

# **A CELEBRATION OF COURAGE!**

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## A CELEBRATION OF COURAGE

### COURAGE! BOOK LAUNCH

#### **Part I**

*The following is a record of the proceedings of the book launch on 22 May 2018 hosted by Jesuit Communications at the Arete, Ateneo Loyola Heights campus, which comprised of the following program: the opening prayer song, the reading of the poem entitled "From Rage to Courage," penned by a poet for the occasion, the welcome remarks by the Jesuit Communications director, reflections by a university professor, a religious sister, a peace worker, a grandson of one of the inspired leaders featured in the book who fought martial law, and the son of a besieged chief justice. These thoughts are followed by messages from women of courage, a response from the author, and final blessings from the bishop who presides in what has become "ground-zero" cum "killing fields" in the interminable drug war that has costs countless lives in our country.)*

#### **I Opening Prayer Song**

##### **Lord, Grant Me Courage**

(originally, the song's title is: "Your Heart Today," by Fr Manoling Francisco, SJ)

Where there is fear I can allay,

Where there is pain I can heal,

Where there are wounds I can bind,

And, hunger I can fill,

Lord, grant me courage,

Lord, grant me compassion

That I may be your heart today.

Where there is hate I can confront,

Where there are yokes I can release,

Where there are captives I can free,

And, anger I can appease,

Lord, grant me courage,

Lord, grant me strength,  
Grant me compassion  
That I may be your heart today.

When comes the day I dread  
To see our broken world,  
Protect me from growing cold  
That your people I may behold  
And, when I've done all that I could,  
Yet, there are hearts I cannot move,  
Lord, give me hope,  
That I may be your heart today.

***II "From Rage to Courage," by Poet-Prof Jimmy Abad***

***From Rage to Courage  
For Ed Garcia***

"Courage is indeed a verb;  
and the noun is the Filipino people."  
-- Ed Garcia

As our people in their heart of hearts cry  
for servant-leaders, for human rights  
and the rule of law,  
I deploy this word-weave for bullet-proof  
vest  
in the very face of our time's *tokhang*  
to "rage, rage, against the dying of the light."  
Oh, how steep and rugged the path  
from reflection and prayer to action!  
All our words fathom the depths  
of our deeds and spirit, but leave us void  
where we cannot meet their sound.

What is our "humanity," where our "moral  
compass"?

A would-be dictator of a police state a-borning  
threatens critics and "human rights" defenders.  
Over the massacre in Bulacan of drug suspects,  
he shrugs and says, "*Maganda, yun!*" and urges  
that it be replicated.

Does he represent us to the world whose protests  
he curses and scorns?

Does he not betray our character as a people?  
What climate change now brews in our people's  
mind?

Is it "weather weather" still from cheer  
over the killing spree, the harumscarum bluster  
and deceit?

Oh, yes, we are a people with a festive lightness  
of being,

given to laughter even in times of adversity,  
yet "forged in the fire of trials and tribulations,"  
sturdy in faith with a deep sense of dignity  
and honor,

gentle, patient, and compassionate without  
pretense.

In our history, we fought our colonizers, Spain,  
America, Japan;

There was a day in February when we cast out  
in ignominy a Martial Law dictator;  
even now, we shall not cower before China  
on Scarborough Shoal!

Never shall "we tarnish our character forged  
by our forbears!"

"To remember and to sing" is our calling;  
Our people's cry shall yet resound,  
"Never again!"

A country is only as strong as her people's  
memory.

### ***III Welcome Remarks from the Director of Jesuit Communications, Fr Nono Alfonso, SJ***

***Fr Nono Alfonso, SJ***, welcomed the guests and participants at the book launching of *Courage!* which his outfit published. He described the importance of the publication during times such as ours and also described the situations when he had met with the author and considered them opportune moments.

Good afternoon, my dear friends. Welcome to the launch of Ed Garcia's latest book, *Courage!* Thank you all for coming despite the heat or the heavy traffic in the metro.

I was in high school when I first got to know Prof Ed Garcia. He was going around the country, with Dean Wilfredo Villacorta, both Constitutional Commissioners at that time, to consult on the proposed 1987 Constitution. I remember being easily impressed by the man's intelligence and eloquence, but more importantly by his passion. If anything, he was speaking to us about the Constitution as if it were a do- or-die situation, like it was a now-or-never affair. What also struck me then was his patience, answering the questions of people, many of them angry, frustrated, or impatient at the political system at that time. And yet Ed was, at the end of every day, a picture of equanimity, of tranquility. That was my first encounter with Ed. He may not be aware of it, but at that time, he had inspired in many of us, young minds and young hearts, service and love for this country.

Our second encounter was a few years ago, when he was newly retired, when he just came back home for good, from his long years of peace work abroad. He was our guest for my weekly show at DZMM. I invited him to talk precisely about his peace missions, including the daily headline then, the challenge for peace in Mindanao. He had aged a lot, I noticed. And I imagined then what it must have been like for him to witness again and again the violence, the cruelty, the inhumanity that men are capable of doing to one another. Ed Garcia, he would tell us in that radio interview, saw the thousands of dead bodies strewn around Rwanda in the genocide that happened there in 1994. As a peacemaker, he would be in countless war-torn cities or countries, witness to countless deaths, assisting survivors, dealing, negotiating with hardened criminals; and, staring at evil face-to-face. Was the experience, I wondered then, like, as one philosopher wrote famously, staring into the abyss and the abyss staring back at you?

And yet the wonder of wonders, through it all, through everything that he has witnessed and gone through, Ed has remained peaceful, calm, tranquil, with nary a tinge of cynicism, or despair, or hopelessness. How can that be possible when many of us who have witnessed or experienced less would complain no end about how tired and fatigued we already feel amidst this endless fight for democracy? What is the secret of this man? What has he learned through years of peace-making, here and abroad?

And that is the reason why, on our third encounter, early this year, last March, to be exact, when he proposed to write this book, there was no hesitation on my part. I believe Ed has this distinct, unique, unequalled voice that a weary nation like ours needs to hear, especially as we seemingly face dark years ahead. A voice of hope, a voice of reason and of faith. A voice of Courage. Thank you once again and welcome to the launch of *Courage!!*

#### **IV Reactors:**

#### **4. Prof. Benjie Tolosa, of the Ateneo de Manila University Department of Political Science and Associate Dean for the Core Curriculum:**

There is a heartwarming and inspiring story about EDSA that Ed Garcia has shared a number of times and which is retold in *Courage!*. It is the story of EDSA from the mouth of a nine-year old girl – the daughter of an Australian correspondent covering the events of February 1986, who watches from a distance how nonviolent People Power unfolds and emerges triumphant over the Marcos dictatorship – with all its greed, abuse of power and injustice. She then tells her father in all earnestness: “When I grow up, I want to become a Filipino.”

