



MESSAGE TO THE 2014 ALL ATENEOS CONVENTION

August 22, 2014

Dear Ateneo Alumni,

Christ's peace!

My warmest congratulations to the Ateneo Alumni Association of North America (AAANA) for organizing the 11th All-Ateneo Alumni Convention, a gathering and reunion of friends old and new! I greet you all on this happy occasion from the city of Davao. Unfortunately, I cannot be with you this year. This month, ADDU is hosting two major international meetings that nearly coincide with the Alumni Association and require my presence: the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities of Asia Pacific (AJCU-AP), which I chair, and the Association of Southeast and East Asian Catholic Colleges and Universities (ASEACCU). Fr. Gabriel Gonzales, S.J., the ADDU Academic Vice President, will represent Ateneo de Davao University at your homecoming. You will discover, he is a worthy representative.

May your gathering of Ateneans on the occasion of the 200th anniversary of the restoration of the Society of Jesus remind us of the special apostolic mission the Jesuits were called to when they were restored - the service of Mindanao.

Last December 26-28, after the Zamboanga siege, the Jesuits of the Philippine Province met in Davao to deliberate on how it might better serve Mindanao. The results included "action points" whose implementation needs not only Jesuits but co-workers coming from Christian, Muslim and Indigenous Peoples communities. Among these action points: the formation of leaders for Mindanao and the common good; the use of our Jesuit universities and institutions as conveners and consensus builders; dialoging for peace through inter-faith and intra-faith initiatives; rejecting an economy that excludes and developing initiatives for the creation of wealth and its equitable distribution to Mindanawons; appropriating and integrating Ignatian spirituality for social transformation; supporting social movements and advocacies for social justice and the common good; advocating cultural transformation-and-regeneration in Mindanao.

Perhaps, your coming together in New York, your renewal of friendships with one another, and your recollection of your old dreams, may inspire you to contribute to our great desires today for a Mindanao blessed by durable peace. This includes our hopes for a more meaningful autonomous region for Muslim Filipinos in the Bangsamoro. With God's grace, help to transition from yesterday's injustice, war and poverty to tomorrow's justice, peace and prosperity – not only in Mindanao and Sulu, but in the entire Philippines.

Help us also to preserve God's creation in Mindanao from unhampered exploitation and wanton destruction. Help us to continue as a university to learn the truth, teach the truth, and serve others in truth.

Meanwhile, enjoy one another's company – ad majorem Dei gloriam!

Sincerely in our Lord,

Rev. Fr. Joel E. Tabora, SJ
President
Ateneo de Davao University