



Office of the President

Ateneo de Zamboanga University

The Jesuit University in Western Mindanao, Philippines
Since 1912

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The University President's Easter Message to the AdZU Community

Dear Ateneo de Zamboanga University Community,

He is risen! Alleluia!

At the heart of Easter is a simple and astonishing claim: **the tomb is empty, and Jesus Christ is alive.** In the Gospel for Easter Sunday, Mary Magdalene comes to the tomb while it is still dark. Peter and the beloved disciple run there in confusion and wonder. Then comes that quiet but decisive moment: he sees, and he believes. Easter begins there, not with everything explained, but with the **first light of faith breaking into the darkness.**

For Christians, Easter is not just the memory of a good man or a beloved teacher. It is the **proclamation that Jesus, who was crucified and buried, has been raised from the dead.** It is the **center of our faith and the deepest source of our hope.** And for our brothers and sisters in AdZU who are not Christian Catholics, Easter may still speak in a humanly profound way: it tells us that **despair is not final**, that **love is stronger than fear**, and that **new life can emerge** even from places that seem closed, wounded, or lost.

That is why Easter is not only a Church feast. It is also a school for the heart. It reminds us that **life is not meant to be lived sealed in disappointment, resentment, or fatigue.** The Risen Lord does not simply console his disciples. He sends them out. He turns frightened and grieving people into witnesses, servants, and builders of new life.

As we near the end of this school year, perhaps this is also the grace being offered to us as one AdZU community. We have spoken much this year about *Compañerismo*, and rightly so. We have needed companionship, shared purpose, and the strength of walking together. But Easter also moves us forward. It invites us not only to stay together, but to give ourselves more generously.

Perhaps even now, the Risen Lord is already leading us toward what must come next: *Servicio con Amor y Alegria*. Service not done grudgingly or for show, but with love. Service not marked by heaviness alone, but by joy. Not a shallow cheerfulness, but the deeper joy that comes from knowing that what we do for others, we do with Christ, and in Christ, who is alive.

May the Risen Jesus bless our students, faculty, staff, administrators, alumni, families, and friends. May He renew our tired hearts, enlarge our generosity, and teach us to serve with greater freedom, compassion, and gladness.

And may this Easter help us become, more and more, a community that not only believes in the Resurrection, but also bears its signs in the way we live, work, and love.

He is risen indeed. Alleluia.

(ORIGINAL SIGNED)

Fr. Ernard M. Andal, SJ
University President