



SPU Manila INTER-OFFICE BULLETIN

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CATHOLICS BEGIN LENTEN OBSERVANCE

The Catholic Church began its observance of the Lenten Season on 25 February 2009, Ash Wednesday, and yesterday was the First Sunday of Lent.

Lent, in some Christian denominations, is the forty-day-long liturgical season of fasting and prayer before Easter. The forty days represent the time Jesus spent in the desert, where according to the Bible he endured temptation by Satan.

The purpose of Lent is the preparation of the believer—through prayer, penitence, almsgiving, and self-denial—for the annual commemoration during Holy Week of the Death and Resurrection of Jesus, which recalls the events linked to the Passion of Christ and culminates in Easter, the celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.



In Western Christianity (with the exception of the Archdiocese of Milan which follows the Ambrosian Rite), Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and concludes on Holy Saturday. The six Sundays in Lent are not counted among the forty days because each Sunday represents a "mini-Easter," a celebration of Jesus' victory over sin and death.

In those churches which follow the Byzantine tradition (e.g. Eastern Orthodox and Eastern Catholics), the forty days of Lent are calculated differently: the fast begins on Clean Monday, Sundays are included in the count, and it ends on the Friday before Palm Sunday. The days of Lazarus Saturday, Palm Sunday, and Holy Week are considered a distinct period of fasting.

Pursuant to Canon 1253, days of fasting and abstinence are set by the national episcopal conference. On days of fasting, one eats only one full meal, but may eat two smaller meals as necessary to keep up one's strength. The two small meals together must sum to less than the one full meal.

Parallel to the fasting laws are the laws of abstinence. These bind those over the age of fourteen. On days of abstinence, the person must not eat meat or poultry. According to canon law, all Fridays of the year, Ash Wednesday and several other days are days of abstinence, though in most countries, the strict requirements of abstinence have been limited by the bishops (in accordance with Canon 1253) to the Fridays of Lent and Ash Wednesday. On other abstinence days, the faithful are invited to perform some other act of penance. (from *Wikipedia*)

SHARING...SHARING...SHARING

From the SPMAFI

The Board of Trustees of the St. Paul Manila Alumni Foundation, Inc. (SPMAFI) will have its regular monthly meeting on Wednesday, 4 March 2009 in the University President's Board Room. The meeting will be presided over by the SPMAFI President, Sherry Lara-Alingod.

The agenda for the meeting will include the final financial report on the last homecoming, as well as matters pertaining to the graduating students, who will become members of the association.

The Board will also start communicating with the next jubilarian classes, especially HS 1985 (Silver) and HS 1990 (Golden) as good planning is a year-long undertaking.

Alumni News



The mother of Amiel Alcantara, the Grade Four pupil of the Ateneo de Manila University who was killed in an accident last week is a Paulinian. She is the former Melanie Anne N. Moreno, BSN 1981-Mariegales.

Amiel was run over in the parking area of the Ateneo and was dead on arrival at the hospital.

He was cremated last Saturday after a Funeral Mass in the Ateneo Grade School Chapel. His parents (shown in the picture), other family members, schoolmates, and friends released blue and white balloons in his memory.

"Fly high, Amiel."

The Paulnian Family commiserates with Pepe and Melanie Alcantara and their other children.

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Tessie Ick of HS 1956 sent this sad e-mail:

This is to inform you that our classmate, Azucena Santos-Prosser, died recently of Alzheimer. This info was relayed to me by Susana Sevilla-Suarez. Azucena lived in Santa Rosa, California. One week after she died, her sister, Zenaida "Mimi" also died of colon cancer.

We condole with the family of Azucena and Zenaida over their losses.

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Another recent death in the Paulinian Family was Asuncion "Sony" Lacson, BM 1957. Sony was a student of Stella Goldenberg-Brimo, who also passed away last year.

A Memorial Mass was held for Sony on 13 February 2009 in the Chapel of the Crucified Christ. It was attended by students and alumnae of the College of Music and the Performing Arts.

After the Mass, the alumnae had lunch in the University President's Board Room, courtesy of Sr. Ma. Anunciata Sta. Ana, SPC.

