



SOPHIA 100th ANNIVERSARY  
 SOPHIA JUNIOR COLLEGE 40th ANNIVERSARY  
 SOPHIA SCHOOL OF SOCIAL WELFARE 50th ANNIVERSARY



**All Sophians' Festival** **No. 35**

1. What is the All Sophians' Festival?

The All Sophians' Festival (below, ASF) is the homecoming of Sophia University alumni held every year on the last Sunday in May (both alumni and current students are known as "Sophians," a term derived from the university's English name). In 2013, which marks the centenary of the university's founding, the festival will be held on Sunday, 26 May. ASF is the most important event organized by the Sophia Alumni Association. An opportunity for alumni to gather and renew ties, it is also open to faculty and staff, current students, Sophians' families and friends, prospective applicants, and people from the neighborhood.



Food booths and the open-air main stage



Model of Angkor Wat made out of 30,000 blocks

booths and a flea market. An organizing committee made up of volunteers among the alumni takes the lead in planning and running these events. In some years there are other events as well—some quite unique—such as an opportunity for current students to interact with alumni active in industry and technology, a "yurukon" get-together (an opportunity for graduates interested in finding a spouse to meet each other in an unpressured fashion), and demonstration classes for prospective applicants by alumni who are well-known preparatory school teachers.

2. ASF: Origins and development

On the day of the festival, following a memorial Mass and the general meeting of the Sophia Alumni Association, most alumni gather in classrooms set aside for the different faculties, departments, and clubs. There are a variety of other events as well: special lectures, open-air performances, entertainment for children, campus tours, and food



Children also enjoying the gathering (1974)



Every year as the finale Sophians link arms to sing the school song

ASF was first held 18 May 1974, a Saturday. Prior to this time alumni gatherings had been



A favorite event—former President William Currie playing the piano

held regularly under the names Sophia Alumni General Meeting and Sophia Alumni Open Meeting. People came to realize, however, that the then 21,000 graduates included some 1,000 couples. It was decided to expand the gathering to include families, and to reflect the new orientation the name was changed to All Sophians' Festival. The circle of "Sophians" thereafter continued to be enlarged to incorporate current students and their families and faculty and staff as well. From 1981 the day for the annual gathering came to be set as the last Sunday in May. In 1981 the university also adopted the custom of officially celebrating the fiftieth, twenty-fifth, and fifteenth anniversary of each class's graduation, and that ceremony is held the same day as ASF.

### 3. All Sophians' Christmas

A homecoming event appropriate to a Catholic university is the All Sophians' Christmas (ASC). Held for the first time in 2008, it is a relatively new celebration, but as with ASF, it is open to people living nearby as well as alumni, current students, faculty, and staff. It begins with a memorial Mass, followed by the ceremonial light-up of the campus illumination by the Catholic Students Association, Christmas carols by the Sophia Choir, a candle service, and a party in the cafeteria in the basement of Building No. 9.

At the fifth ASC, held 7 December 2012, there was as well a booth to collect contributions to help Sophia students directly affected by the East Japan earthquake. The three hundred some attendees could also enjoy student performances of a cappella singing and jazz and a magic show.



At the fourth ASC students from the affiliated Seibo College of Nursing participated wearing their white uniforms (2011)