

TPB Supports 500 YOC Celebration in Philippines with Pilgrim Tours- Heritage Tourism Program

Tourism Promotions Board (TPB) Philippines launched today, December 8, the Pilgrim Tours Heritage Tourism program with a familiarization tour in Manila as part of the commemoration and celebration of the 500 Years of Christianity (500 YOC) in the country.

The said pilgrim familiarization tour, in partnership with Creative Travel and Tours International (CTTI) and Radio Veritas (RV) Global Broadcasting System, aims to strengthen and relive faith-based and heritage tourism.

“Our shared faith as pilgrims has been our source of strength, hope and compassion as a people through this pandemic. This Program is our modest contribution to the various celebratory activities to commemorate the 500 years of our Catholicism. It is also providential that we are launching this Program today as we celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of Immaculate Conception, keeping our pride for being the seat of Marian devotion in Southeast Asia,” said TPB Chief Operating Officer Maria Anthonette Velasco – Allones.

Representatives from TPB and its members, Department of Tourism (DOT), CTTI, and RV toured three of Manila’s most historical churches which include the Basilica Minor de San Sebastian (San Sebastian Church), Binondo Church or the Minor Basilica of San Lorenzo Ruiz, and Cathedral-Basilica of the Immaculate Conception, also known as Manila Cathedral, with new normal health and safety protocols in place.

Apart from actual tour of the mentioned churches, the pilgrims joined activities such as passing through the *Porta Santa* or Jubilee Door, praying of the Holy Rosary, listening to spiritual talks and going to confession, with Rev. Fr. Arnold Layoc of Radio Veritas as the pilgrim tour’s recollection master.

Following the launch, TPB and CTTI are set to implement a series of pilgrim tour circuits in Bulacan-Pampanga on December 16-17, Cebu-Bohol on January 24-27, 2022, and CALABARZON during the second week of February 2022, featuring quincentennial Jubilee churches

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“We are hopeful that through this program we are not only opening opportunities to rediscover our rich religious heritage by visiting the YOC jubilee churches, but also allowing Filipinos to experience and exercise their faith in the new normal ” Rev. Fr. Arnold Layoc shared.

In addition, DOT Undersecretary Woodrow C. Maquiling, Jr. said, “It’s spiritual sanity. This is really something we Filipinos have to promote and push forward. This tour is such a beautiful project of the TPB with the support of DOT. The idea is brilliant. We love to travel across the country, across the world. But this time, you travel and live your faith and your heritage and our churches speak so much of us Filipinos — our resilience and our zeal.”

TPB’s Faith-based and Heritage Tourism program is expected to support the domestic welcome-back campaign which encourages local travelers to explore the country, and showcase the richness of Philippine culture deeply rooted in faith and religious beliefs.

Reference:

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