

GRADUATION MESSAGE  
School Year 2020-2021

Warm greetings to all of you who made it possible, for our graduates and completers to reach this special day. Yes, to you parents, teachers, school heads, local government officials from our barangays, municipal and provincial official and the office of the Congressman. Thank you. Special greetings and congratulations to you, our graduates, and completers of SY 2020-2021. I just cannot help but feel grateful and honored to be part of your graduation ceremony. It is different in a thousand ways previous graduation ceremonies and I earnestly thank you graduates for hanging on until this last school day despite the righteous anger over modules; your parents for their infinite guidance in seeing you attend to your lessons and pushing you to be independent learners; your teachers for their endless energy to imagine and keep you motivated; and, and the entire community who ensured that the modules reach your homes and learning resources are provided.



This pandemic has affected everyone and in the most profound ways. You've gone from classrooms to bedrooms, from school uniforms to pajamas, and from face-to-face classes to modules, virtual rooms, radio shows, and Facebook Live shows. From a learning delivery that was one size fits all to a learning that has to be retrofitted to every learner's need.

Your generation now is in unique situation because this pandemic has broken systems and stereotypes. The virus does not discriminate between rich or the poor, man or woman, race or skin color, city, or town. It brought societies and countries down to their knees. We have seen new things which we would not have otherwise seen if the pandemic did not happen. Great companies and institutions fell, and nothing could have stopped it. On the other hand, opportunities emerged, and many creative educators experimented ways to bring learning to the homes.

While the world is shattered because of the pandemic, there are several things to learn so we do not only respond to the crisis, but we thrive through any crisis that will happen. Interestingly, many young learners have discovered new talents and vocabulary other than hobbies in this crisis. Almost all teachers have now learned to write modules, become broadcasters, online tutors, video developers/editors, curators and storytellers, an expertise performed only by few selected teachers. There were learners who have bloomed because they were given the chance to experience other learning modalities such as online learning, 2-way radio and the like. It is a

challenge of having new ways of thinking, methods and processes and new approaches to learning and living.

To you graduates, you have the opportunity to transform your communities and our country to be resilient. Your generation is now responsible so that this country will be better prepared in responding to future pandemics. Like the covid vaccine, effectiveness is key to survival. Your batch-graduates of lockdowns, you will be policy makers and the change makers. You have seen where we failed and where we succeeded. You can turn the ordinary into extraordinary.

A Japanese legend tells the story of a mighty shogun warrior who broke his favorite tea bowl and sent it away for repairs. When he received it back, the bowl was held together by unsightly metal staples. Although he could still use it, the shogun was disappointed. Still hoping to restore his beloved bowl to its former beauty, he asked a craftsman to find a more elegant solution. The craftsman wanted to try a new technique, something that would add to the beauty of the bowl as well as repair it. So, he mended every crack in the bowl with a lacquer resin mixed with gold. When the tea bowl was returned to the shogun, there were streaks of gold running through it, telling its story, and-the warrior thought-adding to its value and beauty. This method of repair became known as *kintsugi*. This perspective is from the Japanese philosophy where the value of an object is not in its beauty, but in its imperfections, and that these imperfections are something to celebrate.

We do not expect everything to be perfect at this time of the pandemic. In *kintsugi*, the experiences you have in this pandemic and the person you have become are enough to make you thrive in this planet. With all the imperfections in schooling—from the assignments, modules to home support, you have survived this beautiful journey. This graduation is worth celebrating as you have created your real-life *kintsugi*.

With grit and patience, your learning was transformed. You have proven to yourself to anyone that you can get into the ring and finish any battle. You found ways to make the most of the situation surrounded by the people you love—your parents, grandparents, relatives, siblings, neighbors, and friends.

To you graduates, we are sending you off into the real world you may not have imagined. Take this reality you've been handed and make it better. Congratulations and God bless you as you make that bold step into the future.

Again, to you our parents, our teachers, school heads, LGU officials and all stakeholders who generously and consistently gave support to our learners most especially these graduates and completers of SY 2020-2021. *Maraming Salamat po. Mabuhay po kayong lahat!*