

It's a wonderful thing, how fate causes us to do something, most of the time with us not knowing or caring what it may turn out to be.

You see children and you desire to help them, to nurture them, guide them.

You find joy and peace in it, aiding them attain goals that they didn't think they can achieve.

Time passes, the children grow, the tree bears fruit, and then you find yourself with yet another seed, another promise of life.

You repeat the process, create a grander vision.

Next thing you know, you're here. Now. Right now.

In this moment.

For almost 400 years, Letran has been a beacon of hope, a source of inspiration and learning, to countless minds, myriads of young hearts.

The fruits of its labor can be seen all over society, all over history, all of them bearing the Tatak Arriba, a symbol of the institution's commitment to excellence.

Now, we celebrate the entirety of the journey, the labor, the story. Now, we look back to our past, not to be enslaved by it but to allow it to encourage and shape our present, this very moment.

Almost 400 years of changing lives. Almost 400 years of inspiring success.

These and more are what Colegio de San Juan de Letran relived during its Quadricentennial Celebration Year One in its annual Colegio Week festivities last November 24 to 29.

Standing by the theme, "Orgullosos de ti y de tu Historia", which is the Spanish translation for "Proud of you and your history", the Colegio put premium in remembering the glories and accolades that decorate its grand history, evident in the activities of the four-day event.

The Celebration was aptly begun on November 24 with a mass honoring the Feast Day of San Vicente Liem de la Paz and Companion Martyrs at the Manila Cathedral. Newly-minted Prior Provincial of the Dominican Province of the Philippines, the Very Rev. Fr. Napoleon Sipalay, Jr., OP, officiated the mass.

A colorful parade inside Intramuros followed, with a number of stops featuring cultural performances/ field demonstrations, culminating in a streetdance competition held at the Plaza Roma in front of the Cathedral. The said contest was graced by the presence of guest judge Manny Rigor of the renowned VST and Co.

On the same day, booths and exhibits were opened, such as the Cirque de Letran, which showcased products by the different student organizations. Proceeds of the activity will be given to the Aeta community that Letran is in cooperation with. As it was the feast day of the Colegio's alumnus saint, San Vicente's relics were venerated and put on display.

An exhibition game was also held for a selection of Letran employees and students versus former Letran Knights, led by Jonathan Aldave, Ronjay Enrile and Kojack Melegrito.

In the evening, a formal programme was held for the opening of the Quadricentennial Celebration, which is set to happen for four years, a different theme each year, until 2020, marking 400 years of the oldest college in the country. Fr. Clarence presented to the community the Quadricentennial Coin. The Quadricentennial Song was also introduced, sung by the students. The said song was created by Asst. Prof. Rodio Batayen of the Religious Education Area and renowned songwriter and alumnus, Ruben Palisoc.

The annual Arriba Fest followed, hosted by MYX Philippines' VJ Ai dela Cruz and Robi Domingo. The bands Hale and Sud were guest performers.

The Celebration continues

The next days were pretty much eventful and had the Colegio, and all Letranites, buzzing with excitement and energy.

A seminar on Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) was held at the second day of the Colegio Week celebration, November 25, at the Student Center Auditorium. Representatives from Miriam College, Philippine Normal University, and Adamson University discussed the importance of the role of HEIs, the challenges they face, and its commitment to excellence.

Letran also partnered with Eat Bulaga's "Juan for All, All for Juan" by bringing the show to one of its partner communities, Barangay 655. Fr. Clarence Marquez himself went to the said community and was featured in the short segment with other administrators and employees of the Colegio. The show's hosts, Wally Bayola, Jose Manalo, and the popular loveteam, Alden Richards and Maine Mendoza, welcomed the Letran delegation warmly.

Later that night, the Mr. and Ms. Letran pageant was held with Joshua Cuya (Entrepreneurship) and Isabel Alves (Broadcasting) capturing the coveted crowns.

Employees also had a good time that evening as the Human Resources Department organized an Employees Reunion at the Salon de Actos, bringing back the former employees to mingle and fellowship with the current ones.

Day Three was highlighted by the Amazing Heritage Race where students and faculty team up in a race around Intramuros patterned after the famous tv show, Amazing Race. The Basic Education Department, composed of Dennis Apostol, Necitas Carlet, Rhenie Mondejar, Clyde Corpuz, Miguel Sy, and Jeremy Bumanlag, were named champions. They were followed by the Senior High School and Non-Teaching Team 2, second and third place, respectively.

The Letran Heritage Quiz Challenge held at the SC Auditorium pitted the four Letrans against each other, with Letran Manila, composed of Jacquelyn Abardo, Rogie Aquino, Abraham de los Reyes, Earl Enriquez, and Asst. Prof. Mark Buen, emerging as the winners.

The Office of Student Welfare and Development organized the Garage 1620 Car Exhibit and the I Memorabilia exhibit (TV Studio) later that day. The winners of I Memorabilia, an exhibit of the antiques found in each department, were: the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (1st and 2nd Place in the Office

Tool Category), Library (1st Place in Print Category), Research Center (2nd in Print Category), and ITMS (1st in Souvenir Category).

On the last day, the Colegio Week capped off with the Color Fun Run with Zumba early in the morning, followed by the Family Day, where employees and their families gathered for a day of games, and the Bingo Socials.

AXN, a sponsor of this year's Celebration, mounted the AXN Challenge, an obstacle course that tested the Letranites, both in mind and physical strength.

The Quadricentennial Celebration Year One was supported by its sponsors: Smart, AXN, Alaska Krem-Top, Cadbury 5-Star, Pringles, Cocolife, Pond's/Pond'sMen/Axe, and Mr. Murphy Sy.

Colegio Week 2016 was only the first of four grand celebrations that will be done by the Colegio. The last one will be in 2020, Letran's Quadricentennial.

All the roads lead to 2020!

Siempre Arriba, Siempre Letran!