

MESSAGE of the First (1st) Placer

in the June 2007 Philippine Architecture Licensure Examinations (ALE)

delivered Oath-taking Ceremonies of newly Registered and Licensed Architects (RLAs)

August 18, 2007, Saturday at the Sofitel (old Philippine Plaza Hotel)

Imagine if there was only one person who took the board exam. What if there was only one school who participated in the exam?

Ladies and gentlemen, what makes this occasion special is the fact that there were 1,141 individuals representing 64 different schools who refused to be simply referred to as “designers”, rather, made a commitment to take the licensure exam in order to earn the right to be called licensed architects. And today, in a time when the architecture here in the country is facing a lot of issues concerning the practice of several high profile individuals, it’s my honor and privilege to be part of the 467 newly inducted architects. And yes, even for a magna cum laude, the exam was like a rock... its hard. Like chopping onions, it can make you cry.

Hon. Nilo Rosas, PRC Commissioner, our guest speaker, Dr. Fernando Nakpil Zialcita, Arch. Armando Alli, Chairman of the board of Architecture, Arch Angeline Chua Chiacco and Arch Marietta Segovia, members of the board, school officials and members of the faculty, members of the Professional Regulation Commission, my fellow inductees, parents, guests, ladies and gentlemen good afternoon.

In behalf of my fellow newly inducted architects, I would like to extend my deepest appreciation and gratitude to the following... first, to our parents, guardians, for their love, faith and unending support, for that special someone in our lives for being there. Personally, I would like to greet my special someone, Arch Dorothy Delos Santos, my partner, my reviewmate. By, gaya ng sabi ko sayo dati, “I can’t promise you that I’ll be able to love you for the rest of your life. I’ll love you for the rest of mine.”

To our schools, our professors, review instructors for the wisdom they imparted on us. Our schools may not be as popular or as prestigious foreign as architecture schools like Pratt institute and Columbia university, but at least they taught us one important thing: That there is a law and that we need to follow it; that we all need to believe in the system PRC is implementing.

During the review, there were rumors that there’s one professor in UST who called our batch incompetent. So to you, whoever you maybe, I’d like to say thank you. Thank you for inspiring me and my batchmates to strive hard and prove to you and to the rest of the college that batch 2005 is a batch that the university can be proud of. And we hope that we can continue to show you that our batch has what it takes to be one of the best the college has produced.

To our mentors, to the different architectural firms, for the opportunity they gave us to work for them for the past two years. Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen, there were so many things I realized because of the board exams. Well one is kaya ko palang tumagal ng mula 7 in the morning hanggang 6 in the evening ng walang kain, inom, o cr. Na masarap palang calamares at bread pan But seriously, I realized it’s hard to be an

architect. But it's even harder to be a Christian. Way harder. I wish I could say the phrase "it's funny how" but I think "it's a shame how" is more appropriate.

It's a shame how I can stay up late at night even up to the wee hours of the morning trying to read the building code, and all the other referral codes, when I don't think I'll last even for an hour in reading the one book we all have to refer to, the bible.

It's a shame how I was able to memorize so much in such a short span of time... the different formulas in structural design, the proponents of planning, top ten buildings, ratios, I even memorized the different refrigerants in building utilities from trichloromonofluoromethane up to ammonia, and yet with probably the exception John 3:16, there are no other verse in the bible that I can really say that I was able to memorize by heart.

It's a shame because I realized, and probably this also goes for majority of us, that the time in my life that I prayed the hardest was not during Christmas or easter, but during those 3 gruelling days of the exam.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I'm not a priest, never planned on becoming one, and I don't want to sound like one. But I know God put me here for a reason. And although it's nice to be finally called Architect after 5 long years in college and waiting patiently 2 years in the apprenticeship program, isn't it better to earn the title Christian?

During day three, out of 29 drawing requirements, I was only able to draw 14, but it was enough to give me a final rating of 83.3 percent. Sabi ko nga madalas tsamba, swerte lang. But to be christian, hindi pwede ang tsmaba, hindi pwedeng swerte, and definitely hindi pwedeng 83.3 percent lang. while the board exams lasts only 3 days, the test of Christianity takes a lifetime. It's not just a career, not a profession; it's a commitment, its sacrifice.

Upon our return to office next week, we will realize that the society we're living in may at times be cruel. "Mahirap kumita ng pera. May iilang mahirap pakisamahan. May ilang contractors na gugustuhin tayong subukan... Bagong architect lang yan... subukan nga natin kung may alam." It's ok because unlike the board exams were your not allowed markings or erasure, if you mark God in your life, you'll never go wrong.

In the debate society, we often use the phrase "at the end of the day" to end our rebuttal speeches. But for us, the days will certainly not be ending today. Sabi nga ng Carpenters, "We've Only Just Begun"; like the Black Eyed Peas, "Let's Get It Started."

Arch. Doni Rae Dionisio