

PRESS RELEASE

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**Commemoration of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
of the Death of Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, Jr.  
in Honolulu**

The Philippine Consulate General, in cooperation with the Sts. Peter and Paul Parish Church in Honolulu, commemorated the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Death of Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, Jr. on 21 August 2008 with a Mass officiated by Father Romeo Nietes.

The Mass began with a processional led by a Filipino-American World War II veteran carrying the Philippine flag as befits Ninoy's status as a Philippine hero. Father Nietes addressed the mostly Filipino-American parishioners and informed them that the Mass was being offered specifically for the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Death of Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, Jr.

A short program entitled "Recollections and Reflections" about Ninoy followed the Mass. Atty. Perfecto "Jun" Yasay, Jr., former Chair of the Philippine Securities and Exchange Commission and personal friend of Ninoy as well as Dr. Belinda Aquino, Director of the Center for Philippine Studies at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, spoke during the program.

Dr. Aquino, in her recollections, spoke of the life and times of Ninoy. She recalled how in the first quarter of 1983, Ninoy was receiving news about the deteriorating political situation in the Philippines combined with the rumored declining health of President Marcos. She recounted how Ninoy decided to go back to the Philippines, fully aware of the dangers that awaited him. His purpose, she said, was to be at hand to help prepare the nation for an orderly and peaceful transition in case Marcos' illness overtakes him. Ninoy knew that unless this was done, a grab for power by right wing opportunists would plunge the nation into further turmoil under a more oppressive martial regime.

Atty. Yasay, in turn, reflected on the question: "Was the Filipino worth dying for? Or did Ninoy die in vain?" In answer, he stated that "had Ninoy not returned, perhaps, civilian authority in the Philippines might have never been restored; perhaps, our democratic institutions intended to protect the inalienable rights of individuals against government abuses would not have been revived".

Leaders and members of the Filipino-American community of Hawaii who attended the Mass and the program were invited to partake of light refreshments at the Philippine Consulate after the Mass.



Mr. Perfecto "Jun" Yasay, Jr., former Chair of the Philippine Securities and Exchange Commission and personal friend of Ninoy spoke at the Sts. Peter and Paul Parish Church in Honolulu during the "Recollections and Reflections" program in commemoration of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Death of Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, Jr. on 21 August 2008.



Dr. Belinda Aquino, a Professor at the University of Hawaii at Manoa, spoke during the "Recollections and Reflections" program at the Sts. Peter and Paul Parish Church in Honolulu in commemoration of the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Death of Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino, Jr. on 21 August 2008.