



FILIPINO HERITAGE COUNCIL OF CANADA

11 Pond Fernway, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M2J 4M9

SENT VIA E-MAIL

10 September 2020

Mr. Joseph Martino
Chair, Board of Trustees
Toronto Catholic District School Board
80 Sheppard Avenue East, Toronto ON M2N 6E8

Through: Dr. Brendan Browne
TCDSB Director of Education

Dear Trustee Martino and The TCDSB Board of Trustees,
Greetings!

This letter refers to the Philippine commemoration in 2021 of the 500th Anniversary of the Arrival of Christianity in the Philippines, a historic milestone event in our country. In this regard, the Filipino Heritage Council of Canada (FHHC) is pleased to provide this letter of support and gratitude to the Toronto Catholic District School Board for approving the Philippine Consul General of Toronto's request to celebrate the landmark Quincentennial Jubilee (500th Anniversary) of Christianity in the Philippines at the TCDSB commencing with the Art Exhibit & Competition launch at the Catholic Education Centre.

Additionally, FHCC is supporting the request of Trustee Garry Tanuan and Philippine Consul General Orontes Castro to the **TCDSB Proclamation of the Quincentennial Jubilee Celebration of Christianity in the Philippines**, with the event launch at the Toronto Catholic District School Board of "*PH500 Quincentenary Jubilee Art Exhibit*" in October 2020 at the Catholic Education Centre followed by Philippine historic landmark events in March and April 2021, Filipino Heritage Day on June 12, 2021; and a *Catholic Community Jubilee Mass* to highlight the Closing Celebration in August 2021.

The FHCC believes that the Philippines' rich cultural roots and proud passion for our Catholic faith greatly enhance the TCDSB's mission and vision with the continued encouragement and engagement in our Catholic schools, especially those with plans to offer in-school events during the June Filipino Heritage Month.

Our FHCC organization, a registered not-for-profit & volunteer-run association composed of Filipino-Canadian professionals, business executives, entrepreneurs and community & faith leaders, has been engaged since 2018 in promoting, cultivating, and preserving the vibrant heritage, history, language and culture of the Philippines. The mission of FHCC is to lead and support in celebrating and propagating the historic values and contributions of the Filipinos in Canada that includes the traditional and nurturing Catholic values brought about by 500 years of Christianity in the Philippines.

We are fully supportive of Trustee Garry Tanuan's motion to establish a *Quincentenary Jubilee of Christianity in the Philippines (QJCP)* Task Force at TCDSB to aptly coordinate the key events marking the 500th Catholic Jubilee Year for the Board and community. These milestone events will further enhance a vibrant faith-based community of Catholic students, parents, and teachers within the Catholic school system and the wider community. The members of our Filipino Heritage Council of Canada have greatly benefited from participating in the projects and programs of the TCDSB like the celebration of the live "*TCDSB Filipino Heritage Day/Month Virtual Celebration*" last June 12, 2020, and other school and community activities despite the onset of the pandemic. Furthermore, these events vastly contribute to building relationships between our leaders, community stakeholders, and the TCDSB.

Having this "*500th Anniversary (Quincentennial Jubilee) of the Arrival of Christianity in the Philippines*" celebration can complementarily serve to enhance the community-building process especially between schools and organizations, to contribute to the growth of the faith community and to enable more parents and volunteers to actively participate in the education of students.

Broadening and strengthening the relationship is key to the success of the Catholic faithful in the Greater Toronto Area. We look forward to continuing our engagement in this initiative and as well as with the TCDSB in building effective collaboration and cooperation.

Thank you for your kind consideration and utmost attention.

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tony A. San Juan', written in a cursive style.

Tony A. San Juan (OCT-Retired)
Chair
Filipino Heritage Council of Canada