



UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

UST:SO06-00-CI42
A.Y. 2021-2022

TO : THE THOMASIAN COMMUNITY

FROM : OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

RE : 75 YEARS AS THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY
OF THE PHILIPPINES

DATE : 14 MARCH 2022

Seventy-five years ago, the title of “**The Catholic University**” was bestowed upon the **University of Santo Tomas (UST)** by His Holiness Pope Pius XII (1876-1958) on **30 April 1947**, “in recognition of the work that the University has been doing for the education of the youth, its outstanding accomplishments in various fields of learning, and its constant efforts to forge ahead in the all-important task of giving adequate Catholic education to the country’s youth.”¹

Teaching the Light of Faith in the Philippines

UST is engaged “*in the formation of the intellectual personality of the students in inculcating in them the knowledge of, and respect for, the Truth...enlightened by Faith.*”² During the celebration of the 350th anniversary of UST in 1961, His Holiness Pope John XXIII (1881-1963) called UST “*the most resplendent light of Christian Wisdom*”. In 2011, His Eminence Zenon Cardinal Grocholewski (1939-2020), the papal envoy for the UST Quadricentennial celebration, underscored the qualities of a Catholic University as “*a continued reflection in the light of the Catholic Faith, fidelity to the Christian message, and institutional commitment.*”

Searching for Meaning amidst Scientific and Technological Advancement

In the world today, rapid developments in science and technology create an enormous economic and industrial growth, but they also require the correspondingly necessary *search for meaning* in order to guarantee that the new discoveries be used for the authentic good of individuals and of the human society as a whole. It is the responsibility of a Catholic University to respond to this need, and embrace the moral, spiritual and religious dimension in its research, and to evaluate the attainments of science and technology in the perspective of the totality of the human person.³

¹ cf. *The Varsitarian*, September 1956, pp. 36-37.

² cf. Msgr. Amelio Poggi (1914-1974), *Address during the Opening of the Academic Year 1959-1960*, UST, 8 June 1959.

³ cf. Pope John Paul II (1920-2005), *Ex Corde Ecclesiae: Apostolic Constitution on Catholic Universities*, 1990, no. 7.

Developing and Empowering Communities

St. Thomas Aquinas (ca. 1225-1274) said that “just as it is better to illuminate than merely to shine, so to pass on what one has contemplated is better than merely to contemplate.”⁴ In order to share the fruits of our contemplation, the UST-SIMBAHAYAN⁵ Community Development Office is tasked to develop, implement, and manage the University Community Development Program towards the fulfillment of the UST Mission and Vision Statements. *Simbahayan* endeavors to develop and empower communities and institutions with the Thomasian University staff, alumni and students contributing towards social transformation.

Exhortation

The title of “**The Catholic University**” bestowed upon UST is not just a very special privilege granted by the Pope,⁶ but also a responsibility to fulfill the mission of preaching the Good News of Our Lord. For more than four centuries now, Thomasians have been known, not only for their competence but also in their commitment and compassion in serving the Church and the country. We have produced not only heroes and presidents for the nation and leaders for the various professions and industries, but also generation upon generation of good Christians, among them seventeen (17) beatified and canonized saints. Let us continue to fulfill our mission to love.

May the Merciful Lord of our restless being, keep the Thomasians in beauty and truth and virtues, and in our teaching, researching and community development endeavors, may we be continuously imbued with *unending grace*.


FR. LOUIE R. CORONEL, O.P., EHL
Secretary-General

⁴ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II q. 188 a. 6., 13th century.

⁵ The term *Simbahayan* is a combination of the words “*Simbahan* (Church), *Bayan* (Country), and *Tahanan* (Home),” the three foci of UST’s centerpiece project for its Quadricentennial celebration in 2011.

⁶ *Code of Canon Law*, 1983, Can. 808.