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balita

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MANJIT T. SINGH REANDI

President and CEO

John Hay Management Corporation

**Leaders by Vocation,
Rotarians by Heart**

**Rotary Club of Manila
President-Elect
Meets Cardinal Tagle,
Extends Invitation
for 107th Induction
Ceremonies**

**LIBERTY AND
PROSPERITY**
*The Making of
Chief Justice
Artemio Villaseñor
Panganiban Jr.*

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PROGRAM



UNITE
FOR
GOOD

ROTARY CLUB OF MANILA 18th Weekly Membership Meeting Rotary Year 2025-2026

Thursday, January 22, 2026, 12:30 PM
Manila Polo Club

Moderator: PDG ALEXANDER P. "Alex" CUREG

PART I

11:00 AM Registration /Lunch

12:30 PM Call to Order

VICE PRES. RICARDO S.B. "Ricky" GUEVARA

Invocation | **RTN. PAUL ANTHONY T. "Paul" KOH**

Philippine National Anthem | **AVP**

Rotary Club of Manila Hymn
RCM WF Music Chorale

The Four (4) Way Test
STAR RTN. OLIVER L. PANTALEON

Acknowledgement of Guests
PDG ALEXANDER P. "Alex" CUREG

Welcome Song | **RCM WF Music Chorale**

Birthday Celebrants

Jan 17 Sec. Anton Mauricio

Jan 18 Rtn. John Bautista

Jan 20 Rtn. Butch Tamayo
Rtn. Rocco Sarmiento

Jan 21 Rtn. Butch Alcantara

Jan 22 Rtn. Jop Esquivias

Maligayang Bati / Happy Birthday Song
RCM WF Chorale

PART II

12:55 PM President's Time

VICE PRES. RICARDO S.B. "Ricky" GUEVARA

1:00 PM Introduction of the Guest of Honor and
Speaker

Guest of Honor and Speaker

MR. MANJIT T. SINGH REANDI

President & CEO
John Hay Management Corporation (JHMC)

1:30 PM Open Forum / Q&A

1:45 PM Presentation of Certificate of Appreciation
VICE PRES. RICARDO S.B. "Ricky" GUEVARA

2:00 PM Adjournment
VICE PRES. RICARDO S.B. "Ricky" GUEVARA



**SERVICE
ABOVE SELF**

EDITORIAL

Reginald T. Yu
Editor-in-Chief



THE Rotary Club of Manila is deeply honored to welcome as our Guest Speaker Mr. Manjit T. Singh Reandi, President and Chief Executive Officer of the John Hay Management Corporation (JHMC), for what promises to be a rich, timely, and thought-provoking dialogue on leadership, development, and the enduring craft of management in an age of constant transformation.

Mr. Reandi stands at the helm of one of the country's most strategic and symbolically significant institutions. Camp John Hay is not merely an economic zone or a prime real estate development; it is a living convergence of history, environmental stewardship, global enterprise, and public trust. To lead such an institution requires more than technical competence. It calls for vision tempered by prudence, innovation guided by values, and a deep respect for the delicate balance between progress and preservation.

In today's environment, leaders are confronted by unprecedented challenges. Rapid technological change, shifting economic landscapes, heightened public scrutiny, and the growing demand for sustainability and ethical governance have redefined what effective leadership looks like. The old models of command and control are giving way to more nuanced forms of stewardship — where leaders must inspire rather than impose, listen as much as they direct, and build institutions that can endure beyond personalities and terms of office.

EDITORIAL

It is within this context that Mr. Reandi's insights become particularly compelling. His experience at John Hay offers a front-row view of how complex organizations are guided through competing demands: economic growth and environmental care, global competitiveness and local community interests, operational efficiency and long-term legacy. His perspective on development is not confined to physical infrastructure or financial performance, but extends to the cultivation of human capital, the strengthening of institutional culture, and the creation of systems that uphold transparency, accountability, and excellence.

For Rotarians, whose calling is leadership in service, this conversation resonates at a deeper level. Rotary has always believed that true leadership is not measured by authority, but by the positive and lasting impact one leaves on people and communities. The principles that guide our movement — integrity, service above self, and the pursuit of the common good — find natural parallels in the demands placed upon leaders in both the public and private sectors today.

Mr. Reandi's journey invites us to reflect on our own roles as leaders in our respective fields. How do we make decisions that are both bold and responsible? How do we nurture organizations that are resilient in the face of uncertainty? How do we ensure that growth does not come at the expense of values, and that success is shared rather than hoarded?

As the Rotary Club of Manila gathers to listen and engage, we look forward not only to learning from Mr. Reandi's experiences, but also to being challenged by them. His story is an invitation to examine leadership not as a position, but as a lifelong discipline — one that demands clarity of purpose, courage of conviction, and an unwavering commitment to serve something greater than oneself.

In welcoming Mr. Manjit T. Singh Reandi, we anticipate an exchange that will enlighten, inspire, and reaffirm the timeless truth that when leadership is anchored on integrity and vision, development becomes not just growth, but progress with meaning and legacy.

GUEST OF HONOR AND SPEAKER

Manjit T. SINGH REANDI

*President and CEO
John Hay Management Corporation*

MANJIT T. Singh Reandi was appointed as a Director of the Board of the John Hay Management Corporation (JHMC) on 08 April 2024. He was subsequently elected by the JHMC Board as President and Chief Executive Officer on 07 April 2025.



GUEST OF HONOR AND SPEAKER

A dynamic entrepreneur and executive leader, Mr. Singh Reandi brings to the JHMC Board extensive experience in finance, public administration, corporate operations, and social impact initiatives.

He holds a Bachelor of Science in Commerce from Lacson Colleges, and earned his Master's in Professional Studies, major in Public Administration, from Cavite State University in 2020. He also completed the Leadership and Management Development Program at the Ateneo Graduate School of Business, as well as professional courses in marketing strategy, digital transformation, and family business management.

An accomplished entrepreneur, Mr. Singh Reandi is the Founder and CEO of ReCash Prime Finance Corp., Pluma Builders Co., and Reandi Realms Realty. He also served as CEO of Reandi OPC, Chief Finance Officer of Papa Sarwan Lending Corp., and held key leadership positions in Peacock Direct Loans Inc. and

Peacock Financing Corp. His work spans industries including finance, housing, real estate, and construction, and has been marked by a strong emphasis on strategic growth and ethical operations.

In addition to his professional engagements, Mr. Singh Reandi is actively involved in civic and humanitarian causes. He currently serves as a Board Director of the Philippine Red Cross – Makati Chapter and of the North Luzon School for the Visually Impaired, Inc., and is a Past President of the Rotary Club of Forbes Park, through which he has championed education, community development, and inclusive service.

With a broad skill set covering entrepreneurship, operations management, public service, and financial leadership, Mr. Singh Reandi is well-positioned to contribute to the mission and strategic direction of JHMC, particularly in driving sustainable development and economic resilience within Camp John Hay.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Mid-Year Review in Da Nang, Vietnam

IN a significant milestone for our District 3810, District Governor Mary Mei V. Rodrigo is set to lead the Mid-Year Review in Da Nang, Vietnam on 22-26 January 2026, bringing together the Presidents of the various Rotary Clubs in the District along with key District Officers. The Rotary Club of Manila will be participating in this event, and a report will be made during the 3-day activity.

The annual Mid-Year Review serves as a strategic checkpoint for club leaders and district officers to assess progress on goals, share best practices, and deepen collaboration halfway through the Rotary year. Under Governor Rodrigo's leadership, the gathering aims to strengthen alignment on the District's theme of service, fellowship, and impact, ensuring that clubs across



Raoul C. Creencia
President

Manila, Pasay, Cavite, and Occidental Mindoro remain united in advancing Rotary's mission of "Service Above Self."

The event will give all the Club Presidents the opportunity to formally report on the club's performance and direction. Its importance may be understood in several key aspects:

1. Accountability and Transparency

The mid-year review allows the Club President to account to the members—and to the district, when applicable—on how plans,

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

commitments, and resources have been utilized during the first half of the Rotary year. It reinforces transparency in leadership and strengthens trust within the club. It will be recalled that I gave my mid-year report to the membership during last week's membership meeting.

2. Assessment of Goals and Performance

By reporting on service projects, membership growth, attendance, Rotary Foundation giving, and public image initiatives, the Club President can objectively measure whether the club is on track to meet its annual goals. It highlights both achievements and areas that need attention or improvement.

3. Opportunity for Course Correction

Challenges inevitably arise midstream. The review provides a timely opportunity to recalibrate strategies, reallocate resources, or revise timelines, ensuring that the club finishes the Rotary year strong rather than merely continuing on an ineffective path.

4. Alignment with District and Rotary International Priorities

Through the President's report, the club can assess whether its activities remain aligned with district thrusts and Rotary International priorities, including The Rotary Foundation goals and the Action Plan. This alignment is crucial for relevance and impact.

5. Engagement and Motivation of Members

A well-delivered mid-year report recognizes the efforts of officers and members, celebrates milestones, and renews enthusiasm. It reminds members that their contributions matter and that there is still time to make meaningful progress before year-end.

6. Continuity and Leadership Transition

The mid-year review also serves as a bridge between the current and incoming leadership. Clear reporting and documentation help ensure continuity, smoother transition, and institutional memory within the club.

In sum, the Rotary Mid-Year Review is not merely a reporting exercise. It is a strategic leadership moment where the Club President reflects, realigns, and re-energizes the club toward fulfilling its commitments to service above self.



Leaders by Vocation, Rotarians by Heart

by PE Reginald T. Yu

THE Rotary Club of Manila gathered in the gracious halls of the Manila Polo Club for its 17th Weekly Membership Meeting of Rotary Year 2025–2026, a luncheon assembly marked by fellowship, institutional updates, and, most notably, two compelling Classification Talks delivered by Star Rotarians **Rowel Janson S. Ong** and **Jason Romeo C. Valderrama**.

The meeting opened formally with the Call to Order by President **Raoul C. Creencia** and concluded with his Adjournment, framing an afternoon that blended Rotary tradition with professional inspiration.



President Raoul C. Creencia called the meeting to order.

Moderating the program with steady warmth and precision was Rotarian **Ingill Ra**, who guided the flow of proceedings and ensured that each segment of the meeting unfolded with dignity and purpose. The invocation was led by Rotarian **Juanito A. “John” Simon**, followed by the singing of the Philippine National Anthem and the Rotary Club of Manila Hymn by the **RCM World-Famous Music Chorale**, and the solemn recitation of the Four-Way Test led by Star Rotarian **Chris C. Tamesis**.



Rtn. Ingill Ra moderated the meeting.



Rtn. Juanito A. “John” Simon led the invocation.



STAR Rtn. Chris C. Tamesis led the recitation of the Four-Way Test.

Rotarian **Ingill Ra** also formally acknowledged the guests in attendance and welcomed everyone on behalf of the Club, after which the **RCM World-Famous Music Chorale** rendered a Welcome Song that set a gracious and celebratory tone. Birthday celebrants for the period, Rotarian **Jherry Zheng** (January 9) and Rotarian **Paul Kho** (January 10), were honored with the traditional “Maligayang Bati / Happy Birthday” song, once again led by the Chorale.

The meeting then turned to matters of governance and stewardship. Assistant Internal Auditor **Michael D. “Mike” Roxas**, Treasurer of the Rotary Club of Manila Foundation, Inc. (RCMFI), delivered a clear and transparent Report on the Financial Status of RCMFI, underscoring the Club’s commitment to accountability. This was followed by the Announcement of the RCMFI Election of the Board of Trustees for Rotary Year 2026–2027, presented by PE **Reginald T. “Reggie” Yu**, Chairman of the RCMFI NOMELEC, who outlined the electoral process and reminded members of the importance of active participation in the life of the Foundation.



Assistant Internal Auditor Michael D. “Mike” Roxas, Treasurer of the Rotary Club of Manila Foundation, Inc. (RCMFI), delivered a clear and transparent Report on the Financial Status of RCMFI



PE Reginald T. “Reggie” Yu, Chairman of the RCMFI NOMELEC, presented the results of the RCMFI Election of the Board of Trustees for Rotary Year 2026–2027

During President’s Time, President **Raoul C. Creencia** shared updates and reflections, reaffirming the Club’s direction for the year and



President Raoul C. Creencia shared updates and reflections during the President's Time.

paving the way for the intellectual and professional highlight of the afternoon: the Classification Talks of two of the Club's Star Rotarians.

Star Rotarian Rowel Janson S. Ong
Classification: Real Estate Professional Services – Agency / Development Consultancy

Star Rotarian **Rowel Janson S. Ong** began his talk with characteristic humility and efficiency, noting that he had intentionally trimmed his presentation to focus on substance rather than length. He introduced himself as the founder and principal of Hard Assets Express, Inc., a real estate brokerage and development consultancy firm that, in his words, “connects the right

property to the right purpose.”

He explained that Hard Assets Express, established in 2014, was built on a multidisciplinary foundation that brings together the expertise of a licensed civil engineer and broker, a senior real estate professional with deep experience in major land and property transactions, and a partner lawyer who ensures that every deal is legally sound and fully compliant. This structure, he emphasized, allows the firm to go beyond simple buying and selling and instead provide strategic, end-to-end advisory services for individuals, developers, and corporate clients.

