

PRESS RELEASE

Philippine Embassy, Canberra

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“11th PASKO SA CANBERRA” CELEBRATED BY THE FILIPINO COMMUNITY

10 December 2014-The Filipino Community in Canberra successfully held the 11th *Pasko sa Canberra*, the annual Philippine Christmas Festival in Canberra on Sunday, 07 December 2014.

Ms. Cecilia Flores, President of the Filipino Community Council of the ACT (FCCACT), officially opened the event. In her welcome remarks, she thanked the Filipino Community for always supporting the event and the Philippine Embassy for its hospitality in regularly providing the venue for the festivities.

Ambassador Belen F. Anota, in her inspirational message, expressed sincere thanks and appreciation to those who continuously extended generous support and assistance to the victims of natural calamities in the Philippines, and encouraged everyone to continuously extend help for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of the affected areas. She called for unity among all *kababayans*, in the true spirit of Christmas, and expressed hope for a better tomorrow.

The Ambassador also encouraged all eligible overseas voters to register for overseas voting at the Embassy premises, where a registration booth was set up for the duration of *Pasko sa Canberra*. Overseas voter registration will run until 31 October 2015 at the Philippine Embassy.

The Ambassador’s message was followed by the reading of the True Decalogue of Apolinario Mabini, as the event also commemorated Mabini’s 150th Birth Anniversary. The ten (10) verses of the Decalogue were read by the Embassy teens and kids namely: Gabriel San Agustin, Samantha Bulos, Heidi Penaflores, Sophia Pilapil, Giean Estole, Kaithlyn Senturias, Hazell Marang, Luis Pilapil, Kelsy Senturias and Abbey Marie De Fiesta. They wore red scarves over their white tops to symbolize Mabini as the Brains of the Philippine Revolution.

Visitors were able to enjoy Filipino cuisine while witnessing the cultural performances. The Rondanihan group serenaded everyone with Christmas carols, which was followed by the various folk music and dances as well as solo singing performances of Brian Lorenz and Jasmin Henry both from Sydney .

Another participation of the Embassy, which captivated the audience, was Diego San Agustin’s rendition of the pieces “Fairytale” and “Pretty Woman” on Saxophone. Diego is the son of First Secretary and Consul Jim Tito San Agustin.

Several other cultural extravaganza were witnessed throughout the day, which culminated in raffle draws that brought great joy to all the raffle prize winners.

The Embassy booth had a display of Filipino native Christmas decors and various Philippine fiber made handbags and several accessories.

Approximately 3,000 people attended the celebration.

The *Pasko sa Canberra* is held every first Sunday of December at the Philippine Embassy grounds. END