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A Prayer for Renewal

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A Prayer for Renewal
An Invocation at the Ateneo Alumni Home-
coming, Loyola Heights, 5 December 1971

MIGUEL A. BERNAD S.J.

All powerful, all wise, and all merciful God, Our Maker and our Father, look with kindly eyes upon this happy occasion, and bless the alumni of the Ateneo de Manila—both those who are here, and those who are absent. This is their homecoming: their yearly visit to the spiritual home of their youth.

Once upon a time (fifty years ago for some, twenty-five years for others, many years ago for all) they were students in the Ateneo—in Intramuros, or at Padre Faura, or on Plaza Guipit, or here in Loyola Heights. They were young then: with the vision of the young; with the courage and zeal and brave ambitions and noble ideals of youth.

Many years have passed. They have become important persons in their communities. They have become fathers of families; respected citizens. We thank You, Almighty God, for all the blessings that you have showered upon them during all these years. Continue to bless them. Watch over their families. Give success to their undertakings. Or if success does not come, grant them the courage to accept failure as brave Christian men.

Some of them have kept their vision clear; for others, the vision may have become dim. Some have lived up to their high ideals; others perhaps have fallen short; while still others, disillusioned with the high ideals of their youth, have discarded them as impractical and have adopted other ideals, more suited to the values of the world and the market-place.

Renew in them, Almighty God—renew in all of us—the vision of our youth. Or rather, grant us a clearer, wider, more profound vision—not the romantic vision conceived in youthful ignorance, but the vision born of the wisdom of the Holy Spirit; the mature vision of realistic men, who enjoy the light of your divine revelation. Grant us the grace to see things in

the light which Your Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ, came to give: Who said, "I am the light of the world. I am the way and the truth and the life. He who walks with me, walks not in darkness."

And in Your mercy, Almighty Father, bless the Ateneo de Manila: the Jesuit Fathers, the lay teachers, the administrators, the staff. Have mercy above all, on the students: that the Ateneo may continue in its mission of giving light—light in the Lord; *Lux in Domino*—the light of Faith; the warmth of Christian charity; and the strength of Christian dedication.

All this we ask of You, Almighty God: God the Father, and God the Son—Our Lord Jesus Christ—and God the Holy Spirit, Renewer and Sanctifier: through the intercession of her who is here with us today; who is wherever Ateneans are: the Immaculate Virgin, Mother of God, Patroness of the Ateneo, Protectress of the Philippines, Our Mother. Amen.