Drawing from over a decade of practice, Ong shared how the company's capabilities span corporate and commercial site sourcing, residential and investment brokerage, and full real estate consultancy, including site selection, valuation, highest-and-best-use analysis, and development feasibility. Accredited with the country's top developers and supported by a nationwide broker network, Hard Assets Express has helped major corporations such as Wilcon Depot identify and secure strategic expansion sites across the Philippines, completing dozens of locations out of more than a hundred evaluated.

He illustrated the firm's reach through a roster of projects and partners: hotel and resort developments in Boracay and La Union, high-rise and mixed-use projects in Binondo and Mandaluyong, industrial and logistics facilities, township and residential subdivisions, and prime commercial properties in Metro Manila and beyond.

With more than 360 hectares of land sold for development, numerous high-rise parcels transacted, and a strong portfolio of residential and commercial deals, Ong presented a picture of a company built on technical rigor, speed of execution, and, above all, integrity.

What resonated deeply with the Rotarians in attendance was his emphasis on trust and long-term partnership.

“We do not just close deals,” he said in essence, **“we help our clients make good real estate decisions.”**

In the Rotary context, this philosophy mirrored the Four-Way Test and the ideal of Service Above Self: professional excellence anchored on ethics, prudence, and relationships that endure.

Star Rotarian Jason Romeo C. Valderrama

Classification: Construction Project Management

Taking the podium next, Star Rotarian **Jason Romeo C. Valderrama** offered a narrative that seamlessly wove personal journey, professional discipline, and social responsibility. A relatively new member of the Rotary Club of Manila, having joined only in November, he nonetheless spoke with the quiet confidence of a seasoned leader.

A civil engineer by training and a graduate of the University of the Philippines Diliman, with an MBA from the Ateneo Graduate School of Business, Valderrama founded JCV & Associates Project Management and Development, Inc. (JCVA) in 2014. He clarified at the outset that his firm is not a contractor, but a professional consultancy that represents the interests of project owners, standing at the critical intersection of client, designer, and builder to ensure that cost, schedule, quality, safety, and reputation are all protected.

With nearly two decades of experience, Valderrama shared that JCVA has served over 170 clients and completed more than 250 projects, with a combined capital expenditure

exceeding three billion US dollars and a built area of over two million square meters. Today, the firm is among the top five construction consultancy companies in the Philippines by market share, is fully Filipino-owned, and holds dual ISO certifications, with a third — on environmental management — soon to be added.

Beyond impressive statistics, however, his talk gained moral depth when he spoke of the role of honest and competent project management in safeguarding public trust. He alluded to national controversies in infrastructure and flood control, stressing that many such failures could have been avoided through professional, ethical, and transparent management — principles that resonate strongly with Rotary's advocacy for integrity in all vocations.

Valderrama also highlighted JCVA's commitment to corporate social responsibility. As an alumnus of the University of the Philippines, he has led initiatives to build and refurbish student facilities, sponsor engineering scholars, and operate a structured internship program that nurtures the next generation of Filipino professionals. His firm's guiding belief, he concluded, is that "successful engineering projects do not happen by accident; they are engineered" — a statement that encapsulates both technical mastery and deliberate leadership.



STAR Rotarians Rowel Janson S. Ong and Jason Romeo C. Valderrama engaged in a Q&A session with PD Issam Eldebs, Sec. Anton Mauricio, PDG Alex Cureg, PSAA Gunter Matschuck, and Rtn. Philip Recto.



A Meeting of Vocation and Values

The Classification Talks of Star Rotarians Ong and Valderrama transformed the 17th Weekly Membership Meeting into more than a routine luncheon. They became a living testament to Rotary's ideal that every profession, when practiced with competence, conscience, and compassion, becomes a channel of service. From real estate advisory grounded in integrity to construction management anchored in accountability and nation-building, both speakers demonstrated how excellence in one's calling can uplift communities and strengthen institutions.

The afternoon concluded with the Presentation of Certificates of Appreciation by President **Raoul C. Creencia**, a gesture that formally recognized the contributions of the speakers and participants, before he finally declared the meeting adjourned.

In the elegant setting of the Manila Polo Club, amid fellowship and shared purpose, the Rotary Club of Manila once again affirmed that its strength lies not only in its history and traditions, but in the caliber of men and women who live out Rotary values in their daily professional lives.



President Raoul C. Creencia presented the Certificates of Appreciation to STAR Rotarians Rowel Janson S. Ong and Jason Romeo C. Valderrama



Meeting Fellowship



Meeting Fellowship



CLUB ADMINISTRATION

RCM Members' Attendance Report
RY 2025-2026



ATTENDANCE REPORT
January 2026

JANUARY 2026	January 08, 2026	January 15, 2026
	BSP GOVERNOR ELI M. REMOLONA JR.	CLASSIFICATION TALKS
MEMBERS PRESENT	49	27
MEMBERS PRESENT %	22%	12%
MAKE UP ATTENDEES	21	8
EXEMPTED	4	2
ON LEAVE	0	0
Total Active Members	74	37
Total # of Members	218	218
TOTAL %:	34%	17%
ROTARACTORS	9	0
MEDIA	0	0
EMBASSIES / DIPLOMATIC CORPS	0	0
DG, DGE, DGN, PDG	24	0
GOHS / GS	7	0
VISITING ROTARIAN	39	2
Guests of RCM MEMBERS	3	1
TOTAL ATTENDEES	107	30



LIST OF ATTENDEES
January 15, 2026

- 1 Albaña, Michael Jaey C
- 2 Cid, Dean Y.
- 3 Creencia, Raoul C.
- 4 Cureg, Alexander P.
- 5 Davis, Raymond N.
- 6 Del Rosario Sr., Oscar A.
- 7 Egan, Brendan W.L.
- 8 Eldebs, Issam
- 9 Guevara, Ricardo S.
- 10 Koh, Paul Anthony T
- 11 Locsin, Arsenio Z.
- 12 Macatoman, Abdulgani M.
- 13 Matschuck, Guenter Gerhard G.
- 14 Mauricio, Antonilo DC
- 15 Ong, Rowel Janson S.
- 16 Ra, Ingill
- 17 Recto, Philip H.
- 18 Roxas, Michael D.
- 19 Serapio, Carlos G.
- 20 Shimoda, Shigeru
- 21 Simon, Juanito A.
- 22 Valencia, John Nico P.
- 23 Yu, Reginald Tieng
- 24 Hiroyasu, Kanda
- 25 Valderrama, Jason
- 26 Pantaleon, Oliver
- 27 Tamesis, Chris C.

CLUB ADMINISTRATION

List of Members Who Have Paid Their Annual Dues for RY 2025-2026

As of January 20, 2026

1	ABOY, VALENTINO G.	46	DE CASTRO, JUAN ARTURO ILUMINADO
2	ABRIAM, ARIEL	47	DEL ROSARIO, OSCAR
3	ACOSTA, CRISPINIANO G.	48	DIONISIO, RAFAEL
4	AGNES, JERRY A.	49	DOMINGO, RICO, V.
5	ALBAÑA, MICHAEL JAEY	50	DOMINGUEZ, CARLOS G.
6	ALDAY, ALBERT S.	51	DY, MANUEL
7	ALINGOG, ALDOUS REX A.	52	EGAN, BRENDAN
8	ALUNAN, RAFAEL M.	53	ELDEBS, ISSAM
9	ANDAL, AVELINO L.	54	ENRIQUEZ, EDUARDO III
10	ARAGON, JOSHUA RUEBEN G.	55	ESGUERRA, HERMINIO S.
11	ARAMBULO, JOAQUIN JR. L.	56	ESQUIVIAS, JOAQUIN PABLO A.
12	ARGUELLES, PABLO C.	57	EUGENIO, JOHN EMYL G.
13	AVENTURA, AVELINO JR. L.	58	EUGENIO, ERIC
14	BAGATSING, VALENTINO	59	FAJARDO, BEDA G.
15	BALANAY, ARIES B.	60	FERNANDEZ, ANTONIO JAIME JOSE V.
16	BARTOLOME, ARSENIO III M.	61	FOLLOSCO, CEFERINO JR. G.
17	BAUTISTA, JOHN JR.	62	GARCIA, HERBERT JOEY
18	BEDIONES, RODOLFO P.	63	GARCIA, PAUL JOSEPH M.
19	BELLA, GERONIMO JR. D.	64	GARCIA, THEODORE Q.
20	BENEDICTO, BERNARDO III T.	65	GARCIA, VICTOR III G.
21	BENEDICTO, SIXTO T.	66	GASPAR, FERNANDO
22	BERTELSEN, BERTEL INGMAR	67	GINEZ, WINSTON M.
23	BLANCO, MANUEL M.	68	GO, DANNY C.
24	BOGOVICH, JASON M.	69	GO, HENRY S.
25	BRANELEC, JACQUES	70	GONZALES, JONAS R.
26	BUENDIA, CARLOS	71	GONZALES-LA'O, EMIL
27	CABANGON, EDGARD	72	GUARIN, MICHAEL ARCATOMY
28	CABUNAG, ROGELIO	73	GUEVARA, DOMINGO JR.
29	CAMAT, NATHANIEL	74	GUEVARA, RICARDO S.B.
30	CAMPOS, JOSELITO JR. D.	75	HALLARE, DELFIN JR.
31	CANON, RAUL JR C.	76	HALLARE, NICOLO
32	CARLOS, VICENTE J.	77	HERNANDEZ, EDWIN H.
33	CARRANCEJA, ARVIN ARIK B.	78	HESSE, UWE
34	CASTRO, KARLO EUGENE JOSEF M.	79	IBUYAN, BENEDICT JULIUS F.
35	CATALAN, RODILLO	80	JUCABAN, JERIC J.
36	CHAHWAN, RAMI	81	KALAW, TEODORO ALEJANDRO IV Y.
37	CHAN, ROBERT JR.	82	KANDA, HIROYUSI
38	CID, DEAN	83	KATIGBAK J ALFONSO L
39	CO, VAL CONSTANTINE L.	84	KHO, RALPH VALENTIN
40	COYIUTO, ROBERT JR. G.	85	KLEBS, DAVID
41	CREENCIA, RAOUL C.	86	KOH, PAUL ANTHONY
42	CUREG, ALEXANDER P.	87	LACAMBACAL, ALVIN
43	CUTTER, JOHN MICHAEL	88	LIAMZON, ROMEO THADDEUS M.
44	DAYANG, JUAN E.	89	LIM, RICHARD
45	DAVIS, RAYMOND N.	90	LAUREL, RICARDO P.
		91	LAZARO, JUAN MIGUEL

CLUB ADMINISTRATION

List of Members Who Have Paid Their Annual Dues for RY 2025-2026

As of January 20, 2026

92	LEDDA, JAIME VICTOR B.	139	RODRIGUEZ, JOAQUIN SR. C.
93	LEE, RICHARD L.	140	ROMUALDEZ, FERDINAND MARTIN G.
94	LI, RICHARD JOSEPH C.	141	ROÑO, MARLON
95	LIM, DAVID EDUARDO T.	142	ROXAS, MICHAEL D.
96	LOCSIN, ARSENIO Z.	143	SARMIENTO, RICARDO MANUEL M.
97	LONZAGA, REINERIO C.	144	SCHMITZ, STEFAN
98	LOPEZ, ANTONIO	145	SCHNEIDER, BERND
99	LOPEZ, ARTHUR M.	146	SERAPIO, CARLOS G.
100	LORENZANA, DELFIN	147	SEVILLA, LUIS ANGELO L.
101	MACAPAGAL, MICHAEL T.	148	SHIMODA, SHIGERU
102	MACATOMAN, ABDULGANI M.	149	SIBAYAN, JOSELITO H.
103	MAGSAYSAY, FRANCISCO D.	150	SIMON, JUANITO AYSON
104	MANALAYSAY, CESAR P.	151	SO, WARREN
105	MANGALILE, SENEN	152	SOBREPEÑA, ROBERT JOHN
106	MARTINEZ, RONALD	153	STRANATHAN, IKE EDWARD
107	MATSCHUCK, GUENTER GERHARD G.	154	SYJUCO, JOSE, JR. A.
108	MAURICIO, ANTONILO DC	155	TAGAYSAY, HECTOR O.
109	MAURICIO, FRANCISCO ROBERTO C.	156	TALAMPAS, JOSE ANGEL L.
110	MENDOZA, MIGUEL	157	TALUSAN, FERDINAND E.
111	MENDOZA, RAYMUND JOSEPH D.	158	TAMANO, SHALIMAR H.
112	MOMMAERTS, STEVE	159	TAMAYO, VICTOR L.
113	NOLIDO, RAMON ALBERTO B.	160	TAMESIS, CHRIS
114	NOMURA, KAZUHIRO	161	TAN, EUSEBIO V.
115	NONES, ROMEO C.	162	TAN, JOHN G.
116	NUÑEZ, JOSE A.	163	TAN, LAWRENCE L.
117	OBRADO, DANIEL	164	TEE, TEDDY JR. B.
118	OCAMPO, TEODORO J.	165	TEJUMAL, MICHAEL
119	ONG, PHILIP	166	TILLMAN, HANSEL JOSEPH MICHAEL L.
120	ONG, ROWEL JANSON S.	167	VALDES, JOELC.
121	PAGDANGANAN, ROBERTO M.	168	VALDEZ, AMADO
122	PALACIOS, ALBERT S.	169	VALDEZ, JASON ROLAND N.
123	PALLASIGUE, JOHN BRIAN C.	170	VALDERRAMA, JASON ROMEO
124	PANTALEON, OLIVER	171	VALENCIA, JOHN NICO P.
125	PASCUAL, ABRAHAM	172	VALENCIA, RODOLFO G.
126	PAYUMO, FELICITO C.	173	VAZQUEZ, EVARISTO JR.
127	PELIÑO, WILFREDO	174	VILLARICA, HENRY R.
128	PINEDA, JESUS JR. M.	176	YAP, ENRIQUE JR.
129	PINEDA, PATRICIO JR. F.	177	YORDANOV, STEFAN
130	PIZARRAS, JORDAN M.	178	YU, GEOFFREY C.
131	PREYSLER, FAUSTO JR. D.R.	179	YU, REGINALD T.
132	PUJALTE, JOSE BRITTANIO JR.	180	ZALDARRIAGA, FELIX FRANCISCO S.
133	RA, INGILL	181	ZEITOUNI, NAGI
134	RAMOS, CLAVER P.	182	ZIALCITA, XAVIER Y.
135	RANKL, PETER	183	ZIMMER, CHRISTOPHER
136	RECTO, PHILIP H.		
137	REYNOLDS, DAVID		
138	RODRIGUEZ, JOAQUIN ANTHONY JR. H.		



