

Pasuguan ng Pilipinas



Embassy of the Philippines

Canberra

### EASTER MESSAGE OF THE PHILIPPINE AMBASSADOR

The Philippine Embassy in Canberra joins all our *kababayan* as we celebrate the Easter of the Lord's Resurrection. We come together in prayer that we may overcome the adversities that we face.

The year 2020 was marked by difficulties caused by the bushfire and the COVID-19 pandemic. I commend the Filipino community in Australia for demonstrating the spirit of *bayanihan* and initiating innovative ways to generously support the most vulnerable members of our community. Rest assured that the Embassy and the Consulates will continue to work with you.

The crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic is our biggest global challenge and its impact will last for many years. We salute all the men and women at the front lines who are making personal sacrifices and working hard to keep communities safe. We pay tribute to the large contingent of Filipino health professionals who are serving here in Australia and all over the world.

The Philippine Government is doing all it can to protect our country and ensure the welfare of all Filipinos including over ten million Filipinos abroad. Now more than ever, our country and our people need to work together. Each of us will need to do our part so that we may emerge from this difficult period with a better future.

We are deeply aware of the wide range of difficulties experienced by affected Filipinos in Australia and we will continue to provide the appropriate assistance.

For displaced Overseas Filipino Workers in Australia, the Philippine Overseas Labor Office (POLO) in Canberra will facilitate the one-time financial assistance from the Department of Labor and Employment. POLO-Canberra has opened applications to avail of this assistance on 10 April 2020.

For students who are experiencing financial hardship, the Embassy and the ASEAN Missions in Canberra have made a collective representation to State and Territory Governments and Australian educational institutions to exercise flexibility in addressing the unique circumstances of students.

For those who are severely affected by the pandemic, we encourage you to plan your return to the Philippines. There are available Philippine Airlines Special Flights to Manila from both Sydney and Melbourne scheduled on 19 April 2020 which you can take.

With this fast unfolding situation, there will be many changes and possibly more restrictions to movement to prevent the spread of COVID-19. We ask that you regularly visit this website to keep abreast of the Embassy advisories. We will do our best to ensure we provide you with timely and relevant information.

Let us keep our faith in the Risen Lord Jesus Christ. May we all be nurtured with the help of God's blessings and ways.

A blessed Easter to you all.



**MA. HELLEN B. DE LA VEGA**

*Ambassador*