



CBCP Circular Letter No. 01 – s. 2013:

***Celebration of the National Consecration
to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on June 8, 2013.***

Your Eminences/Excellencies/Reverend Administrators:

In 1975, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, in its Pastoral Letter entitled "*Ang Mahal na Birhen*", detailed the place of Mary in the history of the Philippines and demonstrated how deeply the Blessed Virgin Mary is part of the Filipino heritage and identity. Indeed, Filipinos would always hold on to the devotion to Mary as a source of inspiration and an aid to salvation. Having appraised such deep devotion, the Second Plenary Council of the Philippines aptly puts it: the outstanding characteristic of the Church in the Philippines is to be "*pueblo amante de Maria*" – a people in love with Mary (cf. PCP-II, n. 153). Thus, it is always our dream and hope that we, as a Filipino nation, may not only grow in our devotion to Mary, but above all, may acquire a deeper understanding of Mary's role in the Church in the Philippines.

Time and time again, we have experienced tremendous flow of divine grace through the intercession of Mary, our Mother. Such maternal care we continue to implore especially in important events of our nation. In fact, in 2009, the CBCP invited the Filipino faithful to start preparing spiritually for another crucial transition in the life of our nation – namely, the National Elections of May 2010 – by declaring the Year of the Two Hearts for Peace-building and Lay Participation in Social Change from June 2009 – June 2010. In that year, the bishops call on the faithful to consecrate the country to the Sacred Heart of Jesus through the Immaculate Heart of Mary on the very days of their feasts.

Realizing once more the need to invoke the loving guidance of our Mother, especially as the Philippine Church has embarked on a nine-year spiritual journey towards the great jubilee of the Fifth Centenary of the Christian Faith in our beloved land come the year 2021 ushered by the observance of the Year of Faith which offers for every faithful an opportunity to rediscover the Christian faith and intensify our efforts for a renewed integral evangelization (New Evangelization), ***this Episcopal Conference deems it providential to declare in one accord, during its 106th Plenary Assembly last January 28, 2013, the holding of a simultaneous National Consecration to the Immaculate Heart of Mary on June 8, 2013, Feast of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, at 10:00 in the morning in all the Cathedrals, Parish Churches, Shrines and Chapels in the respective Arch/Dioceses, Prelatures and Apostolic Vicariates.***


For a well-coordinated and fruitful celebration of such momentous event, the CBCP Permanent Council has designated an *ad hoc* Committee to plan, promote and spearhead the national consecration. His Excellency, Most Rev. Guillermo V. Afable, Bishop of Digos, acts as Chairperson, with the assistance of the Episcopal Commissions on Liturgy & Social Communications and Mass Media, Amb. Howard Q. Dee of Bahay Maria- Assisi Development Foundation, Fr. Yulito Ignacio and the CBCP General Secretariat.

Attached herewith is the suggested plan of activities prepared by the Committee. Instructional and campaign materials will be sent once ready. An in depth explanation of the rationale of the national consecration will be contained in a CBCP Pastoral Exhortation and a Primer now being prepared.

Meanwhile, I am earnestly appealing to all the Most Reverend Ordinaries to organize arch/diocesan executive committees for the said celebration.

May Mary, Mother of God and Mother of the Church, look upon her “*pueblo amante*”, the Philippines, with a mother’s eye and guide it along the paths of justice, truth and love. Amen.

Given at the CBCP Headquarters, Intramuros, Manila this 3rd day April 2013.



+ **JOSE S. PALMA, D.D.**
Archbishop of Cebu
CBCP President