



September 21, 2026

Dear Lasallians,

Peace!

Last September 18, I attended an online talk on *Lasallian Reflection No. 12: Building a Fraternal World* given by Br. Chuy Rubio FSC, Director of the Pacific Asia Regional Novitiate. During the conversation, Br. Chuy said something that caught my attention: “Lasallian education is never neutral.”

I have been thinking about those words as we commemorate September 21, the anniversary of the declaration of Martial Law by former President Ferdinand E. Marcos. What does it mean to say that Lasallian education is never neutral? For me, it begins with something fundamental: we stand for truth. And truth is not neutral.

Facts do not change, whether they are convenient to us or not. Events in our history cannot change simply because we would prefer to remember them differently. When human dignity has been violated, we must acknowledge what happened and learn from it.

This does not mean that a university should tell its students what position to take. It is the opposite. Education should give our students the freedom and ability to think for themselves. We teach them to ask difficult questions, examine evidence, distinguish fact from opinion, understand context, and listen to different perspectives. This freedom to inquire must always be accompanied by a search for the truth.

And this is why remembering matters. More than five decades have passed since Martial Law was declared. For most of our students, this is already history. They encounter it in books, family stories, and social media, often with competing interpretations of the past. Our responsibility as a university is to help them go beyond popular opinion or whoever has the loudest voice and to look carefully at evidence and historical records.

This connects with our aspiration to build a fraternal university. Brotherhood and sisterhood are not about pretending that we all agree or avoiding difficult truths for the sake of harmony. Genuine fraternity allows us to face the truth together, listen to one another, and disagree without forgetting the dignity of the person before us.

Lasallian education is never neutral because our mission calls us to seek what is true and to uphold the dignity of every human person. May we have the humility to seek the truth, the wisdom to recognize it, and the courage to live by it.

Sincerely,

(Sgd.) Br. Iñigo Riola FSC
President