



LA SALLE
BACOLOD
BROTHERS COMMUNITY

DATE: **February 24, 2026**

TO: **THE LASALLIAN COMMUNITY (USLS, SJS-LS, DLSASMC)**

FROM: **BR. IRWIN ANTHONY CLIMACO FSC**
Community Director De La Salle Brothers - Bacolod

SUBJECT: **Reclaiming Unity, Restoring Decency**
*Pastoral Letter # 7 : Pastoral Letter in commemoration of the 40th Anniversary
of the EDSA People Power Revolution*

Dear Brothers, Partners in Mission, Faculty, Staff, Parents, and Students,

As we commemorate the 40th Anniversary of the historic EDSA People Power I in 1986, we remember not merely an event in our nation's political history, but a profound moral awakening, a moment when faith, courage, and unity converged along Epifanio de los Santos Avenue.

I was born seven years prior to EDSA. While I was too young to fully understand its immediate impact, I grew up in the shadow of that sacred moment in our history. I was fortunate to be raised in a home and community where the values that emerged from EDSA were intentionally instilled in me. Vigilance, responsibility, prayerfulness, and love for country were not abstract ideals. Even as a young boy, I was constantly encouraged to be aware of the news and current events, to understand that citizenship is not passive but participatory.

I grew up believing and knowing that we are a peace loving nation. At one point in our history, we became truly united for a common cause and for the common good. Ordinary citizens stood side by side, lay people, clergy, religious, students, workers, families, armed not with weapons but with rosaries, courage, and conviction. We were not perfect, but we were united.

And perhaps here lies a painful irony. The very word that once bound us together, unity, the rallying spirit that transcended political colors and personal ambitions, is a word we still hear today. Yet forty years later, we must honestly ask if unity has become a slogan rather than a shared sacrifice. Has it been invoked for personal interests rather than for the nation's common good. The unity that once demanded humility and moral courage now risks being reduced to branding, detached from truth and accountability.

There are moments when I find myself saying, we were not like this as a nation. As a millennial who is often described as chronically online, I have witnessed how drastically our social landscape has shifted, particularly beginning in 2016. Digital spaces that once connected us to share good news, hope, joys, and victories have increasingly become platforms for judgment, criticism, and at times, the demoralization of our fellow Filipinos.

When impunity became normalized. When foul language became entertainment. When demeaning words disguised as jokes became acceptable. Somewhere along the way, we began to lose something essential. We began to lose decency.

What began as a trend eventually hardened into culture. And culture shapes character. When decency is eroded in our speech, in our humor, and in our public discourse, it does not remain online. It seeps into how we treat one another in real life. It reshapes what we tolerate. It lowers the standards of what we consider acceptable. It weakens our collective moral fiber.

That we commemorate forty years is not incidental. In Sacred Scripture, the number forty signifies purification, testing, renewal, and preparation for mission.

The Great Flood lasted forty days and forty nights, cleansing the earth and preparing humanity for a new beginning. Moses spent forty days on Mount Sinai, encountering God and receiving the Law that would guide the people. The Israelites wandered for forty years in the desert, a time of purification and formation before entering the Promised Land. The prophet Elijah journeyed forty days to Horeb, where he encountered God in the still small voice. Most significantly, our Lord Jesus fasted forty days in the desert before beginning His public ministry.

Forty is not merely a number. It is a threshold.

Perhaps these forty years since EDSA are likewise a period of testing and discernment for our nation. Have we remained faithful to the grace given to us in 1986. Or have we drifted from the spirit that once bound us together.

A pressing question remains for us as educators and formators. How do we help our Gen Z and Gen Alpha students resonate with, understand, and uphold the values that EDSA embodied. For many of them, 1986 is distant history. Without careful formation, EDSA can become a paragraph in a textbook rather than a living moral memory.

Yet we should not underestimate this generation. They carry compassion, a strong sense of justice, and a desire for authenticity. If the spirit of People Power is to endure, it must be translated into language they understand and embodied in lives they can observe. If they are to uphold the values of EDSA, they must see those values alive in us.

As an educational and Catholic institution, we cannot remain neutral observers of history. Our mission compels us to form consciences, cultivate critical thinking, and shape citizens who are anchored in faith and committed to the common good.

In the spirit of St. John Baptist de La Salle, we are called to form morally grounded leaders who value truth over propaganda, dialogue over division, and service over self interest. We are called to promote digital responsibility, teaching our students that what they post, share, and amplify carries moral weight. We are called to foster spaces of respectful discourse where disagreement does not lead to dehumanization. We are called to reclaim a culture of peace rooted in prayer, compassion, solidarity, and decency.

Decency is not weakness. It is strength under control. It is the quiet discipline of choosing respect when it is easier to ridicule. It is the moral courage to speak firmly without demeaning another. It is the refusal to participate in hatred even when hatred trends.

The spirit of EDSA was never about personalities. It was about people, about the dignity of every Filipino and the moral courage to defend what is right through peaceful means.

If People Power once happened on the streets, today it must also happen in classrooms, in homes, in parishes, and even online. The revolution we now need is not of regime, but of heart. A revolution of civility. A revolution of truth. A revolution of charity. A revolution of decency.

Let us remember that what we offered the world in 1986 was not violence, not vengeance, not domination, but *mapayapang paraang pagbabago*, a peaceful way of change. It was a testimony that moral courage, prayer, solidarity, and decency can transform a nation.

Forty years later, we must ask ourselves with sincerity and humility.

- If that was our gift to the world then, what do we offer to the world now?
- What do we offer to our future generations?

For us as Lasallians, the answer cannot remain abstract. It must be embodied in who we are and how we live.

In the words and lifelong advocacy of the late Br. Ceci Hojilla FSC, “Ako ay Lasalyano, Tapat na Pilipino.”

This is not merely a slogan. To be Lasallian is not separate from being Filipino. Our fidelity to God must be reflected in our fidelity to our country. Our commitment to excellence in education must include the formation of citizens who love truth, defend human dignity, reject the normalization of hatred, and practice decency in both public and private life.

If we claim to be Lasallians, then we are called to be faithful Filipinos, not only in moments of national crisis, but in our daily choices, in how we speak, how we post, how we vote, how we listen, and how we stand for what is right.

May the spirit of EDSA not remain a memory, but become once more a mission.

May we once again choose the harder path of truth over convenience, respect over ridicule, dialogue over division, service over self interest, and decency over disdain.

And may it be said of us in this generation that we lived what we profess.

Ako ay Lasalyano. Tapat na Pilipino.

Live Jesus in our hearts. Forever.