In many ways, that is the story of Ed’s book: we have a precious gift of a people’s courage to hope that we can share to the world and to future generations – *handog ng Pilipino sa mundo mapayapang paraang pagbabago*—which is the result of many years of individual and collective sacrifices and painstaking struggle. It is a genuine achievement and gift. But it is imperfect and unfinished. And unless we realize as Ed emphasizes that “courage is a verb” that requires committed and sustained action (even in small things), that gift of courage and hope can be decimated, discarded or denigrated, as we are tragically seeing now in the Philippines and in many parts of the world. But for Ed, disillusionment and despair are never the last words. As he himself personally learned many years ago from a wounded and seemingly isolated indigenous leader in Colombia whom Ed thought had perhaps lost hope and would no longer see any meaning in their struggle: “Dawn comes even after darkest night.” A Philippine phoenix can rise from the ashes!

Thus Ed challenges the “politics of hate and fear” and the “culture of death and impunity” that have palpably become pervasive today. This is not who we are as a people. We are not condemned to settle for the false hopes and fake news peddled by a Marcos or a Duterte. We have instead the gift of the bravery and integrity of a Diokno, Tañada, Salonga, Magsaysay, Robredo, and Richie Fernando. But individual courage also has to be translated into frameworks and collective projects that will truly put people in the center of decision-making processes, promote social inclusion and economic democracy, and lasting peace based on justice and the sacredness of life, which is how Ed envisioned and helped write the 1987 Constitution, despite its imperfections.

Allow me to congratulate and thank Ed for the gift of this new book of reflections written mostly in the past two years –the era of violent Duterteismo – a time when we most need

it. It is a gift that comes from a life of nonviolent activism, public service for human rights and social justice, and global peace-building – already three-quarters of a century this year as Ed himself puts it – marked by the “courage to hope” despite some setbacks that have not deterred him from his mission. But I think the reason that I’ve been asked to speak today is that I am a teacher, and one of Ed’s lifelong missions has been as a teacher, mentor and formator to several generations of young people from the 1960s to the present. Indeed, if I may borrow from the nine-year old Australian girl from 1986, let me also say earnestly that when I grow up, I want to become like Ed Garcia. I wish I can be teaching, mentoring and inspiring young people like Ed at 75, 85, or who knows, at 95 (surpassing my own mother). Actually, I have to admit that the first time I saw Ed Garcia wearing green and yellow on the FEU bench, I was a little shocked and wondered what had happened to this true Blue Eagle. But once I got past my tribalism, I realized his present work as a formator of FEU scholar-athletes is simply a continuation of his lifelong mission, and as I read about how FEU founder Nicanor Reyes had said the words, “be brave” to his daughter Lourdes just before he was killed by the Japanese during the Battle of Manila in 1945, now everything makes perfect sense. Thank you Ed, for your lifework as a teacher-mentor and formator-companion of the young.

Building on the insights of his own Jesuit teacher and mentor Fr. Horacio de la Costa, Ed believes that the youth are one of the jewels of the Filipino people. This book is his gift to the successor generation. But there are no shortcuts to a hopeful future. When he says we need a “marathon mentality,” he points out that we need patience, persistence and perseverance. We need courage but we also need the stamina of youth. Of course, physical youth inevitably fades (and even Ed Garcia cannot be young forever). Pope Francis says, however, that the only unhealthy aging is the one of growing old from within -- when our hearts are no longer renewed and grow weary of life. But how are our hearts sustained and given new life?

I think it is significant, it is *kairos*, an opportune, grace-filled moment that we are launching Courage! two days after Pentecost Sunday. As we know, Pentecost is the story of how fearful, indeed cowardly disciples who had locked themselves behind closed doors, were suddenly transformed into fearless witnesses of the Resurrection, even at the risk of their own lives. Pope Francis said last Sunday that the Holy Spirit was like a powerful jolt that freed hearts chained by fear. He said that “[the Spirit] changes hearts... It does not free us from the weight of our problems, but liberates us [from] within so that we can face them. It does not give everything at once, but makes us press on confidently...the Spirit keeps our hearts young...” Pope Francis also says the Spirit not only changes hearts. She also changes situations – even the most unimaginable ones.

Thus today as Ed Garcia gives us the gift of his book and lifework, we have also been given the gift of courage, hope, joy and life from within that can truly renew the face of the earth!

**5. Marco P. Gutang, President, Angel C. Palanca Peace Program Foundation, Inc. (ACP<sup>3</sup>FI), and peace educator at FEU:**

On behalf of the Angel C. Palanca Peace Program Foundation, Inc. (ACP<sup>3</sup>FI) and the youth group, Peace to All Youth Organization (PeaceTAYO), based in Far Eastern University, congratulations Sir Ed for this very timely publication!

I first met Sir Ed in 2002 at a workshop in Tagaytay. After seeing him in action, I said to myself, I want to be just like him.

Some have joked about Sir Ed's age today, but I say his energy, the way he spreads positive energy, and his ability to inspire the youth is ageless. He is still the same inspiring man as he was two decades ago.

Today, however, I am still a work in progress. It was in one of the "Waging Peace" conferences organized by the Gaston Z. Ortigas Peace Institute (GZO-PI) that I first heard the words uttered by Sir Ed, "Peace needs a marathon mentality." I realized that I may not even see my own vision for peace achieved in my lifetime, but I work so that future generations may enjoy the peace that I work for today.

I am living witness to this when I was in grade school, as I saw the courage of Filipino citizens to take action to transform our nation, culminating in the EDSA People Power Revolution, one of the leaders of whom was Sir Ed. I was 13 years old then, living in Camp Crame in February 1986. My father was a PC General who defected and sided with the camp of Ramos and Enrile, and branded as a "renegade" soldier by the government TV station.

And so I have held that mantra ever since I heard it. I teach it to my students, I emphasize it in our teacher-training workshops, and I say it to myself. Peace education, in my experience has been a bumpy road. It has its ups and downs. It can be a lonely road at times. It can be downright depressing. And these days, given what has been happening in the country, I feel anger, as well. So I repeat that mantra to myself whenever my work gets me down.

Today, aside from this mantra, I thank Sir Ed for this book, which I consider as a "gas tank" for inspiration to keep me going in doing peace education work. We need it more than ever as we remind the youth to "Never Forget." It gives us continued energy to, "Battle for the Right," as Sir Ed quotes a line from the FEU Hymn. In one of the stories that Sir Ed shares in the book, he fuels our Courage! and says, "Be brave."

Again, thank you and congratulations, Sir Ed!

