

[PROCLAMATION NO. 822, April 04, 2005]

**DECLARING A PERIOD OF NATIONAL MOURNING OVER THE
PASSING AWAY OF POPE JOHN PAUL II**

WHEREAS, Pope John Paul II, from his young life as a priest to his role as Pope, evolved as the voice of goodness, social justice and man's freedom to love;

WHEREAS, he transcended physical, religious and racial barriers, reaching out in the true Christian tradition, to all peoples of the world as a Great Communicator of hope and freedom;

WHEREAS, his generosity, humility and profound love manifested itself in many ways as he made history as the first Pope to visit a Jewish synagogue, a Muslim mosque, and to ask forgiveness for the sins of the past in order to bridge generations and families separated by differences in religious and political beliefs;

WHEREAS, Pope John Paul II has a special place in the hearts of the Filipino people who will fondly remember him as the Pope who canonized the first Filipino saint, Lorenzo Ruiz, and for visiting the Philippines twice in February 1981 for a six-day pastoral visit, and in January 1995 for the World Youth Day as well as for ushering the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000;

WHEREAS, it was evident that the Philippines also had a special spot in the heart of the late Pope as Asia's oldest Christian democracy, for His Holiness personally selected Manila as the venue for the Fourth World Meeting of Families, the first to be held in Asia, in January 2003 and has been known to express his concern for the Filipino people during times of natural catastrophes and other upheavals;

WHEREAS, in his twenty-six years as Vicar of Christ, he made the fast-changing world gentler through his teachings, writings and way of life;

WHEREAS, His Holiness Pope John II has consistently spoken about the poverty that divides nations and the suffering of humanity particularly women and children including migrants as a Shepherd who reminds his flock that: "The Church is a mother who, like Mary, treasures in her heart the story of her children, making all their problems her own."

WHEREAS, this Proclamation expresses the Filipino people's solidarity with the world as our generation mourns the passing of His Holiness Pope John Paul II with loving prayers for his eternal peace.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, President of the Philippines, by virtue of the powers vested in me by law, do hereby proclaim a period of national mourning effective immediately until the burial of Pope John Paul II.