Rotary Club of Manila President-Elect Meets Cardinal Tagle, Extends Invitation for 107th Induction Ceremonies

During the encounter, Yu personally handed Cardinal Tagle a formal invitation to serve as Guest of Honor and Speaker at the Rotary Club of Manila's 107th Induction and Handover Ceremonies, scheduled in July, marking another milestone for Asia's first and largest Rotary club.

The meeting took place in the early hours of the morning, reflecting the Cardinal's tightly packed international schedule and the limited window available for a personal audience. Despite this, Cardinal Tagle received the invitation with warmth and attentiveness, and expressed his willingness to look into his calendar to explore the possibility of flying from Rome to Manila to participate in the historic event.

ROTARY Club of Manila President-Elect Reggie Yu was granted a brief but meaningful audience with His Eminence Luis Antonio Cardinal Tagle, Pro-Prefect of the Section for the First Evangelization and New Particular Churches of the Dicastery for Evangelization, Grand Chancellor of the Pontifical Urban University, and Metropolitan Archbishop emeritus of Manila, during a short meeting at the airport as the Cardinal awaited his onward flight to Hong Kong.

Rotary Club of Manila President-Elect Meets Cardinal Tagle, Extends Invitation for 107th Induction Ceremonies

The invitation comes at a time when the Rotary Club of Manila has been emphasizing the importance of moral and values-based leadership amid growing public concern over governance issues, including widespread frustration over the country's flood-control crisis and calls for greater accountability. In this context, the Club has turned to spiritual leaders whose influence and credibility continue to resonate deeply with Filipino communities.

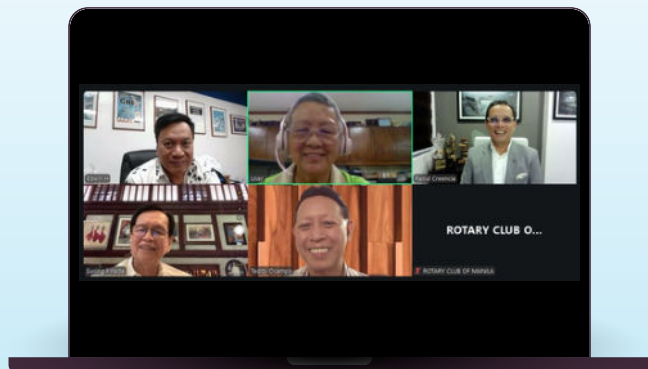
Cardinal Tagle, regarded as the highest-ranking Filipino in the Catholic Church today, is widely respected for his pastoral leadership, humility, and strong engagement with grassroots communities. His global role in the Vatican and enduring connection with the Philippine Church have made him a moral and spiritual reference point for many Filipinos.



Yu expressed hope that, should the Cardinal's schedule permit, his presence at the Rotary induction would be both an honor for the organization and an inspiration to its members as they begin a new Rotary year of service.

The Rotary Club of Manila, founded in 1919, is preparing for its 107th Induction and Handover Ceremonies as part of its continuing commitment to leadership, service, and nation-building.

TOWER Awards 2026 Committee Meeting



The Outstanding Workers of the Republic (TOWER) Awards 2026 Committee met via Zoom on January 16, 2026.

Present at the meeting were President Raoul Creencia, Director Edwin Hernandez, TOWER Awards Project Chair Susung Pineda, and Past President Teddy Ocampo.

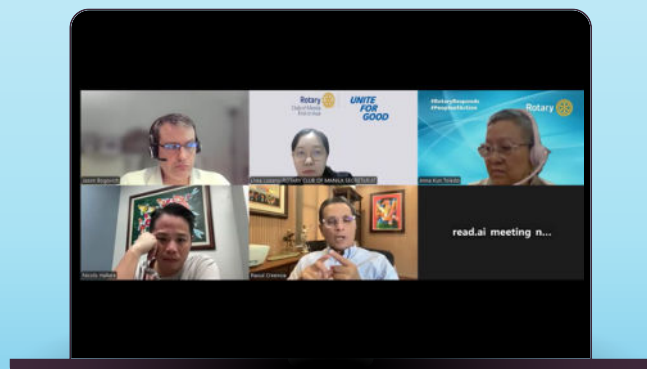


RCM Website Committee Meeting



The RCM Website Committee met on January 20, 2026 to discuss updates, proposals, and other relevant information regarding the RCM website.

Present at the meeting were President Raoul Creencia, Committee Chair Rtn. Nico Hallare, Director Jason Bogovich, Consultant Anna Kun-Toledo, and Executive Secretary Lhea Lozano.



RCM Pro Patria Journalism Awards Committee Meeting



The RCM Pro Patria Journalism Awards Committee met for lunch on January 21, 2026 at the Manila Golf Club. Present were Sec. Anton Mauricio, Vice Chair Caloy Serapio, Chair Dean Amading Valdez, Director in Charge (and host) Edwin Hernandez, and President Raoul Creencia.

Rotary Club of Manila Recognized by Rotary District 3810 as Top 2 Contributor to The Rotary Foundation for the Month of December 2025



The Rotary Club of Manila receives a Certificate of Recognition from RI District 3810 in recognition of its “exemplary support and generosity as the Top 2 Contributor to The Rotary Foundation, with a total contribution of \$6,450.00 for the month of December 2025.”

Rotary Club of Manila Leaders Meet with Manila Hotel for the Club's 107th Induction and Handover Ceremonies



Induction Chairman PDG Alex Cureg, DE/Dir. Mike Albaña, IS Albert S. Alday and STAR Rtn. Rowel Ong met with Manila Hotel President, Former Senator and Rotary District 3830 DGND Joey Lina last January 20, 2026 at the Executive Office of the Manila Hotel in Manila with respect to concessions and discounts for the 107th Induction and Handover Ceremonies of the Rotary Club of Manila.

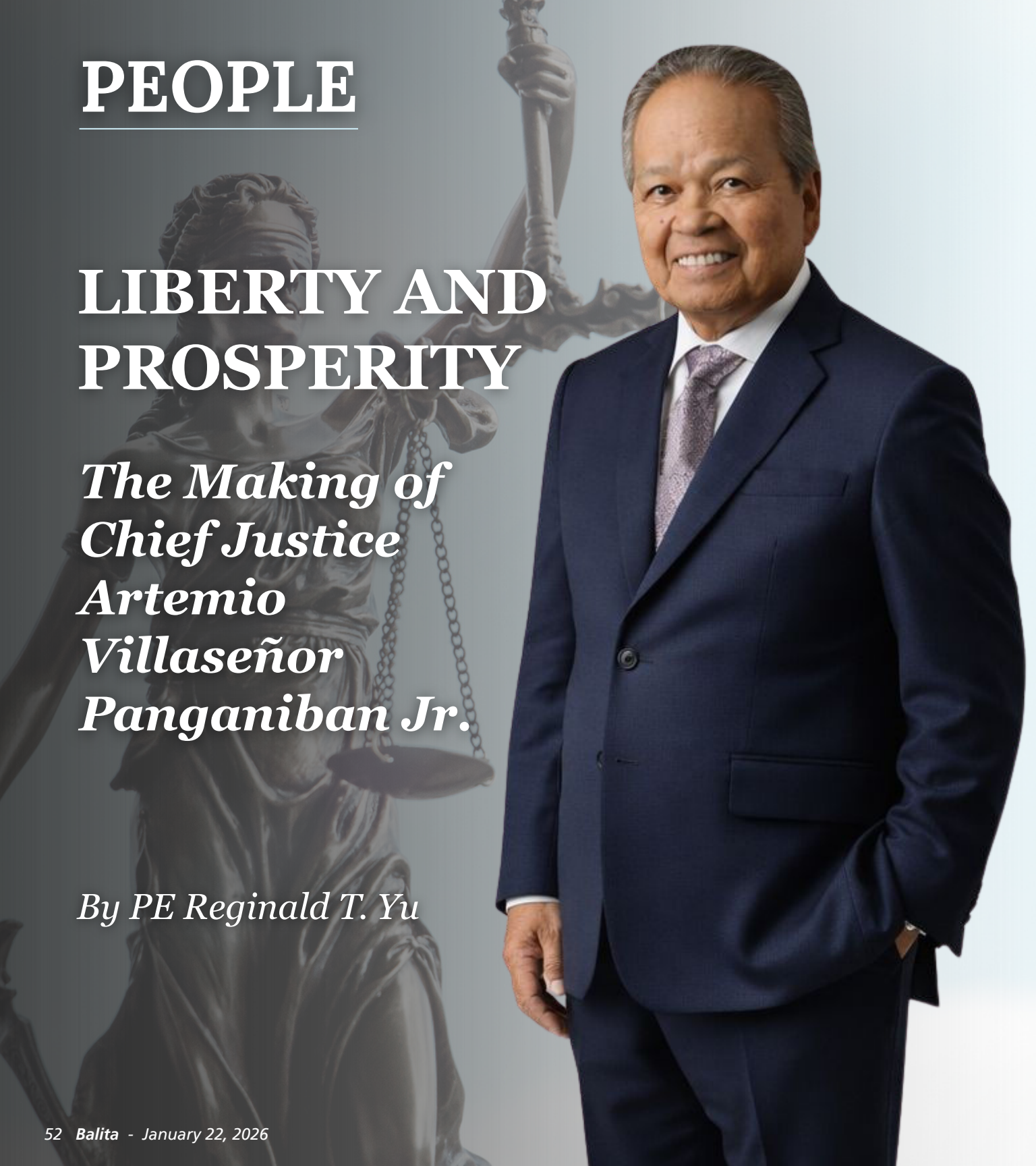


Food Tasting Session for the 107th Induction and Handover Ceremonies



Induction Chairman PDG Alex Cureg, DE/Dir. Mike Albaña, PE Reggie Yu, Manila Hotel Banquet Sales Manager Mitzi So, IS Albert S. Alday, STAR Rtn. Rowel Ong and Lady Anna Cureg took part in the food tasting session for the 107th Induction and Handover Ceremonies of the Rotary Club of Manila last January 20, 2026 at the Apitong Room of the Manila Hotel in Manila.





PEOPLE

LIBERTY AND PROSPERITY

*The Making of
Chief Justice
Artemio
Villaseñor
Panganiban Jr.*

By PE Reginald T. Yu

LIBERTY AND PROSPERITY

The Making of Chief Justice Artemio Villaseñor Panganiban Jr.

FROM a barefoot newsboy sleeping on the pavements of Sampaloc to a jurist whose judgment helped steady the Republic at its most perilous hour, the life of Artemio Villaseñor Panganiban Jr. unfolds as a dramatic study in endurance, conscience, and faith. Forged by poverty, sharpened by discipline, delayed by rejection, and ultimately entrusted with the nation's highest judicial office, his journey is neither linear nor comfortable — but relentlessly purposeful. This is the story of a man who believed that law must do more than restrain power; it must protect liberty, nurture prosperity, and remain worthy of the people it serves — even when history demands decisions before dawn.



The Old Home Economics Building of Candaba Elementary School, which served as the Panganiban family's refuge from 1942 to 1945 — a silent witness to the hardships and resilience of wartime life, where, amid uncertainty and upheaval, the family found shelter and strength, and where the foundations of faith, endurance, and solidarity were quietly forged.



The Panganiban siblings in their teenage years in the early 1950s — captured at a time of youthful promise and close family bonds, reflecting the formative season that shaped their character, aspirations, and the values of faith, discipline, and mutual support that would guide them throughout their lives.