6. **Erin Tanada**, grandson of the late Senator Lorenzo Tanada who witnessed and participated in the events preceding and during the people's power experience provided a narrative of courage demonstrated in "the parliament of the streets.". Erin related the events which preceded and took place during the dispersals of September 1984 at the Espana Welcome Rotonda where his Lolo Ka Tanny

stood his ground in the face of several assaults by the police forces. Despite his age – 86 then – he did not shirk from his moral responsibility to resist the dictatorship with all his might. In a sense, Tanada truly lived his promise: “*Tapat sa Bayan, Tapang sa Laban!*”

**7. Sister Patricia Fox, NDS, Regional Coordinator, Sisters of Our Lady of Sion:**

*(in two parts; Part I delivered on 22 May 2018, a day before she was served the deportation order by the Bureau of Immigration, follows.)*

Good afternoon! Thank you so much for the invitation. It feels a bit like a false pretense, because I’m just an ordinary person who is thrown into something I never chose, like “stardom”! I’ve always been happy to just be in the background.

After reading a lot of the book, even if I wasn’t here during martial law, I now know that the courage of some people here is just truly inspirational.

For years, I have been working with farmers, tribal people. Their issues mostly center around land. I have taken part in numerous dialogues, hearings, rallies, press conferences. The triggering point was this: we had been hearing so many atrocities under martial law in Mindanao; there had been atrocities for ages but they were now increasing.

As the Philippine delegate in an International Fact-Finding mission, I had met *lumads* displaced from their lands, a couple of young farmers, some teenagers, falsely accused and tortured for being misbranded as members of the New People’s Army (NPA). They were choked, thrown with gasoline, twigs and leaves. Fortunately, they hadn’t died since they got out and ran, but they suffered some of the most atrocious burns.

Reflecting on the sacredness of life, your heart just goes out to them. When the fact-finding mission came up, I agreed to join. I went to Davao and encountered some Coca-Cola workers who had been contractual for about 8 to 10 years now. They formed an association to ask for regularization and work benefits, since they were working for 14 to 16 hours a day. They asked me to speak at a press conference, to just say something on their behalf. And basically I said that the social teachings of the Church are clear: the right to unionize, the right to a just wage, the right to security of tenure. This however, formed the basis of both the deportation case and the downgrading of my missionary visa.

The line from the book, *Courage!*, which says “In times like ours, when lives have become cheap, when threats are thrown with abandon, and when human rights are honored more in the breach, it requires a brave brand of citizenship to come together and put a stop to an escalating ‘moral meltdown.’” – these lines clearly speak to me.

I myself saw in Mindanao the escalating breaches of human rights, the families of those who had been killed, the false charges placed upon them, the *lumads* displaced from their ancestral lands mostly due to mining and its disastrous environmental impact.

People must do something that will inspire change. I'm reminded of how Isaiah says: "No longer shall the sound of weeping be heard there, or the sound of crying; No longer shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, nor anyone who does not live a full lifetime; one who dies at a hundred years shall be considered a youth."

But this just doesn't happen in an instant. Again, "Courage is a verb!" and we have to do something, and we have to do it together. That's what truly struck me.

We are a people of hope. Even though darkness is there, we will overcome because we believe that Jesus is alive, the Spirit is alive and active. We Christians can show this through our actions, through being with people, struggling with them, continuing on for them- and this is the challenge of this book – Courage!

When we do show that Jesus is alive, good will overcome evil. This is what I most appreciate.

The other point that struck me was the line, "The task of the hour is to transform grief into courage; intolerance into an openness of the heart; hatred into a capacity to love; and indifference into a brave brand of global citizenship."

We cannot afford to be closed. We have to be open to whatever religion, country or boundaries there may be. Actually, this was one of the things we were fighting in my case. For one, there was a deportation ordered, and now we know where it came from!

They're (the powers-that-be) trying to redefine the role of the Church as just being in one barangay, just converting people or teaching religion. But beyond this, our role is to defend the sacredness of life.

It is another way of teaching when you're respecting people, going with them, defending people, defending human rights – to me, that's a critical part of preaching.

As a foreign missionary, I believe that what we do in one place has an effect on others as well. We're aware of what's going all around us, but we act where we are. And that, I believe, is the challenge of this book for me. That is the challenge!

I thank you all so very much.

*(Part II, delivered on 1 June, follows:)*

I would like to thank Ed for inviting me to this second book launch. In his book he says, "Courage is a verb!" and I think standing here before this audience is a challenge to put this verb into practice. I was not in the Philippines during Martial Law under Marcos, but I had heard the names of Diokno, Tanada, Salonga, and it was inspiring to read about their courage in action as well as the courage of Ed himself with his experiences not only here but in other areas of conflict. What I really loved about the book is the hope that it exudes, but a hope that is not a passive waiting but a hope, as he says, in the

very struggle to preserve and defend the reverence for life and the recognition that human rights is an imperative.

By now you would all know my situation – that I was accused of breaching my missionary visa because I went outside my barangay and didn't stick to teaching religion and converting people. Their definition of missionary activities was taken from Wikipedia and Merriam Webster on line. I think these definitions have not been updated since Vatican II, where in the document *Church in the World*, it said: "The joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the men and women of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys, and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ". The *Compendium of the Social Doctrines of the Church* tells us that the Gospel is not only to be heard but put into practice. It states: "Consistency in behavior shows what one truly believes and is not limited to things church-related or spiritual but involves men and women in the entirety of their life experience and in the context of all their responsibilities".

I am also accused of being "political" and most here would be more aware than I of the legal distinctions between partisan politics and working for social justice. Again, from a Church perspective, Pope Francis in *Evangelii Gaudium* laments that "even if many are now involved in lay ministries, this involvement is not reflected in a greater penetration of Christian values in social, political and economic sectors. It often remains tied to tasks within the Church, without real commitment to applying the Gospel to the transformation of society. The pastoral challenge I see now to the church and all people of good will today – not to be silent in the face of massive human rights violations".

After hearing allegations of massive human rights violations in Mindanao which were increasing with martial law, I was asked to take part in a fact-finding mission last April 6 – 9, 2018. I was assigned to Southern Mindanao. The day I was arrested, I was accused of taking part in rallies in Davao. One photo that I was shown was when I was visiting political prisoners in Tagum Provincial Jail where the warden had taken part in a program with these prisoners and the members of the fact-finding team. There were 27 political prisoners, including a 62-year-old woman and a mother of three, mostly accused of having explosives, the usual trumped-up charge. In the other, I was attending a press conference with Coca Cola workers, some of whom had been contractual for 8–10 years. The workers had organized and sought to dialogue with the management of Coke about being regularized and receiving benefits, but they had been terminated immediately. When they set up a picket it had been brutally broken up and 10 arrested and held for five days. The day I was there they had just been released and were asking for a message of support. I did speak and told them that the social teachings of the Church support their right to unionize, right to a just wage and security of tenure.

Pope Francis has stated that spreading of the social doctrine is part of the Church's evangelization. This follows tradition outlined in the *Compendium* mentioned earlier: "The Church's social doctrine is not a privilege for her, nor a digression, a convenience

or interference: it is her right to proclaim the Gospel in the context of society, to make the liberating word of Gospel resound in the complex worlds of production, labor business, finance, trade, politics, law, culture, social communications, where men and women live... This right of the Church is at the same time a duty, because she cannot forsake this responsibility without denying herself and her fidelity to Christ". So, while I was thinking I was being faithful to the command to love God and love neighbor through supporting calls consistent with the social teachings of the Church, the government thought differently!