ON ESTY JUCO: PAULINIAN GOLD



Today we remember one of our most outstanding alumnae, Estelita G. Juco, *Summa Cum Laude* education graduate of 1952, a loyal Paulinian who spent 50 years of her life in St. Paul—as a student and as a teacher.

Aside from having been a most inspiring teacher of Public Relations and Journalism, she was the school's External Relations Director, moderator of *The Paulinian*, and founder of the PR Unit, a most valuable student arm of the school in those days.



After her retirement from St. Paul, Esty was appointed by President Corazon Aquino as Sectoral Representative for Women and the Disabled. As Congresswoman, she dedicated the last two years of her life serving her constituents, succeeding in making laws providing for ramps for the disabled and day care centers for children of employees.

The article we are sharing with you was written by a former student of hers--Annabelle Tan-Amor (SPCM AB '67) with her permission. It was published in Cebu's SUN STAR WEEKEND magazine on 30 July 1989, shortly after Miss Juco passed away.

ESTELITA JUCO: MY MENTOR, MY FRIEND

Annabelle Tan-Amor

I was the quintessential neophyte when I first walked into St. Paul's hallowed halls late in the sixties. It was the golden age of the fleur-de-lis, and St. Paul College of Manila, with Rev. Fr. James B. Reuter at the helm, was reaping theatrical laurels right and left.



Cecile Guidote-Alvarez was done doing her celebrated thesis on theatre arts, June Keithley was going to do 'Sound of Music' with Vic Silayan as Captain von Trapp, and tall, nimble Tina Santos was to play Liezl. Celeste Legaspi, a nursing student, was wowing them, not with her songs, but with her academic prowess. Baby Barredo was taking up music and voice, while her niece Honey (now better known as Maniya) Barredo, and the Revilla sisters featured prominently in school plays. The

recruits from other schools were made up almost exclusively by young gentlemen like Noel Trinidad, Noel Tolentino, Jose Avelino, Leo Martinez, Subas Herrero, Butch Aquino, Tommy Abuel and a few others, whose love for the theater (and Paulinians?) made them as young children trailing the piper piping his magical songs.

A Paulinian nursing student topped the board that year, while four others grabbed honors in the Magic Ten. The company was exhilarating and St. Paul was riding high. It was into this scene I was "dropped" when I came into the school that was also to be my home for the next four years.

I met Miss Juco (the way she was called in no way indicated the special blend of firmness and intimacy with which she kept us Journalism majors in harness) on the very first day of school. It was a Monday and the mandatory two-and-a-half-inch heels and stockings (sensible black school shoes were worn with socks on other days) was enforced. I had a full five minutes to negotiate the distance between the boarding students' lounge to the AV room on the fourth floor of the main college building, and there was no way I could do that on new high-heeled shoes! So as soon as the stampeding freshies were a safe distance away, i took off my heels and rushed after them on stockinged feet. I had learned earlier that if there was one thing Miss Juco could not bring herself to "smile over," it was habitual tardiness. Quite literally I decided to put my best feet forward on that point when suddenly a voice materialized behind me.

"It's better to be a little late following the rules, than to arrive on time after cutting corners. Better still to try to arrive on time with clean feet!" I turned but the speaker didn't even miss a step. On three-inch heels that matched the color of her bag, the lady in question walked on while I stayed rooted wondering how anyone could know what I was up to. It was only later that I realized the lady was not just anybody, not when this lady's other arm stopped about three inches above the elbow, not when she was Miss Juco herself!

The audio-visual room at St. Paul's was done-up like a theater. It was fully air-conditioned and sound-proofed. The students sat on long rows of tiered upholstered fold-up seats while the teacher stood on a long platform below.

IT WAS ORIENTATION TIME for the Journalism majors, and it was said that it was usually during this time that the officers and staff of the school paper, the PAULINIAN, would be chosen. Miss Juco was reading our name cards and as she looked up, I saw that she had only one good eye. One good arm, one good eye. I was jolted from my reverie when she called my name.

"Haven't we met before, Miss Tan?"

"Yes, Miss," I begged God then that she would not recount what had just transpired in the stairway.

"You are majoring in Journalism; you think you can write?"

"Yes, Miss."