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PROLOGUE: *The Republic at Dawn*

At dawn on January 20, 2001, the Philippines was no longer governed by certainty.

The night had ended, but the morning refused to arrive cleanly. Manila stirred under a low sky, its streets restless with rumor and anger. Barricades stood at Mendiola. Protesters clustered like unsettled weather. Somewhere between the palace and the people, authority had fractured.

Government, that great machinery of order, had stalled.

Inside this moment — before the oath, before the headlines, before history hardened into verdict — **Artemio Villaseñor Panganiban Jr.** prayed.

He was not a man drawn to drama. He did not court crisis or relish the spotlight of emergency. He had spent his life inside institutions, not outside them — believing, stubbornly, that constitutions mattered even when crowds did not.

But now the Constitution itself trembled.

Joseph Estrada was still, technically, President. Gloria Macapagal Arroyo was Vice President — unable to act while

legality remained unresolved. The military watched. The streets waited. A coup was imaginable. Bloodshed was possible. Silence was dangerous.

In the quiet hours before noon, Art reached a conclusion that would follow him for the rest of his life.

If the law waited, chaos would arrive first.

And so, at approximately 5:30 in the morning, he made a call — not as a politician, not as a strategist, but as a jurist confronting the edge of collapse. He called the Chief Justice and proposed something radical in its simplicity: swear her in.

Do it now.

Do it lawfully.

Do it before the Republic fractures beyond repair.

That call — invisible to the crowd, absent from photographs — would become one of the most consequential acts of judgment in modern Philippine history.

To understand how a man could make such a decision, one must return not to the Supreme Court, but to a sidewalk in Sampaloc — where a boy once learned that survival itself requires discipline, and that order, when absent, must be built by hand.

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The Boy Who Slept on Pavement

Sampaloc did not produce future Chief Justices.

It produced workers. Survivors. Children who learned early that hunger was not an event but a condition.

In a cramped rented apartment on Cataluña Street, the youngest of four children grew up listening to adult conversations about money that never stretched far enough. His father, Artemio Sr., had left school early to support seven younger siblings after the death of his own father. His mother, Patricia Villaseñor, had little formal education but possessed the quiet endurance common to women who carry families through scarcity.

For the youngest son, childhood ended early.

He sold newspapers before dawn. He sold cigarettes during the day. He learned which streets produced buyers and which produced trouble. Some nights, it made no sense to go home. He slept on sidewalks — not from neglect, but from calculation. The papers arrived early. He needed to be there first.

Years later, he would recall those nights without sentimentality. He remembered the cold stone beneath his back. The

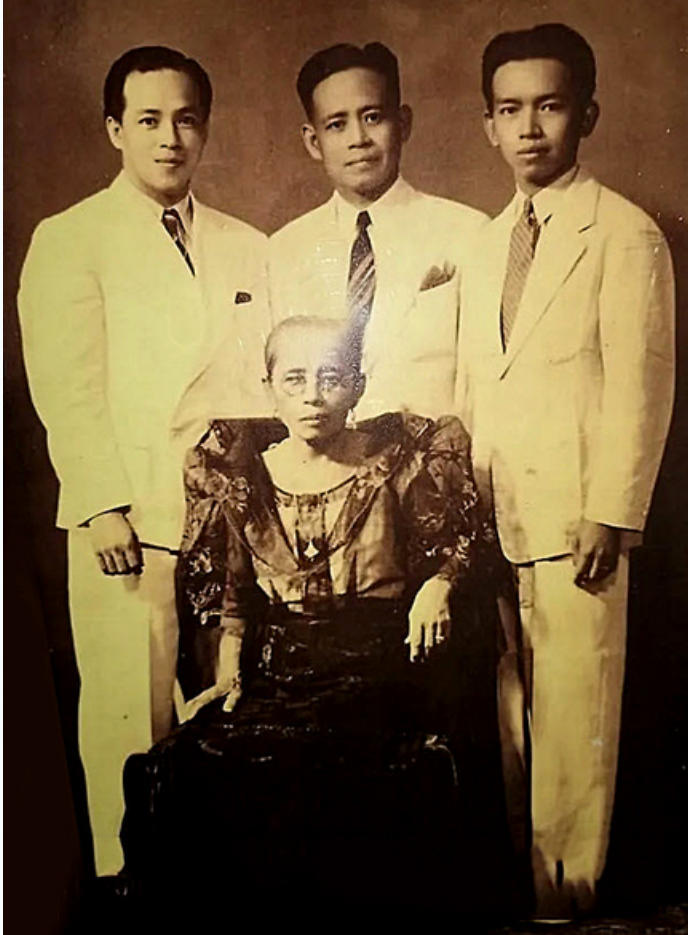
envy he refused to indulge when he imagined classmates sleeping in beds. He remembered telling himself, again and again, that this was temporary — that discipline would outlast deprivation.



The Panganiban family in a portrait taken circa 1952, with young Art standing at the rightmost — an early glimpse of the roots, relationships, and formative years that shaped the values of faith, discipline, and service that would later define his life and legacy.

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Delfin, Artemio Sr. (Art's father), and Benjamin Panganiban with Honorata Pelayo Panganiban in the early 1950s — a portrait of family roots and quiet strength, capturing the generation that shaped the values of faith, discipline, and service that would later define Art's life and legacy.

It was here, long before law books or Latin maxims, that Art learned his first philosophy: endure first, explain later.

School became refuge. He studied not

because teachers praised him, but because excellence was the only escape route he could see. He graduated with honors from public schools — Juan Luna Elementary, Victorino Mapa High — rising in crowded classrooms where obscurity was the default fate.

When he was accepted to the University of the Philippines on scholarship, it seemed that fate had finally cracked open.

Then came the bus fare.
Fifteen centavos.
That was the distance between Sampaloc and Diliman — between promise and possibility.

He never complained. He simply walked to Far Eastern University instead.

FEU and the Construction of Ambition

Far Eastern University was not his second choice.

It became his proving ground.

He walked into FEU carrying more than notebooks. He carried urgency. He studied as if time itself were rationed. He graduated summa cum laude in pre-law, cum laude in law, and in 1959 was named the Most Outstanding Student of the entire university.

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Yet the transformation was not merely academic.

He entered FEU with almost no understanding of faith. Catholic by baptism, secular by upbringing, he once failed a scholarship interview because he could not name the persons of the Trinity. It would later become one of his favorite stories — told not for humor, but as testimony.

At FEU, faith arrived quietly.

A chaplain noticed the disciplined student. A priest invited him to Student Catholic Action. Another insisted that integrity was not enough — leadership required moral responsibility for others. Slowly, a boy raised without catechism began to read Scripture not as doctrine, but as instruction.

Leadership followed.

He became president of the FEU Central Student Organization — the youngest ever elected. He co-founded the National Union of Students of the Philippines, discovering that influence required listening as much as command. In student assemblies, he learned how ideals fracture under pressure — and how institutions survive compromise without surrender.



Art was awarded a Plaque of Honor as the Most Outstanding Student of the FEU Institute of Law on May 14, 1959, a singular distinction that affirmed his exceptional academic performance, intellectual discipline, and early promise as one of the country's future leaders in the legal profession.

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It was also here that he met Elenita Carpio.

She was thoughtful, precise, intellectually formidable. Where he was urgency, she was balance. Where he pushed, she measured. Their partnership would anchor him through decades of ambition and uncertainty.

But before life offered stability, it would test resolve.

The Bar Exam and the Discipline of Pain

In **1960**, as bar candidates across the country arranged their schedules, sharpened their pencils, and rehearsed doctrines late into the night, Art lay flat on a **hospital bed**.

The timing could not have been worse.

The Philippine Bar Examination was not merely an academic hurdle; it was a rite of passage that determined whether years of sacrifice would harden into profession or dissolve into regret. For many, it was the most demanding intellectual trial of their young lives. For Art, it arrived when his body had begun to fail him.

Fever drained his strength. His head throbbed. His limbs felt heavy,



Elenita "Leni" Alcazar Carpio in her graduation portrait — a young scholar at the threshold of a distinguished academic and professional journey, whose intelligence, grace, and quiet strength would later be matched by a lifetime of partnership, service, and shared purpose alongside Art.

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unresponsive. Doctors advised rest. Friends urged caution. The sensible choice — the rational choice — was withdrawal. There would be other years, they said. Better to recover fully than to risk collapse.

But withdrawal carried its own cost.

It meant postponement without guarantee. It meant prolonging dependency. It meant risking the erosion of momentum he had fought so hard to build. And, perhaps most painfully, it meant conceding that circumstance — not discipline — would dictate his limits.

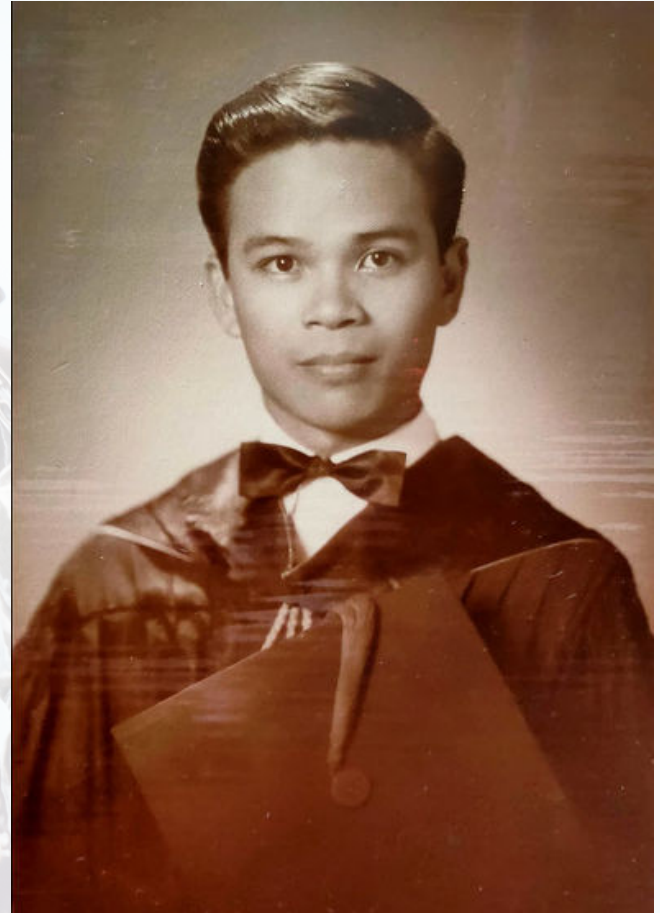
Then his dean arrived.

Jovito R. Salonga, himself already a figure of moral and intellectual authority, looked at the weakened young man and said words that would lodge permanently in Art's memory:

“Do not quit.”

There was no lecture. No pep talk. Just conviction.

Salonga understood something essential about the student before him: that quitting now would wound him more deeply than any physical strain. That endurance, once surrendered, is difficult to reclaim.



Art earned his Bachelor of Laws degree, graduating cum laude from Far Eastern University in 1960 — an early testament to his intellectual rigor and academic excellence, and a prelude to a distinguished career in law, leadership, and public service.

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So, Art rose from the hospital bed and entered the examination hall.

For **four relentless weeks**, he endured the bar examinations while ill. Each day demanded sustained concentration — hours of legal reasoning, careful writing, precision under pressure. The questions were unforgiving. The days were long. The nights offered little relief. His body weakened even as his mind was forced into sustained clarity.

It was an ordeal of balance: pushing hard enough to perform, but not so hard as to collapse.

He finished not with exhilaration, but with exhaustion.

When the results were released, his name appeared among the top ten — **sixth overall**, with a rating of **89.55 percent**.

There was satisfaction, yes — but not celebration.

What marked the moment most deeply was not triumph, but **confirmation**. Proof that pressure did not fracture him. Proof that adversity, when met with discipline, could be absorbed rather than feared. Proof that he could endure without compromise.



Art (center), one of the most decorated graduates of Far Eastern University's Law Class of 1960, stands at the threshold of a remarkable journey — his academic excellence already foreshadowing a lifetime of distinction in law, leadership, and public service.

It would become a defining trait — one that would surface again and again in courtrooms, committees, crises, and moments when retreat would have been easier than resolve.

Yet even as congratulations arrived and professional doors seemed poised to open, opportunity once again revealed its conditional nature.

A scholarship awaited him at **Yale** — a

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chance to pursue graduate legal studies at one of the world's most storied institutions. It was the culmination of academic excellence, the validation of promise.

But validation did not pay for passage.

He applied for financial assistance. He sought a travel grant. He waited.

The answer came back: **denied.**

Without funds for airfare, the scholarship became an abstraction. The door closed — not dramatically, not cruelly, but decisively.

Years later, Art would say this was the moment when the world seemed to collapse around him.

He had done everything right. He had endured illness, excelled under pressure, earned distinction. And still, the horizon withdrew just as he approached it.

The disappointment was profound.

But it was not terminal.

In time, he would come to see this denial not as an ending, but as a redirection — one that forced him



Art was featured in the January 1961 issue of Far Eastern Advocate, the weekly college publication of Far Eastern University, in recognition of his outstanding 6th place finish in the 1960 Bar Examinations — an early national accolade that heralded the rise of a young jurist destined for distinction in the Philippine legal community.