From what I saw and heard in Mindanao, I found really relevant when Ed says in his book: "In times like ours, when lives become cheap, when threats are thrown with abandon, and when human rights are honored more in the breach, it requires a brave band of citizenship to come together and put a stop to an escalating and moral meltdown". He later writes: "The task of the hour is to transform grief into courage, intolerance into openness of heart, hatred into a capacity to love and indifference into a brand of global citizenship". As is mentioned, this global citizenship also includes protecting our Mother Earth, as most of the killings, false charges, forced evacuations that we investigated in Mindanao, stemmed from the victims trying to defend their lands against large-scale mining corporations or the expansion of plantations so that they could continue planting food crops; and for the *lumads* it is a matter of preserving their religious and cultural traditions as well as their schools which they value so much.

Ed says we are all dreamers. One of my favorite bible passages is from Isaiah where, paraphrasing, he says: no longer will an infant die young or an old person not live out his/her days; those who build houses will be able to live in them and those who plant will be able to eat their produce. "The wolf and the lamb will pasture together. The lion and the ox will eat hay. They will not harm and they will not kill". (Is 65).

I think of access to health care, agrarian reform, people living on the streets having a house, evacuees and others caught in conflict able to go home and live in peace – this dream of Isaiah would be the kingdom of God in the here and now. The challenge of Ed is to overcome all kinds of boundaries, territorial, political, religious and all sorts of afflictions which divide us and not succumb to fear and inaction so that we can realize our dream for a society and world where all can live in peace and dignity as children of God.

But, it is not only *courage* that is a verb but so also is hope; and, we have to live believing that change can come if we stand shoulder to shoulder, as he says, and see everyone as our brother and sister. Ed writes "if our eyes are open in this journey we call life, we might begin to realize that the dreams that bind us are far stronger than what divides us. What this day then ultimately provides us is the opportunity to listen and learn, and to act since we must". I believe that light always overcomes the dark; and, the flame of light in one corner of the world is enough to spark the flame of truth and justice in other parts of the universe. As Christians we are people of hope which incorporates courage which is a verb. I end with his challenge which also comes from a

fidelity to the Gospel: “Seize the moment”. Once again thank you, Ed, for the book and the invitation.

## **Part II**

*(Hosted by the Ateneo Law School, Jesuit Communications and the Ateneo Class '58 Diamond Jubilarians, a second launch of the book, Courage! took place on June 1<sup>st</sup> at the Ampitheater in the Rockwell Campus. Dean S Candelaria and Jess de la Fuente, director and former president of the Ateneo Alumni Association gave the opening remarks. They were followed by FEU Law Dean Mel Sta. Maria, Sister Patricia Fox, Ms. Samira Gutoc of Marawi, and LaSalle Law Dean Chel Diokno. Messages were received from former Chief Justice Jun Davide, Chancellor Adolf Azcuna, Atty Dick Romulo, and CHR chair Chito Gascon – all of whom were Framers of the 1987 Constitution. Final messages were received from former Senators Jun Magsaysay and Bobby Tanada. The latter also introduced his grandchildren Paolo Palanca and Gabrielle Tanada who spoke on behalf of today's youth. The author closed the gathering with a word of thanks.)*

### **Welcome Remarks:**

*Dean Sedfrey Candelaria of the Ateneo Law School and Jesus de la Fuente of Grupo '58, director and former president of the Ateneo Alumni Association welcomed the guests and gave the opening remarks.*

Dearly beloved friends,

On behalf of the Ateneo Professional Schools and the Ateneo Law School, in particular, I would like to express our warmest appreciation to Prof. Ed Garcia and the Jesuit Communications Foundation for having given us the opportunity to host this event today.

Prof. Ed Garcia's book, "Courage," provides a message of HOPE, amidst the anxiety and restlessness pervading our society.

Through the years, starting from the time I met Ed, after the EDSA People Power Revolution, when we were planning a nationwide advocacy on the concept of constitution-making and developing popular education materials on the subject in Loyola, I have never seen Ed stop a while to set aside his advocacy for a just and lasting peace, not only in our country but in other parts of the world.

Our professional tracks would often cross paths on peace issues.

Students of law have benefitted from his discourse on human rights concerns, looking beyond the fine print of legal rules in order to imbue a spirit of humanity and morality which are often overlooked in the application of these rules to concrete cases.

We all look forward to be further engaged by your book on this momentous occasion.

### **Reactors:**

#### **8. Dean Mel Sta. Maria of the FEU Law Institute:**

Ed, congratulations for this remarkable book; engaging, historical , informative , contextual, educational and simply inspiring.

Ed asked us to narrate, briefly, and I quote from his email an “experience of courage in our lives.” That is difficult. Many times, we just do things simply out of our convictions unconscious of their courageous implications.

But let me try. And, at the outset, my apologies if, in so doing, I sound like I am preening myself too much. But occasions like this come very rarely and I might as well take advantage of it.

Ed talked lengthily of the historical 1986 people power revolution.

It is so easy for some people --- especially revisionists--- to now diminish the value of that Revolution. But I don't. It stands for something more beyond the dates, the places, and personalities involved. It symbolizes the sacrifices of all those who, during the Martial Law period, suffered and died for freedom and justice.

During the 70s and 80s, Ed Garcia , Edgar Jopson and Fr. Archie Intengan SJ, were the generals, so called. We were only the foot–soldiers.

If you experienced going to the hills of Montalban to escape from special government agents, seeing your long-haired friend driven to the stockade for merely looking like a subversive, nearly being caught by the Metrocom "gestapo" in their warrantless raids, harboring an activist hunted by the government, being an “errand-boy” of a Jesuit revolutionary (I am referring to Fr. Archie Intengan) going to places like Batilyo, Navotas, Quiapo, Montalban, and Sapang Palay to relay messages and give provisions to like-minded “subversives” and, fetching more than 100 political prisoners from the Bicutan stockade (with my girlfriend now my wife), and of learning the apprehension and death of a good friend, *and knowing the dangers involved*, you still kept on fighting and fighting peacefully even if the "powers that be" seemed to be insurmountable, I guess that is courage enough.

But during those times, you could only marvel not at your own acts of courage but those of others. And in **Courage!**, Ed talks about Jose Pepe Diokno, Jovito Salonga, Lorenzo Tanada, stalwarts all.

We were witnesses.

