The Sto. Niño has presided over the San Beda scene—
and the lives of all Bedans—since 1904.
In that year, after a petition by the
students to be allowed to organize
themselves into a confraternity of the
Sto. Niño, the image of the Holy Child of
Prague, widely reputed to have
beneficent miraculous powers,
was enshrined in the
Chapel of Our Lady of
Montserrat, the
first chapel of San
Beda on Calle
Tanduay and later in
the Abbey Church at
Mendiola, as patron
of all Bedans.
A Short History of the Devotion to the Sto. Niño de Praga in San Beda College (Manila and Alabang)

On December 13, 1903, the Benedictine Community in Manila agreed to establish the Confraternity of the Infant Jesus for the students of the Colegio de San Beda. The following day the students presented to the Rector a formal petition for the establishment of a Confraternity.

In January 1904 the hymn *O Niño Dios* was composed by Fr. Jaime Bofill, OSB, who taught music at the Colegio. On January 17, 1904, the monks and students celebrated the feast of the Sto. Niño at San Beda for the first time. Since no statue was available, they used a framed picture of the Holy Child.

On November 4, 1904, the Community installed a wooden image of the Sto. Niño de Praga at the Benedictine Chapel in Tanduay. Maximo Vicente, a known sculptor who maintained a *taller* for religious images and paraphernalia in Quiapo, made this image of Sto. Niño. The story is told that the same image is a copy of the image venerated in the Church of Salesian Sisters in Barcelona, Spain.

On December 28, 1904, the Archbishop of Manila, Archbishop Jeremias Harty, gave permission for the establishment of the Confraternity of Sto. Niño de Praga. The Colegio held the first procession of the Sto. Niño with the image made by Maximo Vicente on January 20, 1905. Its route was from the Colegio de San Beda in Arlegui to the house of the Benedictine Community on Balmes Street.

The Benedictine Priory in Manila gained the dignity of an Abbey in 1924, and in 1926 the Abbey and the Colegio moved to new buildings on Mendiola Street. Since then, the shrine of Sto. Niño de Praga has been in the Abbey Church of Our Lady of Montserrat.

Since 1975, the Benedictine Abbey celebrates the Feast of the Sto. Niño de Praga as a Solemnity on the last Sunday of January. The San Beda College Alabang school Community celebrates the same Feast in the third week of January. Students, alumni, administrators, faculty and staff pay homage to Jesus through festive activities and games, dances and music, exhibitions and renditions.

*(Article from Rev. Fr. Anselm M. Manalastas, OSB. Photos from Mr. Kendrick Dominic Yu, blog site: lasagraexpedicion.wordpress.com.)*