships with people, the new spring. ^{I've suggested before} I ~~suggested a few days ago~~ that there's plenty in the customs, traditions and symbolism of this present festival that a Christian can find full of a Christ-meaning as well: and in our prayers these days we ought to reflect on this presence of the spirit of Christ, and to thank God with joy for the joy around us. He is, in the most full sense, our Father: we are His family; through the new life He's given us, brothers & sisters together and with Christ our elder brother. In our communion together we can find the fullest expression of the family celebration and filial duty that is so important a part of this holiday festival. But since it is a holiday, song is perhaps ^a more appropriate prayer than mere talk from me - so here's one, for this new-spring holiday: 'Springtime', by Sr Irene O'Connor

MUSIC
PRAYERS

Praise and thanksgiving to God our Father has a particular relevance for these festival days, and so I'd like to finish out today's Monday Prayers with a hymn of praise which is too long for the usual prayer-in-music time in this programme: today, in joy, we can listen in prayerful praise of God to Flor Peter "Exulta Festiva"