I am sure many in our generation lost a friend or a relative during those dreadful times. Teotimo Tantiado, an ordinary citizen who loved his country, was one of them. I was with him just about an hour before he was apprehended on April 10, 1978 when the Loyola House of Studies (LHS) was raided. The Metrocom came and dragged Teotimo (together with Lorenzo Faustino). Fr. Francis Reilly SJ, my spiritual adviser, called me up just to make sure I was ok. He advised me to go somewhere (carefully and discreetly) as I might have been tailed. I did --- to Montalban. Few days later on April 17, I think through Fr. Hontiveros , we learned that Teotimo was tortured and eventually died. I am sure he saved the lives of his friends and companions by not squealing on them. For all I know, he might have even saved my life. Ampy and I will not forget him. God bless Teotimo..... and thank you dear friend. Teotimo, not a stalwart, but as much a hero as Diokno, Salonga, and Tanada.

And now this is my take-away from ***Courage!***

Today, we should not stand idly-by to let others repeat that period of our history ---- a period of plunder, summary and extra-judicial executions, and disappearances ----where duplicitous government leaders were criminals themselves.

While it may be easy to express disappointment and feel disheartened – either because we see a creeping dictatorship in our midst gaining strength and threatening to re-emerge with greater greed for power, or because we feel betrayed by people who took office post-Martial rule and failed to live up to the ideals of honor, integrity, honesty and love of country that we felt in EDSA –, let us remember that our duty to make our country good again did not end when People Power happened many years ago .

The deaths of Teotimo and all the victims of martial law only show that the duty to make sure that there would be no need for another people power in order to protect our rights lies in each and every one of us. And we can start by small but meaningful steps as Ed would allude in ***Courage!***

The miracle of EDSA only marked the beginning of a conscious awakening that ***our cherished freedoms will always be threatened if we do not fight for them.*** And this we must do with unwavering commitment much like the lyrics of our national anthem – "*ang mamatay nang dahil sa iyo*".

And that ladies and gentlemen was what was powerfully rekindled in me in reading ***Courage!*** -- the book of Ed. Thank you, Ed, for your immensely valuable and inspiring work.

**9. Samira Gutoc, a leading stalwart and survivor from Marawi, a fellow from the Oxford University Centre for Islamic Studies:**

**“Courage for a Coward”**

Life, at times, is a wonderful journey of goodness, fighting and righting wrongs; and, allow me to begin my sharing.

I hate fights...I fear bullies...my homeland had bloody clan wars, too many goons. Goons were power, the authority.

I was an “*iyakin*” .... I am used to being invisible and ignored. Manila rejected my applications after I graduated from Mass Communications at the University of the Philippines. Manila didn't give me a job, except in the freelance world and I didn't find any place to attend to meet new people. I developed a “kapal muks” (brave-faced) attitude, so after approaching a speaker at a forum at the Asian Institute of Management, I said that I wanted to study at Oxford. Having relatives look down upon foreign travel, wanting me instead to get married and stick around, I found a way to get out.

While in London, there I met Ed Garcia of the big *International Alert* organization, a dream for us who were peace activists and later at the *Waging Peace Conference* at the Ateneo Loyola Heights campus. I told him that I wanted to work in conflict areas, for example, in Afghanistan, not knowing that armed conflict would literally knock at my door, at our doorsteps in Marawi.

And, so Ed Garcia, your courage story inspires me to share some of my little story too. Nothing really compared to your wading into the world of tyrants, apartheid and slaughter. But back where I stayed in Marawi to truly walk the talk at the age of twenty one, I visited jails, and reported for radio where women must not be visible. At a time when women would be degraded and seen as a prostitute for speaking to soldiers, we formed a movement with them. And, when killings of Christians and gays unleashed hatred in these faceless young guys, we women had to stand up front, and say no, that is not ISLAM.

Now, standing up against martial law in Mindanao is the least I could do. It is what I can tell my baby Ameer and in a book like Ed's that I would like to try writing. *Inshala!*

*(Samira adds a background piece: “The Islamic world has been consistently seen as alien and exotic. The causes fought for by the Muslims have not been able to capture the attention and sympathy of citizens of the Western world. Instead, the actions and ideology of Muslim extremists – the “fundamentalists of popular culture” – are seen to represent the entire body of Muslims. The articulate, rational voices of Islamism are therefore systematically ignored or the multiplicity of voices within Muslim communities overlooked. The anomaly of generalizing Muslims has its historic roots. The Mindanao Muslim as savage is based on what Columbia University Professor, the late Edward*

*Said, would call the “cultural other”. The colonial branding or “terming” of Moros to encompass all “Mohammedans” of different sultanates, overlooked the territorial, cultural distinction of the Muslim groups in the archipelago. A prejudice against the South was entrenched soon after the arrival of the Spaniards paving the way for sporadic wars between 1565-1898. They employed the derogatory term “Moro” to describe those “uncivilized natives” who refused to convert to Christianity; and “Moro pirates” to describe the un-subjugated natives. And, because the first Muslims had an oral culture, leaving no written narrative, Philippine history with the stereo-typed Moro has been taught throughout generations of Filipinos. In multi-cultural societies like the Philippines, there is a need to deepen the coverage of stories beyond calamities and conflicts. It is not enough to know the “5 Ws of the story”. More basic is the need to provide context which gives the background on why conflicts happened in the first place. There is a need to mainstream images of ordinary Muslims. Moderate voices also need space. Many significant activities such as peace-building and development assistance are happening on the ground.”)*

**10. Dean Chel Diokno of the De LaSalle Law School:** *he recounted the life of his father the late Jose W. Diokno who shared his thoughts on the importance of courage in life.*

## **V Messages:**

### **11. Vice-President Leni Gerona Robredo**

When I look back at my life and that of my late husband Jesse, it is clear that all of the most defining moments of our lives, almost without exception, are preceded by junctures that required great courage. Joining the EDSA People Power Revolution, Jesse’s decision to run for Mayor of Naga City, and, of course, my decision to enter politics to preserve Jesse’s legacy.

I believe that the same will be true in our lives moving forward, as well as in our country, as we strive to preserve the various kinds of freedom precious to us as a people. This is not the time to fear, and we, as Filipinos, must learn to speak truth to power, and bear in mind the plight of the last, the least, and the lost.

Ultimately, hope resides not in a single person nor a single movement. It can pierce the darkness only if we all have it in us, and more importantly, if we nurture it in the extraordinariness of ordinary people. The man, woman, and child we meet on the street are truly our vessels of courage and of hope.

### **12. Senator Leila M. De Lima, Prisoner of Conscience**

First of all, let me extend my warmest congratulations to Professor Ed Garcia for the launching of his book “Courage”. It is a privilege to have been given a copy of the manuscript a few months ago, and I am now looking forward to seeing the final copy. Coming from an author who exemplifies courage as a peace worker, educator, and

activist, one who embodies the values of *magis* in public service, it is no surprise that this book contains meaningful lessons in life and shows the importance of courage in facing challenges during these dark times.

It is an honor for me to have the opportunity to share my message along with courageous individuals who fight for human rights, justice, and democracy.

Courage was instilled in me in my early years largely through my father's teachings. He was my longtime mentor and role model who taught us to "never be afraid to fight for what you believe is right."

