



CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
VANCOUVER

MESSAGE



The Philippine Consulate General in Vancouver joins the entire Filipino community in British Columbia, Yukon and Northwest Territories in celebrating the 122nd anniversary of the Proclamation of Philippine Independence. This year also marks the second anniversary of observing Filipino Heritage Month in Canada.

Every year for the past century, we Filipinos around the world congregate in commemorating the hard-fought freedom our forefathers sacrificed their lives for in order for us to live our lives free from persecution and repression. It is also a time for us to come together and celebrate our rich cultural heritage and traditions.

This year, however, we are unable to celebrate the activities that we are accustomed to due to the COVID-19 pandemic, an invisible enemy that has threatened our very existence, not only in the Philippines but all over the world. But despite these challenges, we, Filipinos, shine a bright light amidst the current doom and gloom.

We find, on the frontlines of this battle, our 21st century Rizals, Bonifacios, Tandang Soras, Mabinis, and all the unsung and nameless heroes and heroines—*Filipino healthcare professionals and workers in hospitals and care facilities, and essential service workers in groceries, farms, transportation, logistics, sanitation, food services, amongst others*—fearless spirits who continue to forge on so that majority of us may still live a semblance of normality.

This global pandemic has brought out the best in Filipinos, wherever we may be. The values of *bayanihan* and *malasakit sa kapwa* innate in us, in our culture, guide us through every day. We do not need to be prompted to act and help. We are present. We give of ourselves generously. We risk our lives to save others, to serve fellow humankind regardless of color, race, religion, gender, beliefs. And I could not be prouder of you, *kababayan*.

We salute you for all your sacrifices and hard work. We thank you for your courage. We honor you for showing the world the indomitable Filipino spirit!

I wish everyone well and I am hopeful for the day in the near future when we can gather to celebrate our victories together!

Mabuhay kayong lahat!


MARIA ANDRELITA S. AUSTRIA
Consul General

10 June 2020
Vancouver, B.C.