

**LETTER OF THE APOSTOLIC NUNCIATURE
MANILA, PHILIPPINES, 6 OCTOBER, 1977**

TO

**HIS EXCELLENCY, MONSIGNOR TEOPISTO V. ALBERTO, D.D.
ARCHBISHOP OF CACERES, NAGA CITY**

ON

**THE QUADRICENTENNIAL OF THE EVANGEL-
IZATION OF THE BIKOL REGION**

Your Excellency:

His Holiness, Pope Paul VI, has learned with limpid joy that, four centuries ago, the Gospel of Christ was first announced by the intrepid missionaries of the Order of Saint Augustine in Bicolandia. His mind is pervaded with the mystery of the Church, the more so, since the Second Vatican Council in its dogmatic Constitution has explained it clearly to the words of Saint Cyprian: "The Church of the Lord sends forth its rays and they fill the entire world..."

The choice of the theme for this year-long celebration "Renewal in Christ" is undoubtedly motivated by the recurrent necessity of life; not only because of the inevitable exhaustion caused by the passing of time, thus exposed to decline and aging, but also due to a positive principle, progress, of which man is capable and his institution with him. This movement is produced in Christian life, which needs to be invited to renewal.

For the Church, her mission is to bring the Good News into all the strata of humanity and through its influence transforming humanity from within and making it new. It is impossible to accept, as the Supreme Pontiff says "that in evangelization one could or should ignore the importance of the problems, so much discussed today, concerning justice, liberation, development and

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peace in the world. This would be to forget the lesson which comes to us from the Gospel concerning love of our neighbor who is suffering and in need".

It is fitting, then, that religious solemnities have been convoked by the Most Reverend Ordinaries of your Ecclesiastical Province to recall the memory of that momentous event to give praise and thanksgiving to God for the inestimable gift of the Faith and to solemnize salutary festivities as the Formal Opening of the Quadricentennial Celebrations of the Evangelization of the Bikol region.

By this grateful commemoration of the 400th year of the Christianization, may it not only revive the planting of the Cross, but also serve to make full preparations for the continuing preservation of so great a treasure, and for its being handed on, richer and deeper, to future generations.

As the Holy Father celebrates this achievement, full of virtues and values, with Your Excellency and your Suffragan Bishops, your priests, religious and people, in a union of spiritual and paternal affection, he willingly pledges his prayers on the happy anniversary and imparts to you all, his Apostolic Blessing.

I avail myself of the opportunity to renew to Your Excellency the sentiments of my deep esteem.

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd.) MSGR. CLAUDIO MA. CELLI
Charge d'Affaires a.i.