It is the same courage that has guided me as a mother, lawyer, human rights defender, former Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights where I had the opportunity to work with Prof. Ed, and as former Secretary of Justice.

As Senator, I remain committed in my advocacies to protect human rights, uphold the rule of law, and strengthen our criminal justice system.

Despite being a neophyte lawmaker, I stood my ground and vehemently opposed the spate of extrajudicial killings in the country. I was stripped off of my Committee Chairmanship, became the victim of massive black propaganda, of unrelenting, vicious, malicious, and misogynistic attacks aimed at discrediting and tainting my integrity and credibility, and detained based on trumped-up charges. Despite all these, I continued to speak truth to power, even when it cost me my own freedom.

I am now on my 452<sup>nd</sup> day as a prisoner of conscience of the Duterte regime, and I have learned that I needed to muster more strength and a different kind of fortitude to carry on with my advocacies.

I admit: I found myself searching for more courage to overcome the deep sorrow of being separated from my family, and to continue fighting for my freedom and justice despite my detention and physical isolation.

I fortunately found this in my renewed faith in God, and in the outpouring of love from my family and supporters—*sa mga kababayan nating naninindigan para itama ang mali, at ipagtanggol ang ating mga karapatan.*

In times when dissent is silenced because of the climate of fear and culture of impunity perpetuated by an oppressive regime, we should be courageous in resisting and continuing the fight for what is just and right.

We need to be brave to speak to one another, to speak for ourselves and to speak for our nation.

We also need to enlighten others who may have been blinded by a leader who has done nothing except to encourage killings, strike a deal with convicted drug lords to imprison his staunch critic, curse individuals and the international community who

express concerns about his crooked policies, utter unsavory remarks against women, and facilitate the removal of the Chief Justice through an unconstitutional process; a person who leads and decides everything on a whim.

*Malinaw po: Si Duterte ang matinkad na halimbawa na ibang-iba ang “matapang” sa “mayabang” lang.*

*Kailangan nating ipakita na hindi tayo kagaya niya at ng kanyang mga kaalyado at alipores na puro salita lang at pangako. Lalong walang mangyayari kung magwawalang kibo lang tayo sa mga lantarang kamalian at pag-abuso. Ipakita natin ang tunay na tapang at giting ng Pilipino.*

Despite the unjust detention and the continued persecution by the Duterte regime, I continue to have faith in the Filipino. Our history attests to our extraordinary courage as a people. In the face of different challenges, we have stood united and have fought hand in hand to triumph over a despotic government.

Let us not waver now. Let us not be cowed. Let us fight for our rights. Let us fight for our children. Let us fight for our future.

Again, congratulations to Prof. Ed Garcia and to the Jesuit Communications. Thank you and good day to all of you.

***12. Adolf Azcuna, Chancellor of the Philippine Judicial Academy and retired Associate Justice of the Supreme Court:***

This book is vintage Ed Garcia. Ed was our colleague in the drafting of the present Constitution. He is the unheralded author of the far-seeing provision on the right to a healthful environment “in accord with the rhythm and harmony of nature.” He also provided so many inspiring ideas and pushed us to expand the space of freedom in every direction even in uncharted areas. He used the mantra from the Catalan songwriter, Joan Manuel Serrat, “*Caminante no hay camino, se hace camino al andar.*” or “walking without a path, and making a path as we walk.” The nation owes him so much for the freedom that we enjoy today and it is heartening that we see him still pushing for that freedom and calling on all to summon the courage that is the price we have to pay for its survival. Thank you, Ed, and I wish you every success.”

***13. Ricardo Romulo, a Framers of the 1987 Constitution:***

Congratulations on the publication and the launch of your book, Courage! -- a much-needed commodity both here and abroad.

**14. Hilario Davide, Jr, Retired Chief Justice and Former Philippines' Permanent Representative to the UN in New York:**

Only Ed Garcia, among a few, could have written “**Courage!**” Its publication at this time of our history as a nation and as a people is most timely; it is even inspired by a Power Who is the source of Truth, Justice, Love and Peace. Our time calls for courage to face and overcome forces that bedevil our nation and which could bring us back to the dark days before the February 1986 people power revolt. A courage with the sterling virtues of wisdom, understanding and prudence; and with the exceptional qualities of patience, endurance, perseverance, fortitude, righteousness and compassion. The courage which Ed brought to the 1986 Constitutional Commission (CONCOM) as one of the fifty Commissioners appointed by then President Corazon C. Aquino. I was among the fifty. A courage that breathes Faith, Hope and Love which he articulated in the second Invocation he delivered at the opening of one of the plenary sessions of the CONCOM. A courage which inspired all of us in the CONCOM which resulted in the drafting of a Constitution which, although imperfect, is the best the Philippines ever had. It is the only one which is pro-God, pro-Life, pro-Filipino, pro-People, pro-Poor, pro-Social Justice, pro-Human Rights, pro-Family, pro-Marriage, pro-Women, pro-Youth, pro-Environment, Pro-Servant-Leadership, among others. As I pledged in the explanation of my affirmative vote on the final draft of the Constitution prepared by the CONCOM, “it is the Constitution I am willing to die for”.

In explaining his affirmative vote for that draft of the Constitution, Ed Garcia beautifully expressed his faith and hope in and love for our country and our people in these words:

“. . . my vote for this Constitution is Yes, a yes based on faith in the people, in our ability to forge a future together, to achieve unity from our diversity, a unity that breaks ground and looks forward. It is a recognition that what our people have undertaken in their long struggle which brought about the events of February 1986, we can do once again and that we have the capacity to fulfill this unfinished quest. Ultimately, it is a conviction that our people can make use even of an imperfect document to determine their future and say yes to life. Finally, it is an affirmation that our people are capable of being faithful to their destiny and that a time

indeed will come when we will all be truly free . . . free from fear and hunger, free to build and chart our own course in our own time and in our own way, and finally to sing our own song and make real our own possible dreams.”

It is Ed Garcia's brand of courage that we all need today to resist the move to amend/revise our Constitution by adopting a system of government that is a complete stranger to our people and our country and institutionalizing at the same time a new paradise for politicians, but hell for the people. It is to be evolved by splitting our country into several states or regions thereby creating more fertile groups for feudalism and political dynasties and making the rich richer and the poor poorer. It is that brand of courage we all need to safeguard and protect our democratic institutions which are now under siege.

May God inspire all of us to live with the brand of courage which our country calls for in times like ours. Thank you, Ed. May God bless you always.

### ***15. Chito Gascon, Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights, and a framer of the 1987 Constitution***

I am sorry and deeply saddened that I am unable to be physically present at the launch of the new book of my dear friend and mentor Ed Garcia, entitled: ***Courage!*** I am travelling back from the Oslo Freedom Forum and will be touching down in Manila a few hours after the launch; thus, I wish to extend my personal congratulations to Ed and Bong on this significant contribution to the narrative of our people's unfinished quest for freedom, justice, human rights and democracy.