"Well, Miss Tan, you must always remember that very often the writer's hands can get very

dirty, it goes with the territory. The writer's tools, pen and ink, can get very messy. His feet, however, must always remain immaculate."

I did not know it then but I had just been taught lesson number one. Later, in my junior year, as I was coming in bone-weary from having brought our paper to press, she expounded: "Your feet bring you bodily to where you may be forced to compromise your principles. While you can go anywhere with your mind, your feet will actually take you there. You can inhabit a book through someone else's talent. The same way you can invite others to inhabit another world through your writings - be worthy of your calling.

"Be absolutely sure the situation is not more than you can handle, otherwise don't even try to walk."

So there it was, her job, her craft, was to her a calling. Small wonder then that she responded to it in superhuman terms.

In her time, Estelita Juco was graduated from St. Paul *summa cum laude* and Paulinian Student of the Year. Later, there would be more honors, more feathers to her cap but Miss Juco would remain essentially the same. She was a stand-up comic, when the occasion needed one.

She could move an entire class to tears in the re-telling of their family's ordeal during the Japanese occupation of Manila. The awful guns of World War II took an eye and an arm from her, while she presently walked about with several pieces of shrapnel still embedded in different parts of her body. Still, she remained on exceptionally good terms with the Japanese. Fluent in Nippongo, she travelled extensively, often to Japan, frequently sharing with us stories about the Japanese people, even going as far as teaching us the correct way of holding the Japanese soup bowl.

She brought us the latest best-sellers which she would raffle off using two sticks of cigarettes (and cutting one shorter) which she would extract from those she suspected had started on the habit, saying always "...actually I'm doing you a great favor."

She brought us to the tidy fragrant world of Erehwon and Solidaridad where for many an afternoon we would gladden our young hearts by merely browsing and marking out the books to buy with the following month's allowance. Eventually the choice between a new book and a new pair of shoes would become moot and academic. Wherever Miss Juco went, whatever she did or thought, the moral lesson was not far behind. But there was never anything stuffy about her. She was one of the girls, if that was needed; a strict disciplinarian if THAT was necessary. A brilliant storyteller, we learned our lessons through her unorthodox method of teaching. Our lessons then are the stories we would never forget.

In my second year in college, seeing that it was time perhaps to gird me for higher responsibilities in the literary magazine of our school paper, she sent me to San Lorenzo Village to interview the celebrated author of "The Molave," the patrician recluse Rafael Zulueta da Costa. When I asked her if she would set up the interview for me, she promptly replied: "Of course not, what kind of a journalist do you expect to be anyway?"

I was 16 and small, and Manila was a huge labyrinth of a place, I was certain I would be swallowed up with great ease. Later, seeing how the whole experience touched me, she invited all her journalism classes to hear me tell the story of the interview again. I had done the impossible, she made certain that I understood that Zulueta da Costa agreed to the interview "only because I was curious about what a girl your age could ask." In fact, he knew Miss Juco, but I was the very first student of journalism she had sent to him. So did my mentor send me to do battle armed only with her confidence of my skills, and the constant encouragement to "invent" solutions as they became necessary, and so because I had become resourceful at last, I began to be able to truly deliver the goods.

ONE DAY in the September of my senior year, the rains came fast and furious. Many of the students lingered in the lobby, and girlish laughter sprinkled the corridors. Suddenly, somewhere deep in the main lobby that faced the courtyard, a sonorous melody rose from the baby grand. The giggles stopped, and well that might be for Miss Juco was playing Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, her one good hand a blur as it went flying cross the keyboard with the finest dexterity and precision to shame us all who had two good hands. But Miss Juco's influence, her style, her whole life wrought precisely the very opposite effect, for indeed the word "handicap" begged redefinition when applied to Miss Juco. She was the original free spirit who taught me and countless others the truest meaning of "Noblesse Oblige," fully accepting life as a true gift, and always enjoining others by supreme example to do the same.

Godspeed, my dear friend and teacher!

From the Human Resource Services Office Visit to the SPC Heritage Center

As part of the celebration of the Year of St. Paul , SPU Manila employees visited the SPC Heritage Center to learn more about the roots of St. Paul Manila and its patron, St. Paul. The employees have been going to the center by groups.



SPU Manila employees walking around the Labyrinth near the SPC Heritage Center.

