



CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE
PHILIPPINES
LOS ANGELES



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**PHILCONGEN LA HOSTS “THE LAST CONVERSATIONS”
BOOK LAUNCH**



*Consul General Cruz and Consulate officials with Rev. Simon (4th from right),
Mr. Simon (3rd from right), and Filipino-American community members*

LOS ANGELES, CA – As part of its continuing efforts to promote cultural engagement and community dialogue, the Philippine Consulate General in Los Angeles hosted the launch of the book “*The Last Conversations*” on 19 March 2026 at the Consulate’s Community Hall.

The event gathered members of the Filipino-American community for an evening of reflection centered on the power of storytelling and the preservation of life experiences. The program featured the book’s authors, Rev. Dante Eleazar Lorenzana Simon and Mr. Elzar Dodjie Lorenzana Simon, who shared the inspiration and process behind their work.

In his opening remarks, Consul General Adelio Angelito S. Cruz welcomed the attendees and emphasized the significance of the book's message. He described *"The Last Conversations"* as a timely reminder of the importance of listening and valuing moments shared with loved ones, especially in the face of life's realities.



Consul General Cruz delivering his opening remarks

"Tonight is an opportunity for all of us to pause and reflect on the importance of truly listening while we still can," Consul General Cruz said. "[This book] preserves reflections that might otherwise be lost, and it builds a bridge between generations – allowing the experiences of the past to inform the decisions of the future."



Rev. Simon reading an excerpt from the book

The authors delivered a moving presentation and reading of selected excerpts, which offered the audience a glimpse into the personal and spiritual narratives captured in the book. Drawing from his decades of experience as a hospice chaplain, Rev. Simon shared stories of loss and the thoughts that emerge at the end of life. Meanwhile, Mr. Dodjie Simon complemented these with insights from his own multidisciplinary background, which further highlighted the universal relevance of their work.

The readings resonated strongly with attendees, many of whom expressed how the stories reflected their own experiences with family and grief. During the question-and-answer session, participants engaged the authors in thoughtful discussion about the process of documenting such personal moments and conversations.



Audience listening to the authors' presentation



Food sampling from Manila Inasal

The program concluded with a photo opportunity and informal fellowship among guests. Prior to the program, attendees were also treated to a special sampling from *Manila Inasal*, a Los Angeles-based Filipino restaurant that has gained recognition from the Los Angeles Times and The Infatuation.

“The Last Conversations” is a deeply reflective work drawn from the experiences of a hospice chaplain who walks beside individuals and families at the threshold of life and death. For more information on the authors and their work, visit <https://www.facebook.com/dodjsim>. (END)