Ed Garcia's words both spoken and written have the capacity to inspire and evoke from those who hear and read them to consider the human condition in our midst and then to take positive action. I have benefitted from and have been changed by these words that come from Ed's indubitable human spirit. It is a gift – for that is exactly what you now hold in your hands and hearts – that must be shared if we are to attempt to make our world just a little bit better tomorrow than what it is today.

***Courage!*** is not just the title of this book but more importantly it is a human quality that must be nurtured and engendered if real change is to happen. As I had mentioned, I am just returning from a conference in Oslo where I was privileged to listen to the very moving stories being told by human rights defenders, freedom fighters and democracy activists from across the world. Although the specific contexts and particular circumstances of these testimonies I heard over the last four days are very different – they all spoke about the cruelty and injustices that those with power are able to inflict upon those without it. But every single story I heard also spoke about the capacity to push back against evil and to dispel despair with hope. And what makes this possible is the seed of courage in our souls that we must allow to grow in order to overcome the odds we individually and collectively face.

That is why what Ed Garcia has written are so important. They help to strengthen our resolve as a people to do what must be done in order to establish a nation for our children. This after all is the ultimate purpose of our work in this temporary sojourn that we each take on upon this earth – to do all that we can wherever we are or whatever we have, with an abiding faith in the fact that it shall be enough because it has been blessed by God. A philosophy of life that Ed Garcia has consistently lived throughout his own personal pilgrimage is best exemplified in the prayer of St. Ignatius of Loyola: “to give and not to count the costs, to fight and not to heed the wounds, to toil and not to seek for rest, to labor and not to ask for reward, save that of knowing that we do Your most holy will.” May this book and its message – Courage! – accompany us in doing all that must be done. *Padayon!*

**16. *Jun Magsaysay, former Senator, entrepreneur and son of the late President Ramon Magsaysay:***

In his political biography entitled “Ramon Magsaysay: Servant Leader with a Vision of Hope,” former UP President Jose Abueva painted the picture of a profile in courage.

Digging deep into my childhood memories during the Japanese Occupation, I would like to share this story: When the *Kempetei* or Japanese Intelligence seemed to have warmed up to our location near Sta. Scholastica in Singalong, my dad decided to evacuate to Zambales where we come from. It must have been around 1943 as my sisters Teresita and Mila, and I were then all enrolled in Sta. Scholastica. I was then in kindergarten under Mother Gracia, a stern and very kind German sister who saw to it that we would behave and get good basic meals, when available.

My dad and mom, all of us would fit into a cab contracted to take us to Zambales which was quite risky as he was pinpointed as the supply officer of the Zambales guerrillas who would go to the Philippine General Hospital to be given basic medicine by the brave and youthful Filipino doctors for turnover to Col. Gyles Merrill, head of the guerrillas. The cab engine was converted by my dad and a couple of his mechanics to burn charcoal rather than gas, as there was a strict rationing and only to those who collaborated with the Japanese.

All told, the journey took almost a whole day with many sentry check points especially departing from Singalong towards Central Luzon, passing through Bulacan, Pampanga, Bataan, and finally Castillejos, Zambales, our safe haven in Canaynayan a small barrio far from the highway.

As a side comment, when Jovy Salonga was still quite active some years back and he with President FVR had a get-together at the United Church of Christ opposite PGH, I had a chance to join them and Jovy, who was our senior in the Old Liberal Party of Gerry Roxas, Ninoy Aquino, Ambrosio Padilla, and others circa 1960's, related this to me.

“Your dad was a very lucky and stubborn person. He used to come to this place to connect with some doctors in PGH who would turn over to an American missionary basic medicine and others like atabrine and penicillin, to maintain the supply to Western Luzon guerillas. He was almost caught once but decided not to arrive as the collaborators led the Japanese to the place where he was to meet the missionary.” Salonga had to address the congregation then, and had to cut short his story.

I would like another story of courage that my rather foolhardy, risk-taking, action-oriented father undertook. When the Huks were poised to take over Manila during late 1950, President Quirino had to dig deep among his LP stalwarts as the Philippine Free Press, the Manila Times, even the Herald and Chronicle kept up the barrage and put pressure to change leadership, especially to address the increasingly aggressive attacks of the military arm of the Huk movement.

Quirino asked Sen. Tomas Cabili of Mindanao then Chairman of the Senate Committee on National Defense, to accept the post. Sen. Cabili decided to forego the offer and instead urged the President to appoint Magsaysay, his counterpart Chairman of Defense in the House of Representatives. I was present when my dad called his core group of advisers and friends from Zambales and from Congress, plus some media friends. His Zambales friends were all against the transfer to the Executive as he had to give up his seat with a fixed term from 1949 to 1953 with re-election ensured as he ran almost unopposed in the 1948 elections. The rest especially media and some colleagues such as Crisologo, Sanidad, Primicias, mostly Ilocanos urged him to take the challenge and help the Administration resolve the deteriorating peace and order situation and the worsening social-political ills of the country. The larger national challenges won the day and he accepted the President's offer and was sworn in on August 31, 1950 in Malacanang.

I mention this as it was an act of courage, since it was “risk-heavy” involving going head-to-head against entrenched political warlords all over the country in the midst of a deteriorating peace and order situation; as against taking the path of least resistance with the least risks since it meant merely continuing with a sure position in Congress, re-election ensured in his home base.

I got a few more memories, Ed, but it would take a lot of time and space for our common goals of the Filipino, especially our youth to realize the trove of noble individual lives we witnessed all these decades who quietly, without much publicity, and with true humility did their level best to improve conditions in our country the best way they knew and how the people around them helped them by providing more wisdom and sincere guidance required to be effective and to succeed in their endeavors.

Sorry for the runaway last sentence but that is how my green LaSallian mind has been working all these decades!!! Thank you again and happy to be with you and your friends many of whom I have known and have met at one time or another.

From my family, regards to your family and the best to the children of my ninong, Dr Paulino J. Garcia.

**17. Bobby Tanada, former legislator as Senator and member of the House of Representatives from Quezon, a member of the “parliament of the streets” and the son of the legendary Lorenzo M Tanada, Sr.**

Among the valuable lessons that my late father, Lorenzo “Ka Tanny” Tanada, taught his children, a few stand out which I would like to share with you today:

- He was devoted to his family, and was devoted to family prayer. He always prayed, and never failed to invite his whole family to prayer.
- He was a dedicated public servant even before he was elected Senator of the Republic, and as a servant leader he holds the distinction of serving our people in the legislature for some 24 years which ended just before martial law was proclaimed.
- He was a man of courage; through thick and thin he always believed that in the end, “it is courage that counts.” He protested fraud in the Batasan Pambansa elections and was jailed for his convictions; at age 86, he stood his ground against the assaults of the police forces at the Welcome Rotonda in Espana at the height of martial law not once but thrice, battling tear gas and water cannons, rocks and bullets without flinching because he was a man of courage and wanted to inspire the martial law generation.