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inward, toward mentorship instead of credentials; toward institution-building instead of personal advancement; toward a path that would ultimately carry him farther than Yale ever could.

The world had not closed.

It had simply asked him to enter through a different door.

The Mentor and the Moral Spine

The Yale scholarship that never materialized became, in retrospect, one of the most formative disappointments of Art's life.

He had wanted it badly. Not for prestige — but for completion. He sensed, even then, that law was not merely a profession but a calling that demanded the sharpest tools available. Yale represented the pinnacle.

But money intervened, as it had before.

When the travel grant was denied, frustration gave way to something darker: the feeling that no matter how hard he worked, the ceiling might

always descend just before he reached it.

It was at this juncture that **Jovito R. Salonga** stepped fully into his life — not merely as a former dean, but as a moral architect.

Salonga had walked the path Art dreamed of. He had studied at UP, Harvard, and Yale. He had absorbed not only legal technique but the ethical traditions of Western jurisprudence. When Yale became unreachable for his young protégé, Salonga made a quiet offer that would change everything:

If you cannot go to Yale, Yale will come to you.

At **Salonga, Ordoñez and Associates**, where Art apprenticed from 1961 to 1963, law was not practiced as transaction. It was practiced as **responsibility**. Cases were dissected for principle as much as outcome. Victory without integrity was considered failure. Political expediency was distrusted. Conscience mattered.

Here, Art learned something more valuable than advanced degrees: **judgment**.

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A newly-minted lawyer, Art pores over legal casework at the Salonga, Ordoñez and Associates Law Office, where he worked from 1961 to 1963, in the formative years of his legal career — honing his craft under some of the country's finest legal minds, absorbing the discipline of rigorous research and advocacy, and laying the intellectual and ethical foundations that would later define his distinguished life in law and public service.

Salonga introduced him to a lineage of Filipino legal giants — **Jose W. Diokno**, whose human rights advocacy would become legend; **Claudio O. Teehankee**, whose judicial courage would later define an era. These were not men who merely interpreted law. They embodied it.

Art absorbed their example with reverence. He learned that law divorced from morality becomes tyranny by



Art later established his own law firm, PABLAW (Panganiban, Benítez, Parlade, Africa and Barinaga Law Offices), which he headed until 1995 — building a respected practice grounded in professional excellence, ethical rigor, and a commitment to mentoring young lawyers, and further cementing his stature in the Philippine legal community.

another name. That judges must sometimes stand alone — and accept isolation as the cost of fidelity.

This apprenticeship forged his moral spine.

When he left to establish his own firm in 1963 — **PABLAW** — he carried with him not only legal competence, but a philosophy: **success must never outpace conscience.**

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Independence by Design

Art did not rush into government service.

Offers came early — invitations to become a judge, to join Malacañang as a technical assistant. He declined them all.

The reasons were not ideological. They were practical, even parental.

Public service did not pay enough to shield his family from the kind of insecurity he had known as a child. He was determined that his children would never sleep on pavements — metaphorical or otherwise.

So, he built independence first.

PABLAW grew steadily. He became a respected practicing lawyer, then a senior partner. Teaching followed — at Far Eastern University, Assumption Convent, San Sebastian College. His classrooms were demanding. He insisted on clarity, precision, and ethical reasoning. Law, he told students, was not about cleverness. It was about **trust**.

Beyond the courtroom and classroom, he ventured into business — not for opulence, but for autonomy.

He founded **Baron Travel Corporation** in 1967, then **Arpan Tourism Industries Corporation** in 1974. What began as pragmatic entrepreneurship evolved into leadership at scale. He would eventually lead the Philippine Society of Travel Agents, the Tourism Organization of the Philippines, and even the global **American Society of Travel Agents**, becoming the first Asian to chair it internationally.

This mattered.

By the time he reached his forties, Art had achieved something rare: **freedom from political dependency**. He owed no patron his livelihood. He could say no — and often did.

He also achieved something quieter but more enduring: the restoration of a childhood dream. The boy who once slept on sidewalks waiting for newspapers now ran travel companies that took him — and later his children — across the world. The Yale degree he never earned would, in time, be eclipsed by something more personal: five children who would graduate from Harvard, Stanford, Chicago, Michigan, and Berkeley.

Scarcity had been defeated — not by luck, but by architecture.

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Wedding portrait of Art and Leni Panganiban, circa 1961 — capturing the youthful grace and quiet joy of a young couple at the beginning of a lifelong partnership in love, faith, and service that would span more than six decades.

Faith Finds Its Voice

For many men of ambition, faith is an accessory — useful in ceremony, silent in decision.

For Art, faith arrived late — and then refused to stay quiet.

His early encounters at FEU had planted questions. Years of reading, listening, and reflection followed. But it was only

in the mid-1980s, when he and his wife **Elenita** joined **Bukas Loob sa Diyos (BLD)**, that faith ceased to be theoretical.

BLD demanded vulnerability. It asked professionals to pray aloud, to confess uncertainty, to submit ambition to discernment. It was not comfortable — which is precisely why it reshaped him.

He became a servant leader. A marriage encounter facilitator. A speaker in Life in the Spirit seminars. He read Scripture not as metaphor but as instruction. Leadership, he began to believe, was not granted by election alone — it was **discerned**.

Faith soon pulled him into national service.

He became secretary of the **Council of the Laity of the Philippines**, a delegate to the **Second Plenary Council of the Philippines**, and later — improbably — the **only Filipino appointed by Pope John Paul II** to the **Pontifical Council for the Laity**.

The irony was not lost on him.

The boy who once could not name the Trinity now advised the Vatican on the life of the faithful.

Faith had not replaced law in his life. It had **disciplined** it.

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Just married: newlyweds Art and Leni Panganiban after their wedding at the Immaculate Conception Church in Rosario Heights, Quezon City on April 8, 1961, beginning a lifelong journey of love, faith, and partnership that would span more than six decades and be marked by shared devotion to family, Church, and service to country.

Art consistently dazzles his audience with his mastery of the law—speaking with clarity, depth, and quiet authority, and illuminating even the most complex legal questions with the precision and wisdom of a true jurist.



Art, as a speaker at the UNESCO Regional Conference of the Asian Youth Institute in the 1960s, already commanded the room with intellectual rigor and moral clarity—engaging young leaders from across the region and foreshadowing a lifetime devoted to scholarship, leadership, and public service.



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Rotary, Earthquake, and the Test of Leadership

In **1990**, Art found himself standing at the threshold of an institution older than the Republic he would one day help steady.

The **Rotary Club of Manila** — the first Rotary club in Asia and among the most influential civic organizations in the Philippines — was not merely a luncheon forum or a professional network. It was a proving ground for leadership, a gathering of Cabinet secretaries and jurists, captains of industry and ambassadors, physicians, educators, and public servants whose conversations often spilled beyond the ballroom and into the national bloodstream.

Its presidency was not sought. It was **conferred**.

Rotary tradition in Manila did not reward ambition. It elevated those who topped the open election for the Board of Directors, an arrangement that made the presidency both inevitable and inescapable. When Art emerged with the highest number of votes, the path ahead was clear — even if he did not wish to walk it.

His first instinct was refusal.

The presidency demanded near-total

commitment. Former presidents had taken leaves of absence from their professions to serve properly. Art, at the time, was deeply embedded in multiple worlds: a flourishing law practice, expanding business interests, a growing family, and an intense commitment to **Bukas Loob sa Diyos (BLD)**, where he and his wife were entrusted with leadership roles that required spiritual, emotional, and logistical labor.

This was not a role that could be added casually to an already full life.

And so, he did what had become his reflex in moments of consequence: **he prayed**.

Not briefly. Not performatively. He entered a sustained process of discernment, gathering trusted companions, particularly within BLD, to pray with him — not for success, but for clarity. He asked not whether he *could* lead Rotary, but whether he *should*.

The answer that emerged shocked even him.

When the time came to articulate his presidential vision, he announced a credo that stunned the Club:

LOVE GOD. SERVE MAN.

The reaction was immediate — and fierce.

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Rotarians were aghast. Religion, they warned, had no place in a civic institution built on pluralism and neutrality. The credo was divisive. Unprecedented. Risky. Some feared it would alienate non-Christian members. Others worried it would reduce Rotary's work to moral exhibitionism.

No one could recall a Rotary president anywhere who had framed his term so explicitly in theological language.

Art listened patiently. He explained calmly. He did not retreat.

He argued that Rotary's foundational maxims — *Service Above Self, He Profits Most Who Serves Best* — were not merely civic slogans but moral truths, deeply consonant with the commandment to love one's neighbor. His credo, he insisted, was not an imposition of belief but a **clarification of purpose**.

Faith, for him, was not sectarian. It was catalytic.

On **July 12, 1990**, he was inaugurated. He distributed a **76-page Program of Action**, unprecedented in the Club's history — detailing **178 projects**, a calendar of execution, and a proposed budget of **₱90 million**, an amount that dwarfed anything the Club had attempted before.



Art delivers his inaugural address as President of the Rotary Club of Manila in 1990, articulating a vision of service rooted in integrity, fellowship, and civic responsibility, and setting the tone for a term marked by principled leadership and quiet, steadfast commitment to the Rotary ideal.

Skepticism followed him into the ballroom.

Then, four days later, the earth itself intervened.

On **July 16, 1990**, a **7.7-magnitude earthquake** tore through **Luzon**, flattening communities, burying buildings, and killing more than two thousand people. Baguio lay in ruins. Panic spread faster than information. Suffering arrived before response.

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At the next Rotary meeting, there was no prepared speech.

Art stood and made an appeal — not for ceremony, not for recognition, but for immediate action. He asked the Club to help the poor, the injured, the displaced — the least visible victims of a catastrophe too vast for any one institution to manage.

What followed stunned even him.

Within **thirty minutes**, pledges reached **₱5.5 million**. By the next day, contributions exceeded expectations many times over. Doctors volunteered their services. Businessmen redirected resources. Rotary Anns mobilized clothing and food. A **tent city** rose in **Burnham Park**, sheltering hundreds of families.

Rotary clubs abroad responded as well. The **Rotary Club of Waikiki** organized a massive airlift — over **3,300 kilograms of relief goods** flown in from Hawaii.

This was not charity as gesture.

It was compassion as mobilization.

Standing amid the whirlwind of response, Art understood something fundamental about leadership. Conviction, when aligned with compassion, could move institutions faster than policy, more

decisively than procedure, and more enduringly than rhetoric.

His credo had been tested — not in theory, but in catastrophe.

And it had held.

For the first time, he allowed himself to believe that faith, when married to action, was not divisive at all.

It was transformative.



Art delivers his remarks as President of the Rotary Club of Manila during the Newsboys Mini-Olympics on September 30, 1990, encouraging young participants with words of hope and discipline, and reaffirming Rotary's commitment to nurturing the potential of every child through service, sportsmanship, and compassionate leadership.

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As President of the Rotary Club of Manila, Art welcomed Jaime Cardinal Sin as one of his distinguished guest speakers in 1991, bringing the nation's foremost spiritual leader before the Club to share wisdom on faith, moral leadership, and civic responsibility — an encounter that reflected the high regard in which Art and the Club were held.

The Reckoning of a Year — and the Quiet Accumulation of Trust

When **June 1991** arrived, Art did not speak of legacy. He spoke of **accounting**.

True to his nature, he refused to let the Rotary presidency dissolve into memory without measurement. At his valedictory meeting, he distributed a **94-page Final**



Two Presidents: RCM President Art presents a plaque of appreciation to fellow Manila Rotarian and Philippine President Fidel V. Ramos, a moment of shared leadership and mutual respect that brought together the head of the nation and the head of Asia's oldest Rotary club in recognition of service, integrity, and devotion to country.

Report — a document unprecedented in the history of the **Rotary Club of Manila**. It was exhaustive, almost severe in its precision. Numbers were tallied. Projects itemized. Outcomes measured against promises.

Of the **178 projects** pledged at the start of his term, **185 had been implemented**. Of the **₱90 million** budget once deemed unrealistic, nearly all had been responsibly deployed.

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Committees had multiplied. Attendance had deepened. Service had expanded beyond rhetoric into reach.

But what mattered most was not arithmetic.

It was **credibility**.

For the first time in years, Manila Rotary was being spoken of not merely as influential, but as **effective**. Not merely prestigious, but **purposeful**. The Club had rediscovered its moral center without sacrificing its civic breadth.

Art did not claim credit.

Instead, he offered confession.

In his closing address, he described himself not as a successful leader, but as an **unworthy servant**, sustained not by talent alone but by grace. It was an unsettling posture for an audience accustomed to triumphal retrospectives. Yet it resonated. His humility did not diminish his authority — it clarified it.

Something had shifted.

Men who had once regarded him as a capable lawyer now saw him as a **trusted steward**. Business leaders observed how he balanced vision with discipline. Clergy took note of a layman who understood that faith, to be credible, must translate

into service. Public officials — watchful, pragmatic — recognized in him a rare combination: decisiveness without arrogance, conviction without cruelty.

He had passed a test few recognized at the time.

Not of popularity, but of **governance**.

