

The Province of Southeast Asia thanks Archbishop Yong as he takes up his new "appointment"

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Close to a thousand participants gathered at Suntec City Ballroom, Singapore, for the 10th Anniversary

Celebration of the Province of Southeast Asia. At the same time, it was a event to give thanks to the retiring Archsbishop, Datuk Yong Ping Chung for his commitment and leadership in the Province and the wider Communion. Also present were many overseas guests who were also here for the [Installation of the Third Archbishop of the Province](#).

In contrast to the earlier formal lunch reception at Fullerton Hotel, there was a strong sense of a family celebration as leaders from the various dioceses came together. In between dishes, served in true Chinese 'spinning-table' style, there were cultural presentations by parishes in the Province and words of greetings by church leaders.

Bishop Jonathan Gledhill, representative of Canterbury said, "Archbishop Yong is well-known in England and throughout the Communion as a wise counsellor and an inspiring leader. The way in which the Province has embraced its missions calling in the last decade has been a wonderful help to the rest of the Anglican world to be true to her calling." Bishop Bob Duncan, Moderator of Anglican Communion Network in the ECUSA and Bishop of Pittsburgh, expressed his appreciation for Datuk Yong's unwavering support and encouragement.

Bishop Thomas Soo (West Kowloon, Hong Kong) remarked, "He is a good leader who has moulded the Province of South East Asia. It is good for the Communion." Bishop Made Katib (Diocese of Kuching, in photo) in the closing speech, summarised, "He has run the race and he has fought the good fight."

The Primate of All Nigeria, Peter Akinola has this to say of his influence in Global South and the Communion, "He is a great Asian tiger. He is a warrior and fearless fighter. Through Archbishop Yong's leadership, this Province has been faithful even though it is small. So small can, indeed, be beautiful."

The phrase 'small but beautiful' was inspired by Mrs Julia Yong, who has stood as a prayerful and supportive partner. Many paid tribute to her, no less, Datuk Yong himself, who confessed that it would not have been possible without her companionship.

In his short but heart-warming speech, ArchbishopYong had the audience in pin-drop silence as he spoke of his next appointment upon retiring. After a pregnant pause, he quipped, "To be a full-time grandparent," to roars of laughter. "Running a Diocese and a Province is easier than running after two grandchildren." He expressed confidence that his successor, John Chew, will be able to continue the vision of the Province. He also spoke warmly of his successor in his Diocese (Sabah), Bishop-elect Albert Vun, as a clergy with a pulse for parish life, who has seen his parish experienced remarkable growth.

His easy wit and quick quips aside, he made certain statements reflecting his deep and innate understanding of the ministry. He is looking forward to retuning to the Province after a long overseas break, to again relearn and serve in submission to "archbishops and bishops." For him, the season of influential leadership is over and in quiet peace; he is welcoming a new season of serving in different ways, at the domestic front and in the churches upon request. If Yong Ping Chung is a special breed of an "Asian Tiger," it is one where courage and boldness are mixed with Christ-like humility and "selfless" servanthood; perhaps an "Aslan"-like lion may be a more accurate description.

As the evening closes, we could almost hear those present saying: "Datuk Yong and Julia, thank you for your fine example and we wish you well." And we are sure such echoes can be heard throughout the Communion.
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