

Understanding the Maguindanao Massacre; Remembering the Victims

A Forum and Prayer Vigil

December 02, Wednesday, 4pm, DLS-CSB Theatre

RATIONALE:

The massacre of 57 people that happened in Ampatuan town in Maguindanao on November 23, 2009 left the entire nation and even the international community in disbelief especially on how brutal, barbaric and heinous the crime was executed. The enormity of the crime was such that it elicited immediate outcry from the public, including statements of condemnation from various sectors and organizations, including the Philippine Lasallian Family.

The Maguindanao massacre highlighted crucial issues especially in Philippine politics, such as election violence, human rights violations, warlordism, patronage politics and the legitimacy and political survival of the Arroyo administration. Many in particular took note on how slow the government is acting in bringing to justice the perpetrators of the massacre. Three days after the massacre on November 26, Andal Ampatuan Jr., the alleged mastermind, was arrested and detained at the NBI. Even with his arrest, a number of issues remain unanswered.

This forum aims to help us gain a deeper understanding of the November 23 Maguindanao massacre. Critical issues related to the Maguindanao massacre and how they will affect the state of affairs of the Philippine political arena in the next few weeks will be discussed. The forum will also open the discussion on what needs to be done in order to bring to justice the perpetrators of the heinous crime towards the larger challenge of effecting change especially in terms of the prevailing culture of violence and untruth being perpetrated by certain sectors in Philippine society.

The forum is organized by the Lasallian Justice & Peace Commission (LJPC) together with the Center for Social Action of the De La Salle – College of Saint Benilde (DLS-CSB). Attendees will be from DLS-CSB, other La Salle schools, and external partners. It shall be on December 2, Wednesday at 4:00pm in DLS-CSB Augusto Rosario Theatre.

Below is the program for the December 2 Forum:

04:00	Opening Prayer	<i>Video clip and song of peace</i>
	National Anthem	<i>Lupang Hinirang (Pag-asa Video)</i>
	Welcome Remarks and Rationale	De La Salle – College of Saint Benilde
04:15	Looking Through Legal Lens: <i>Brief Presentation of the Case and Legal Questions to Bring Justice for the Victims</i>	Atty. Jobert Pajilga National Union of Peoples' Lawyers
04:45	Silencing the Media, Death of Democracy: <i>Impact of violence on freedom and democracy</i>	Representative (To be confirmed) National Union of Journalists in the Philippines
05:15	Elections and the Culture of Violence: <i>The Use of Fear and Violence in Elections and in Sustaining Political Power</i>	Mr. Mon Casiple Institute for Political and Electoral Reform
05:45	Open Forum	
06:00	Reading of the Philippine Lasallian Family Statement on the Maguindanao Massacre	Philippine Lasallian Family Lasallian Justice & Peace Commission
	Prayer for Peace and Justice	<i>Prayer and Candle-lighting</i>