From Civic Leadership to National Visibility

In the years that followed, Art did not announce ambition.

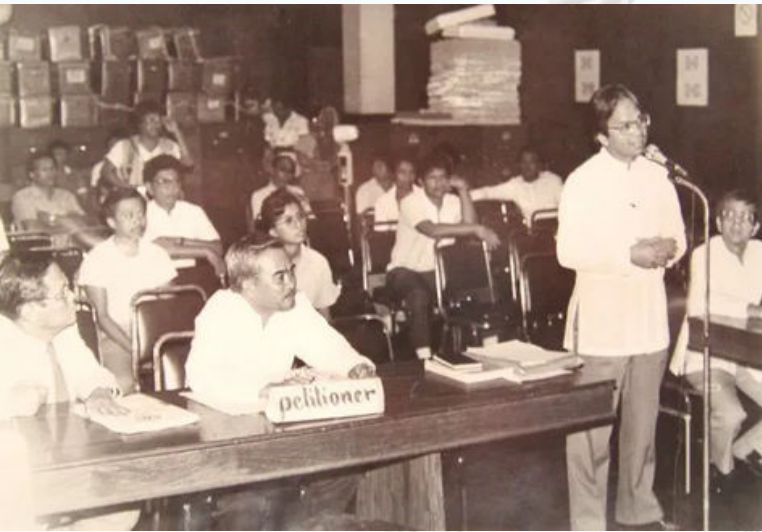
He returned quietly to his law practice, his businesses, his writing, his work in Catholic lay movements. Yet invitations began arriving — first sporadically, then persistently. He was asked to chair awards committees, to mediate disputes, to speak on governance, ethics, and the rule of law.

He became Chief Legal Counsel of the **Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV)** — a role that placed him near the moral fault lines of Philippine democracy. He advised without theatrics. He guarded credibility as fiercely as outcomes.

During elections, when passions flared and accusations multiplied, he insisted on process. When activists demanded instant righteousness, he cautioned patience.

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Art, who served as Vice President of the Legal Management Council of the Philippines from 1976 to 1977, is seen here vigorously arguing his case before the court — exemplifying the intellectual rigor, courtroom mastery, and professional excellence that marked his early years at the Bar and foreshadowed his distinguished career in the judiciary.



When institutions faltered, he argued not for replacement — but for reform.

This was not the language of partisanship.

It was the language of institutional preservation.

Presidents noticed.

The Call from Malacañang — and the First Refusal

By **1992**, the country stood again at a turning point. A new administration was taking shape. The wounds of authoritarianism had not fully healed; democratic institutions remained fragile, distrusted, incomplete.

President-elect **Fidel V. Ramos** summoned Art for a private meeting.

The offer was direct: **Secretary of Justice.**

It was the kind of appointment that would have thrilled many. For Art, it triggered caution. He had not campaigned. He had

Art addresses the delegates of the ASTA World Travel Congress in Rome upon his election as ASTA International Chief Officer, delivering a statesman's message that reflected both global vision and Filipino excellence, as he assumed a leadership role on the world stage.

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not sought office. More importantly, he sensed that politics — even in reformist guise — would exact a cost his family and conscience might not be prepared to pay.

He declined.

Ramos pressed him. Not with flattery, but with reasoning. He spoke of trust. Of observed competence. Of Rotary. Of PPCRV. Of a country that needed steady hands more than loud voices. Still, Art hesitated.

Then came the alternative.

“If not the Cabinet,” Ramos said, “then the **Supreme Court.**”

It was not a consolation prize.

It was a summons.

Seven Rejections

By the early 1990s, Art had done everything one was supposed to do before entering public service.

He had built professional independence. He had raised his children into academic excellence.

He had led civic institutions without scandal.

He had deepened his faith into discipline.

When the call to serve finally came, it did not come gently.

It came with rejection.

From **1992 to 1995**, vacancies opened repeatedly in the Supreme Court. Each time, Art’s name was submitted to the **Judicial and Bar Council**. Each time, it was scrutinized. Each time, it was questioned. And each time, it was passed over.

Seven times.

Objections arose from the past — some vague, some petty, some resurrected from decades-old client dissatisfaction. A former case was reexamined. An old grievance was amplified. Others were deemed “more qualified,” usually because they had climbed the judicial hierarchy instead of practicing law.

Each rejection landed heavily.

Art was not naïve. He understood institutional caution. But the cumulative effect was corrosive. Each screening became a public exposure. Each delay, a whisper of doubt. Each rejection, a silent question: *Was this calling real—or self-invented?*

At night, he prayed with increasing urgency.

“How long, O Lord?”

“Why humiliation if the path is Yours?”

“Why surrender ambition only to be tested again?”

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The law had taught him patience. Faith demanded more.

In **January 1995**, after the seventh rejection, something broke — and something else was born. He surrendered completely.

He prayed not for appointment, but for removal of desire.

“Take all that I am,” he offered.
“My career. My ambition. My will.”
“Do what You want.”

For the first time in years, he stopped hoping.

Ask. Seek. Knock.

In **July 1995**, when Art had finally convinced himself that the chapter was closed, the past returned quietly—almost apologetically.

A friend from the **Supreme Court** approached him without ceremony, without persuasion, without the urgency that usually accompanies opportunity. It was said almost in passing, as if testing the air.

“Why don’t you try again?” the justice asked.

“There won’t be another vacancy for years.”

The words were simple. The effect was not.

Art dismissed the suggestion almost immediately. He had already surrendered. Months earlier, after seven humiliating rejections by the Judicial and Bar Council, he had made peace with what he believed was God’s answer. He had prayed not for appointment, but for detachment. He had offered up the ambition itself, believing that obedience meant letting go.

To hope again felt like disobedience.

To apply again felt like pride disguised as perseverance.

And yet — the words lingered.

They followed him home. They surfaced in the quiet between conversations. They returned in moments of stillness, unwelcome and unresolved. He could not tell whether they were temptation or invitation.

On the night of **July 29, 1995**, sleep refused him.

Past midnight, he lay awake, staring into the darkness, rehearsing the same question over and over—not aloud, but with the intensity of a cross-examination.

Was he clinging to ambition?

Or resisting obedience?

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He rose and prayed. Not briefly. Not casually. For hours.

He did not ask to be appointed. He did not ask to be vindicated. He asked only for clarity—for the grace to know whether persistence would be faithfulness or defiance. He told God that he had already surrendered the dream. Why, then, would it not leave him alone?

Near dawn, exhausted, unanswered, he slept.

The following morning, **Sunday**, he served as a **Special Minister of Holy Communion**, as he had done many times before. The ritual was familiar. The church was quiet. His role was routine.

Then the Gospel was read.

From **Luke**:

*Ask and you shall receive.
Seek and you shall find.
Knock and the door shall be opened to you.*

The effect was immediate and physical.

His skin prickled. Cold sweat gathered at his temples. Gooseflesh rose along his arms. The words did not sound ancient; they sounded personal—uncomfortably so.



Art meets Pope Saint John Paul II, a moment of profound grace and spiritual significance that affirmed his deep faith and lifelong commitment to serving both Church and nation with humility, integrity, and devotion.

He whispered inwardly, almost in protest:

“My Lord, is this meant for me?”

But discipline had taught him caution. He had spent too many years in law to trust first impressions, even spiritual ones. He feared mistaking desire for discernment.

That day, he prayed again.

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“If this is truly Your will,” he asked quietly, “give me another sign. One more. I do not want to be deceived by my own longing.”

One week later, in the same church, with the same priest, the Gospel was read again—this time the account of the **Transfiguration**.

*A cloud came and overshadowed them...
and a voice said:
This is my Son, my Chosen One.
Listen to Him.*

Listen.

The word struck him harder than the first reading.

Not ask.
Not seek.
Not knock.

Listen.

In that single command, the conflict resolved itself. Listening did not mean ambition. It meant obedience. It meant acting not because he wanted to rise, but because he was being called to respond.

That was enough.

He submitted his name to the Judicial and Bar Council once more.

The resistance returned immediately.

At one meeting, there was a concerted effort to strike his name from the list. Old objections resurfaced. Familiar skepticism hardened. The vote came dangerously close.

Only one member intervened.

“Let us defer this,” the member said. “We are meeting again next week.”

It was a procedural delay. Nothing more.

Two days later, the same member spoke to him privately.

“Unless something extraordinary happens,” he said plainly, “you will be removed next week.”

Unless a miracle happens.

Art did not panic.

He prayed — not defensively, not anxiously, but defiantly in faith. He had reached a strange calm. He no longer argued his merits. He no longer rehearsed rebuttals. He rested entirely on a conviction that had crystallized within him:

Human forces, however exalted, could not override divine will.

At the next meeting, something inexplicable occurred.

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No one objected.
The accusations did not resurface.
The arguments did not return.
The opposition did not speak.
Silence filled the room.

For the first time in three years, his name
survived the screening.

There was no applause. No
announcement. No sense of triumph.

Only a quiet, unmistakable knowing.

The miracle had arrived — not with
thunder, but with stillness.

And the door, at last, had opened.

The Bench

In **October 1995**, **President Fidel V. Ramos** appointed Artemio Panganiban Jr. as **Associate Justice of the Supreme Court**.

When Ramos later asked him how he had finally passed the Judicial and Bar Council, Art answered without irony:

“I did not do it. The Lord did.”

The bench changed him — and revealed him.

He wrote relentlessly. Opinions poured from his chambers. Decisions were not merely rendered; they were **reasoned**.



Art is sworn in as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court by President Fidel V. Ramos in 1995, with Chief Justice Andres R. Narvasa looking on — an historic moment that marked his formal entry into the nation's highest tribunal and the beginning of a distinguished chapter in his service to the rule of law.

Colleagues soon noticed the pattern: clarity without arrogance, firmness without cruelty.

Justice Antonio Carpio would later call him **“the most prolific writer of the Court.”**

More than a thousand decisions bore his name.

He chaired divisions. Led reform committees. Wrote books — one each year — as if compelled to account for his stewardship. His judicial philosophy

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Art delivers his judicial opinion as Associate Justice of the Supreme Court during an en banc session, speaking with measured authority and intellectual depth as he helps shape the Court's collective wisdom on matters of law, justice, and constitutional principle.

crystallized into a simple, audacious premise: **The judiciary must protect liberty and nurture prosperity.**

Law, he argued, was not merely restraint. It was enablement. Predictable justice encouraged economic growth. Fair courts strengthened democracy. Liberty without order was chaos; order without liberty was tyranny.

Then history intruded.

EDSA, Judgment at Dawn

January 2001 was not a legal puzzle to be solved by precedent or procedure.

It was a **moral emergency**, unfolding faster than doctrine could keep pace.

The streets had already rendered their verdict. President **Joseph Estrada** had lost the confidence of the people—his authority eroded not by court ruling, but by public withdrawal. Protesters massed at EDSA. Barricades hardened around Mendiola. The chants grew louder, angrier, less patient. Yet in the cold language of law, he remained President.

On the other side stood Vice President **Gloria Macapagal Arroyo** — endowed with moral authority, buoyed by popular support, but still tethered by constitutional constraint. She could not act without risking illegitimacy. The Constitution, designed to ensure order, now threatened paralysis.

The military hesitated. Each hour of delay increased the danger of miscalculation. A coup — open or disguised — was no longer unthinkable. Government machinery faltered. Authority fractured. The Republic stood exposed, suspended between legality and collapse.

From within the Supreme Court, **Art** watched the situation darken.

He saw the abyss clearly—not as abstraction, but as consequence. He imagined what hesitation could unleash: violence at the barricades, bloodshed justified by confusion, the Constitution

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rendered irrelevant by force. He understood that once order dissolved, no court ruling could restore it intact.

He feared violence more than controversy.

He feared constitutional collapse more than personal criticism.

And so, he did what he had trained himself to do his entire life: he withdrew from noise and turned inward — to reflection, to prayer, to judgment.

In the quiet hours before dawn on **January 20**, he reached a conclusion that would mark him permanently. The Constitution, he believed, had to be **saved from annihilation by inaction**. If the law could not move forward decisively, it would be overtaken by events beyond its control.

There was only one path left.

He placed the call to Chief Justice **Hilario Davide Jr.**

His words were direct. Unembellished. Grave.

Swear her in.

Davide listened.

The proposal was extraordinary — not

because it was illegal, but because it was unprecedented. It carried risk. It invited criticism. It would be misunderstood. But it offered one essential thing: continuity of constitutional order without resort to force.

By **noon**, before uncertainty could metastasize into violence, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo took the oath of office.

The immediate crisis passed. The Republic held.

But the argument did not.

The decision would divide opinion for decades. Scholars would debate it. Politicians would weaponize it. Critics would accuse the Court of intervention; defenders would call it constitutional rescue. History would refuse easy consensus.

When the legality of Arroyo's presidency later reached the Supreme Court, Art did what his conscience and integrity required: **he recused himself**. So did Davide. The Court deliberated without them.

The result was unequivocal. **Thirteen justices voted unanimously** to uphold Arroyo's ascension to the presidency, and later to deny with finality Estrada's motion for reconsideration.

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The Court spoke.
History continued to argue.
Art did not.
He had not acted to seize power.
He had not acted to choose a president.
He had acted, as he understood it, **to preserve order when order was about to fail.**

In moments like that, he believed, a jurist is not judged by popularity or applause — but by whether, when the Constitution trembles, he chooses courage over comfort and responsibility over silence.

Chief Justice

On **December 20, 2005**, Artemio Villaseñor Panganiban Jr. ascended to the highest judicial office in the land as **Chief Justice of the Philippines.**

There was no campaign trail behind him. No whispered lobbying. No calculated pilgrimage to political powerbrokers. He had not even sought an audience with the President who would appoint him. His elevation was not the result of orchestration, but of culmination — an acknowledgment, belated yet unmistakable, of a jurist whose life had already been spent in preparation.

For Art, the Chief Justiceship was not a coronation. It was a burden.

He entered the office without triumphalism, keenly aware that the authority of the Supreme Court does not rest in robes or titles, but in public trust — fragile, conditional, easily lost. He presided not as a conqueror of the institution, but as its **custodian**, conscious that he was merely holding the Court in trust for those who would come after him.



Art Panganiban takes his oath as the 21st Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Philippines before President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo on December 21, 2005 — an historic moment that crowned decades of distinguished service in the judiciary and marked the beginning of his stewardship of the nation's highest tribunal with integrity, independence, and unwavering fidelity to the Constitution.

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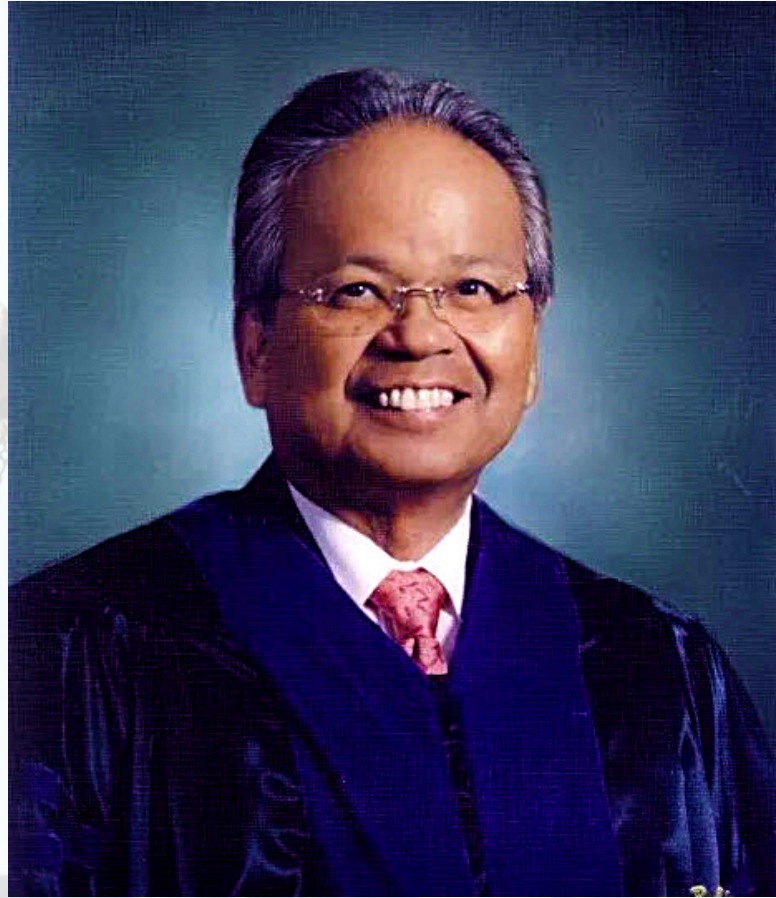
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From the outset, he framed his leadership around restraint and reform. He championed judicial modernization, transparency, and ethical accountability — not through grand pronouncements, but through steady institutional discipline. Independence of the judiciary, he believed, was not something to be declared loudly; it was something to be **practiced quietly**, day after day, decision after decision, even when it proved inconvenient or unpopular.

Criticism came readily, as it always does to those who stand at the summit of power. He met it without retaliation. He neither belittled dissent nor weaponized authority. In an era where power was often confused with invulnerability, Art insisted on something rarer: **intellectual humility**.

That humility was tested publicly in **2006**, after Congress abolished the death penalty. Reflecting on the now-historical case of **Leo Echegaray**, whose execution in 1999 he had affirmed as an Associate Justice, Art spoke with candor that unsettled many. He suggested that the Court may have committed a **judicial error** — that not all qualifying circumstances required for the ultimate penalty had been conclusively established.

He did not raise the issue to provoke outrage or to rewrite history. He raised it to confront moral consequence.



The official portrait of Art Panganiban as the 21st Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the Philippines (2005–2007), capturing the quiet authority, intellectual gravitas, and moral clarity of a jurist whose tenure was marked by steadfast defense of constitutionalism, judicial independence, and the rule of law.

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LIFESTYLE/C1

2b/U! lists 100 ways to change the world in this season of joy

METRO/A20

Heads will roll, says BI chief, following escape of 3 foreigners from BI jail

NEWS/A2

NBI chief's post jinxed? 4 nearly successive directors die in office

BUSINESS/B1

Gov't to install new board at Maynilad; 84% to be sold in 1st quarter

Believe it or not, BIR makes it to antigraft body honor roll

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

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Panganiban named 21st SC Chief Justice

CITY OF GOLDEN LIGHTS is used to the S.M. Mall, dining, and a movie place at night. But no longer does Manila, Oriental Cor. Oscar Villamor, chairman and head of the general capital complex in Cebu City. In this night scene of the urban lights of Cebu, Villamor's glowing golden light is the highlight for those who come to see the golden light of the city.

Gov't to Meralco: Pay P42-B debt in 3 yrs

By GFC Cabanogian Jr.

THE PRESIDENTIAL COMMISSION on Meralco is offering a three-year payment plan for the P42-billion debt it owes Meralco. The plan, which is being considered by the Meralco Board of Directors, is a significant step towards resolving the long-standing debt issue between the two companies.

SC gives gov't go-signal to take over Naia 3

By GFC Cabanogian Jr.

THE SUPREME COURT has given the government the go-signal to take over the third terminal of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia 3). The court's decision is a significant step towards the government's plan to modernize the airport and improve air traffic flow.

Baguio docs, nurses form Christmas 'rondalla' to benefit cancer patients

By Vincent Calma

THE BAGUIO CITY GOVERNMENT and the Baguio City Nurses Association have joined forces to form a Christmas 'rondalla' to benefit cancer patients. The group will perform songs and dances during the Christmas season to raise funds for cancer research and patient care.

From nets to chisels: Fishermen carve hope out of Quezon tragedy

GENERAL NARAYAN is a small town in the province of Quezon. The town is known for its fishing industry, but the recent tragedy has left the community in a state of mourning. The fishermen are now carving hope out of the tragedy, using their skills to create beautiful carvings that will be sold to support the victims' families.

The reaction was swift. Death-penalty advocates bristled. Critics accused him of undermining the Court's authority. Others worried that such admissions might weaken public confidence in the judiciary.

Art listened.

Then he clarified — calmly, precisely, without defensiveness. His remarks, he explained, reflected **his personal conscience**, not an institutional pronouncement. Courts speak collectively through decisions; individuals, even Chief Justices, remain accountable to their own moral reckoning.

It was a subtle but profound distinction.

In making it, he articulated one of his deepest convictions: that **truth is not diminished by humility**, and that the judiciary is not weakened when its leaders acknowledge fallibility. On the contrary, he believed that moral honesty — especially when voiced without compulsion — strengthens the legitimacy of institutions far more than rigid silence ever could.

For Art, the law was not a fortress designed to conceal doubt. It was a living structure, sustained by integrity, reflection, and the courage to confront uncomfortable truths.

That, more than any title he would ever hold, defined his tenure as Chief Justice.

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Chief Justice Art leads the flag-raising ceremony on January 2, 2006, standing in solemn respect before the national colors at the opening of the new judicial year — a symbolic moment of patriotism, duty, and renewed commitment to uphold the Constitution and the rule of law.

Art served as Chairperson of the Supreme Court's Third Division and of the House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal (HRET), and concurrently chaired seven Supreme Court committees devoted largely to judicial reforms — positions that underscored the Court's trust in his leadership, administrative acumen, and steadfast commitment to strengthening the institutions of justice.



The Panganiban Supreme Court En Banc — Chief Justice Art presiding over the full bench of the nation's highest tribunal, a historic assembly that reflects the collective wisdom, independence, and constitutional stewardship of the Court during his tenure.



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Rotary Club of Manila President Peter Wohlrab presents a plaque of appreciation to Associate Justice Art during an RCM meeting in 1998, in recognition of his distinguished service in the judiciary and his enduring commitment to Rotary ideals of leadership, fellowship, and service above self.



Chief Justice Art administers the oath of office to Sandiganbayan Justice Alexander Gesmundo in 2006 — an auspicious moment that linked two generations of judicial leadership, as the young magistrate he welcomed to the bench would, in time, himself rise to become the incumbent Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

The Justice on Wheels (JOW) Program, conceptualized by Chief Justice Art and launched in 2004, transformed retrofitted buses into mobile courtrooms that brought the justice system to remote and underserved communities — an innovative reform that embodied his vision of making the rule of law accessible, humane, and responsive to the needs of the people.



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Retirement Without Retreat

When Art stepped down from the Supreme Court in **December 2006**, there was no sense of disappearance.

He did not retreat into silence. He did not retreat into comfort. He did not retreat at all.

The robe came off, but the vocation did not.

Retirement, for him, was not an ending but a repositioning — a shift from judgment rendered behind closed doors to judgment articulated in the open forum of public discourse. He had spent more than a decade shaping jurisprudence through decisions. Now he would shape civic conscience through words.

In **February 2007**, he began writing a weekly column for the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* titled “**With Due Respect.**”

The title was not accidental.

It reflected both tone and posture: firm but civil, critical but disciplined, grounded in law yet attentive to human consequence. He wrote not as a partisan, nor as a scold, but as a former Chief Justice who understood how easily institutions could be weakened — and how slowly they were rebuilt.

Each Monday, readers encountered a familiar voice: measured, precise, occasionally stern, often pastoral. He wrote about governance, corruption, constitutional limits, judicial independence, moral leadership. He wrote as someone who had seen power from the inside and understood how thin its moral margins could be.

It did not take long for the column to find its audience.

Law students dissected it. Policymakers bristled at it. Judges quietly admired its restraint. Ordinary readers trusted it because it did not shout.



Art speaks to the media during the FLP Awarding Ceremony at the Asian Institute of Management in 2023, sharing thoughtful reflections with characteristic clarity and composure, and offering insights shaped by a lifetime of leadership in law, governance, and public service.

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PANGANIBAN ON BEING PART OF AT LEAST 15 CORPORATE BOARDS

one
news

Art serves as keynote speaker at the 50th Golden Anniversary of ACCRALaw at Shangri-La at the Fort in June 2023, delivering an address marked by depth, wisdom, and institutional memory, as he reflected on five decades of legal excellence and the enduring ideals of integrity, professionalism, and service to the nation.

Chief Justice Art appears as a guest on Thought Leaders with Cathy Yang, aired on Signal TV Channel 8 in May 2023, offering measured insights drawn from a lifetime in law and public service, and engaging in a thoughtful exchange on leadership, governance, and the enduring role of integrity in public life.

In time, the columns were gathered into books — *With Due Respect*, *With Due Respect 2*, *With Due Respect 3* — each volume a ledger of civic conscience, each page insisting that democracy survives not on passion alone, but on restraint.

Even in retirement, Art remained accountable — to history, to faith, to the discipline of thought.

The Elder Statesman

Age did not soften Art into ceremonial irrelevance. It sharpened him.

He became a sought-after **independent director**, adviser, trustee, and chairman — not because of prestige, but because of trust. Corporations and institutions did not ask him to decorate their boards; they asked him to **steady** them.

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Cardinal Chito Tagle presents Art and Leni with a plaque of appreciation in June 2015, honoring them as generous donors and benefactors of the Manila Cathedral — an expression of gratitude for their enduring support of the Church and their quiet, steadfast commitment to faith and service.



Cardinal Chito Tagle receives a plaque from Arthur Ty of the Metrobank Foundation during the launch of the Manila Cathedral book in March 2019, with Art Panganiban as witness — an occasion that brought together leaders of faith, philanthropy, and public service in celebration of the Cathedral's history and enduring mission.

He sat at tables where decisions affected power grids, energy policy, banking stability, telecommunications infrastructure, mass media, ports, hospitals, food systems, and national investment. He chaired audit committees, risk oversight bodies, governance panels. He insisted on process. He insisted on independence.

When asked why he continued to accept such roles long after he could have rested, his answer was consistent:

Institutions matter.

And institutions require guardians.

Beyond corporate governance, he returned again and again to foundations — the quieter arenas of nation-building. He led and advised organizations devoted to liberty, prosperity, judicial education, dispute resolution, the Church, and civic formation.

In **2017**, he was appointed Chairman of the **Philippine National Group to the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague**, a role that carried international consequence and symbolic weight. It was fitting: the former Chief Justice, once denied Yale for lack of fare, now represented his country in one of the world's most venerable legal institutions.

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The Manila Overseas Press Club honors Art Panganiban as Journalist of the Year in the Field of Law in 2023, recognizing his incisive legal commentary, intellectual clarity, and lifelong commitment to enlightening the public on issues of justice, governance, and the rule of law.

Recognition followed — but he never chased it.

When he received the “**Journalist of the Year – Law**” award in 2023 from the Manila Overseas Press Club — the first such award in its long history — he accepted it not as validation, but as responsibility.

When he was honored by the **Bantayog ng mga Bayani** as a **Haligi ng**

Bantayog, he stood among figures associated with resistance, integrity, and moral courage. He understood the symbolism — and the burden.

And when the Church conferred upon him the papal award **Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice**, he received it not as culmination, but as confirmation: that a faith discovered late could still be lived fully.

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The FEU Law Alumni Association honors Art during a testimonial dinner at the Manila Hotel in 1998, paying tribute to his outstanding achievements in law and public service, and celebrating a career that brought distinction and pride to his alma mater.



The Rotary Club of Manila honors Art at the Manila Polo Club in November 2023, celebrating him as the only RCM President to have risen to become Chief Justice of the Philippines — a singular distinction that brought pride to the Club and underscored a lifetime of exemplary leadership in both civic service and the nation's highest court.



Art is conferred the Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice Papal Award at the Manila Cathedral on September 18, 2024 by His Eminence Jose Cardinal Advincula — one of the highest honors bestowed by the Holy Father upon lay faithful, in recognition of a lifetime of steadfast service to the Church, exemplary Christian witness, and unwavering dedication to faith, justice, and the common good.

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Art leads the worship services at the Servant Leadership in the Year of Faith Conference at the SMX Convention Center in June 2013, guiding the assembly in prayer and reflection with humility and spiritual depth, and embodying the integration of faith, service, and leadership that has long defined his life and public witness.



Art hosts a Christmas gathering in honor of the incumbent and retired Justices of the Supreme Court, together with their spouses, at his Dasmariñas Village home on December 1, 2023 — a warm evening of fellowship and gratitude that celebrated enduring friendships, shared service to the nation, and the spirit of the season.



Art leads the re-dedication of the Christ the Redeemer Mirador Jesuit Villa and Retreat House in 2019, marking the renewal of a sacred space for prayer, reflection, and spiritual formation, and affirming his lifelong commitment to faith, service, and the strengthening of Catholic institutions.

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The Making of Chief Justice Artemio Villaseñor Panganiban Jr.



Chief Justice Art and Professor Leni marked their 50th Wedding Anniversary with a simple and deeply moving renewal of vows in April 2011—an intimate reaffirmation of half a century of love, fidelity, and shared life, grounded in faith and crowned by quiet grace.



His Eminence Jose F. Cardinal Advincula and Father Record Reginald Malicdem during the Diamond Wedding Anniversary of Art and Leni at the Carmelite Chapel in Tagaytay—an intimate and grace-filled celebration marked by prayer, thanksgiving, and the presence of cherished shepherds who have accompanied their six decades of married life in faith and devotion.



CJ Art and Prof. Leni were joined by two distinguished and cherished guests — Tessie Sy-Coson and Chief Justice Alexander Gesmundo — during their Diamond Wedding Anniversary celebration in Tagaytay, a gathering made all the more meaningful by the presence of close friends and eminent leaders who have shared in their journey of faith, service, and enduring partnership.

LIBERTY AND PROSPERITY

The Making of Chief Justice Artemio Villaseñor Panganiban Jr.



The Panganiban family at the interment Mass for Leni Panganiban on April 9, 2023 — a solemn gathering of love and prayer, marked by deep gratitude for her life of grace, scholarship, and devotion, and a tender farewell commended to God's eternal care.

Celebrating a Diamond Milestone: The 60th Wedding Anniversary of Chief Justice Art and Professor Leni, marked in solemn thanksgiving and quiet grandeur at the Manila Cathedral in April 2021 — six decades of steadfast love, shared faith, and a life lived in service, crowned by grace, constancy, and enduring devotion.



LIBERTY AND PROSPERITY

The Making of Chief Justice Artemio Villaseñor Panganiban Jr.

EPILOGUE: The Judgment That Endures

In the quiet accounting of a life, titles eventually fall away.

Chief Justice.
Associate Justice.
President.
Chairman.
Columnist.

What remains is judgment — not the kind rendered from a bench, but the kind history renders over time.

Art was not born into advantage. He was born into necessity. His childhood taught him endurance before it taught him law. His poverty taught him discipline before it taught him ambition. His faith arrived not as inheritance, but as discovery — earned slowly, tested often, and embraced finally with conviction.

He learned early that institutions are fragile — that law must be defended not only from enemies, but from apathy; that democracy is not self-sustaining; that liberty decays without stewardship; that prosperity falters without fairness.

When the Republic trembled, he chose order over applause.

When ambition tempted, he chose patience.



The Panganiban Family Reunion in Los Angeles, California in December 2023 — a joyful gathering across generations and continents, celebrating kinship, shared memories, and the enduring bonds of family that time and distance only deepen.

LIBERTY AND PROSPERITY

The Making of Chief Justice Artemio Villaseñor Panganiban Jr.



The Panganiban family — Art and Leni with their children: Maria Elena Panganiban-Yaptangco, Jose Artemio III, Maria Jocelyn Panganiban-Hannett, Maria Theresa Panganiban-Manalac, and Maria Evelyn Panganiban-Reagan — a portrait of a close-knit family whose shared values of faith, love, and service form the heart of their enduring legacy.

The Panganiban family with their five children and ten grandchildren — a portrait of a growing lineage bound by love, faith, and shared values, and a living testament to a legacy that continues to unfold across generations.



The Panganiban family — each a holder of advanced degrees from leading universities in the United States and an accomplished professional in their respective fields—stand as a testament to a legacy of intellectual pursuit, discipline, and excellence, nurtured by values of education, hard work, and service that span generations.



LIBERTY AND PROSPERITY

The Making of Chief Justice Artemio Villaseñor Panganiban Jr.

When faith demanded obedience, he answered — even when the cost was delay, humiliation, or doubt.

He once wrote that he held office **by God's grace** — and he meant it not as piety, but as accountability. Power, in his worldview, was never owned. It was borrowed.

Now, as age confers perspective rather than limitation, he stands as a reminder of something increasingly rare: that leadership can be both principled and effective; that judgment can be both firm and humane; that faith and reason, properly disciplined, do not compete — they converge.

From the pavements of Sampaloc to the halls of the Supreme Court, from silence to authorship, from judgment rendered to judgment reflected upon, his life traces a single, unwavering arc:

**Liberty must be protected.
Prosperity must be nurtured.
And the law, above all, must be worthy of the people it governs.**

When future generations ask what steadied the Republic in moments of peril, they will not find the answer in slogans or speeches.

They will find it in men who chose restraint over power, conscience over convenience, and judgment over noise.

They will find it in the life of **Artemio Villaseñor Panganiban Jr.**



The Panganiban family welcomes the New Year at Mövenpick Beachfront in Pattaya, Thailand, in December 2019 — gathered in warmth and celebration, sharing laughter, gratitude, and the quiet joy of being together as another chapter of their family journey begins.

DISTRICT EVENTS

DGND/DSG Hermie Esguerra Joins Rotary Club of Carmona's Milestone Events



DGND/DSG Hermie Esguerra attended the lively Motorcade visiting all Rotary Markers across Carmona, to the Unveiling of the Presidents' Wall and President's Banner, and a special photo opportunity at the Rotary Markers and Rotary Center of the Rotary Club of Carmona last January 14, 2026 in Carmona, Cavite.

Governor's Visit to the Rotary Club of Carmona

DGND/DSG Hermie Esguerra attended the Governor's Visit to the Rotary Club of Carmona last January 14, 2026 at the Rotary Center Carmona in Carmona, Cavite.



DISTRICT EVENTS

Governor's Visit to the Rotary Club of Carmona



DGND/DSG Hermie Esguerra giving his insights during the Governor's Visit to the Rotary Club of Carmona.



DGND/DSG Hermie Esguerra stressing a point during the Governor's Visit to the Rotary Club of Carmona.



DISTRICT EVENTS

Chartering Presentation of the Rotary Club of Pasay Eco City



DGND/DSG Hermie Esguerra conducted the Charging of Charter Members during the Chartering Presentation of the Rotary Club of Pasay Eco City last January 16, 2026 at the Century Seafood Restaurant in Manila.



DGND/DSG Hermie Esguerra congratulating the Charter Members of the Rotary Club of Pasay Eco City.



DGND/DSG Hermie Esguerra as part of the group picture at the end of the Charter Presentation of the Rotary Club of Pasay Eco City.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

56th Anniversary Fundraising Ball of the Rotary Club of Kowloon East

Rotary
Club of Kowloon East
九龍東區扶輪社

P.O. Box 96794, Tsim Sha Tsui Post Office, Kowloon, Hong Kong.
Meeting: First and Third Tues, each month at 12:45 p.m. at the Peninsula Hotel

九龍東區扶輪社
ROTARY CLUB OF KOWLOON EAST

全世界第一個百份之一百保羅哈理斯之友扶輪社
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543 Aquiza Cor. Grey Street Ermita,
Manila City, Philippines
Tel: (632) 527 1886, 527 1887
Fax: (632) 527 1885
Email: rcmanila@rcmanila.org / manilarotaryclub@gmail.com
Attention: President Raoul C. Creencia,

Dear President Raoul C. Creencia,

Greetings from the Rotary Club of Kowloon East!

It is my great pleasure to advise that our 56th Anniversary Fund Raising Ball to be held on 8th February, 2026 (Sunday) at the Grand Ballroom of the Regent Hong Kong Hotel. (Hotel address: 18 Salisbury Road, Tsim Sha Tsui East, Kowloon). 6:30p.m. Cocktails, 7:00p.m. Meeting, 8:00p.m. dinner. We would be very much honoured if you & your club members can join us to celebrate this happy occasion.

In the evening of the 7th February, 2026 (Saturday) we will host a welcome dinner.

In the afternoon of the 9th February, 2026 (Monday) we will host a farewell lunch.

I shall appreciate very much if you will advise us the number, the names of your Club members & their family members who will be attending our Annual Ball / welcome dinner / farewell lunch.

As we are proceeding in preparing our complimentary programme, we should be grateful if you would let us have your CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE together with your recent photograph for inclusion in our complimentary programme. Please email to (rotaryclub@kowloneast.org.hk / queeniecheungcf@gmail.com).

Thank you for your kind attention.

Yours in Rotary,

John LAN
President-elect & Ball Chairman 2025-2026
Rotary Club of Kowloon East

Rotary
Club of Kowloon East

九龍東區扶輪社
ROTARY CLUB OF KOWLOON EAST

56週年慈善餐舞會
56th Anniversary Fund Raising Ball

時光臻享 邀您共賞
Beauty

08 February, 2026
6:30 p.m. cocktail 晚上6:30酒會
7:00 p.m. Banquet 7:00晚會開始

Venue 地點
麗晶酒店宴會廳
香港九龍尖沙咀梳士巴利道18號
Regent Hong Kong, The Grand Ballroom
18 Salisbury Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong

中國·香港

Contact:
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+852 9163 6006

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+852 6273 8513

I N V I T A T I O N

Rotary
Club of Manila

Dear Esteemed Members of RCManila,

I warmly encourage each of you to join our dear friends at the Rotary Club of Kowloon East in celebrating their momentous 56th Charter Anniversary on February 8, 2026, at the splendid Regent Hong Kong in Kowloon.

To enhance your experience, special hotel rates have been graciously arranged by our Kowloon East counterparts. If you're considering a stay at this esteemed hotel, please take a moment to sign up on the hotel confirmation sheet for our collective reference.

Together, let's mark this significant occasion and strengthen our bonds of friendship.

Yours in Rotary,

Raoul Creencia
President

Room Type	(Event Special Rate)
1 Classic Kowloon View Room (with one breakfast per room per night (Single occupancy)	HK\$2,900 plus 13%
2 Classic Kowloon View Room (with two breakfast per room per night (Double occupancy)	HK\$3,100 plus 13%
3 Classic Harbourview Room (with one breakfast per room per night (Single occupancy)	HK\$4,100 plus 13%
4 Classic Harbourview Room (with two breakfast per room per night (Double occupancy)	HK\$4,300 plus 13%
<i>(Room is subject to availability upon your request for reservation)</i>	
Room Type Request:	
No. of Guests/Names	
ETA/ETD/Flight details	
Credit Card Number/Expiry date:	
REMARKS	

Aleco Monday Breakfast Fellowship



Aleco Monday Breakfast Fellowship held on January 19, 2026, hosted by PD Abe Pascual.

Present were Director Edwin Hernandez, DSAA Dave Reynolds, IA Nick Locsin, PD Abe Pascual, PD Beda Fajardo, DE/BLA Caloy Serapio, Rtn. Willie Peliño, PD Rod Valencia, Sec. Anton Mauricio, PD Jun Hallare, PDG Jackie Rodriguez, PP Archit Bartolome, and former member Jorge Salazar.





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