Today, his legacy lives on and my prayer is that the gift of courage be sustained by the young in our midst and those around the country.

*Kung may tapang, may pag-asa!* I believe, as someone put it, that “Courage is the one virtue that makes all the others possible.”

*Salamat at Mabuhay!*

## **VI VOICES FROM THE SUCCESSOR GENERATION:**

### **18. Joren Sereno**

*Friends of courage, friends of light, greetings!*

Allow me to apologize for not being there in person. Recent events have taught me the need to adjust to the ebb and flow of the unforeseen – or if not unforeseen, the unavoidable. I hope this short message will be enough of a glimpse of me, or rather of why I was asked to give this message to you.

Prof. Ed Garcia is a good friend of my Kuya James Villano. I had written a short poem and posted it on my wall for mother's day. Kuya James sent it to Prof. Ed, and he contacted me and asked me to give a message for his book launch. Prior to this, I knew nothing of him. My 8-year stay in this campus was mostly confined to the high school covered courts, and later on the philosophy department. I was however fortunate enough to have as my professor Dr. Jimmy Abad, who I remember fondly giving us the *Iliad* as an assigned text.

Prof. Ed told me who else was speaking, and I was a bit startled that I would be asked to give this message amongst these giants. My initial surprise was replaced with some hesitation, but seeing the courage of other people around me as they speak out, the hesitation turned into conviction. Allow me to share a little bit of myself.

I am Jose Lorenzo Sereno, or Joren for short. I was born in 1987, the same month our 1987 Constitution took effect. I was born in a time of change, when the howling winds of dictatorship and death had finally broken against walls of people holding hands and rosaries. I was born to two people who in their own small way had struggled to ensure that my sister and I, a year apart, would live in a better world.

My father's name is Mario Jose, or Jong for short. He was born in 1957, in the now highly-popular Davao City. He was a simple and shy boy who excelled in academics. He was quiet, dependable, and had dreams of his own that he could not fulfill. He was after all born poor, and relied on scholarships to get through school. Still, it was only a matter of time before his efforts paid off, when he was sent off to far-flung Manila to study in this very school. He was a Cervini boy who played his guitar in its quiet halls during holidays while other dorm-mates would go home to the province because he could not afford the trip home. In these cold nights, he endured.

My mother's name is Maria Lourdes, or Meilou for short. She was born in 1960, in the lively streets of Kamuning, Quezon City. She was not a simple and shy girl. She was intense early on, picking fights with boys and scaring them off with her ferocity. She was brilliant, but initially unchained. And while her Tagalog mother would keep the family afloat through businesses and a day job as a public school teacher, her half-Tausug father would do whatever he wanted because he was brilliant, fiery, and wildly popular. The fire of the hearth and the fire of the sword. They forged my mother into what she is today. And in the Ateneo de Manila, she met my father.

Fire and Ice. A popular theme nowadays. But quite apt in my case, because I am both my father and my mother. And it is as their child that I speak to you today, to the youth of today.

Do not forget your history. Do not forget where you came from, your mother's name, your grandfather's dreams, and your ancestors' legacy. Do not forget the courage that made our forebears bleed throughout our seven thousand islands, when others tried to impose their will on us and curtail our freedom. We are what they made us to become – fire and ice.

Today, it is easy to be silent. It is easy to simply try to survive, to compromise otherwise unbreakable principles. To befriend otherwise detestable individuals. To give them a pound of flesh that by all rights is undeserved, but that they take by force. Be it from the barrel of a gun, or the twisted words of the law, do not give them that satisfaction.

My mother is far more eloquent than me, and her entire ordeal in standing up against a regime that is entirely fixated on power and control to the detriment of national interests and the rule of law is a journey that is not yet over and deserves complete attention. Nor is the hardest part of it done. She stood, when others knelt. She decried the lack of due process, the lack of legal safeguards, the utter lack of competence, and was struck down because of it.

She still stands. Whether as Chief Justice or as a simple citizen of this young democracy, she will continue to stand and speak. But her voice will only carry weight if others join in. If others likewise speak what must be spoken. Remember that she does not speak from her experience alone, but she speaks what others want to say but fear saying. She speaks for the mothers bereaved, for the fishermen and indigenous people driven from their ancestral lands and seas by aliens and strangers. She speaks because she must, because nothing – not position, not power, not covering silence – will save you when the devil comes for you. And he will, because after all the jungle of laws have now been cut down.

Take courage. It is not about lacking fear but embracing and overcoming the fear, and fighting on despite the fear. Recall the whispers of your blood, the blood of the brave Bicolano; the fierce Ilocano; the valiant Kapampangan; the unconquerable Visayan; the true Filipino. We are called today to take courage, because as much as our parents gave us what we have, it is in our hands to take this and make of it something more.

As a final note, let me share with you my poem. It was written in just a few minutes, when my emotions were purer than they are now, when I was still a bit sentimental. Today I have shed off sentiment, and steeled myself for whatever lies ahead. Omnia in bonum. It is all for the good. May God bless you all today.

All the best, and congratulations to Prof. Ed Garcia,

### ***THE WOMAN OF FIRE***

I know a woman.

Born of fire.

She came from the union of a Tausug and a Tagalog, endowed by flaming blood.

She studied hard in public schools, earning the wings to study in the Eagle's nest. She left. Down from the hill.

The path led her to the halls that produced the greatest and worst of advocates; tyrants and martyrs, the crooks and heroes. She simply strived.

Her valedictory address was witnessed by the great Cardinal. The one who walked the talk.

She worked. Worked too hard. Her daughter's tears flooded her dreams. Unbearable

tears.

Once more she left privilege to pursue her mother's path. She taught people younger than her. She taught people older than her. She taught intellectuals and scoundrels alike the noble manner of law. She taught and taught. And somehow, people listened. They listened well enough.

She studied in foreign lands and gained their respect. They sought to keep her for their own, a sister their equal and greater.

But her blood, its drops of fire, called upon her to return home.

At home she found her wings, and soared to the peak, to the sun. They could not touch her there. She favored neither north nor south, neither east nor west. She flew no flag of color or shade. For she was not their own. She was born of fire.

They clipped her wings in desperation. They culled the mountains and seas, and dove through hell to bring her down.

And she fell. She fell from the stars.

But she never hit the ground. The fire within her burned brighter still.

As a phoenix, she rose from the fires of tribulation, scintillating - blindingly so.

Now she comes to set the whole world ablaze with her fire.

From blood. From ashes. From the cross.

### **19. A Celebration of Courage: by Gabby Tanada & Paolo Palanca**

*(Introduced by their Lolo Bobby Tanada, Paolo Tanada Palanca is a law student at the University of the Philippines College of Law at BGC while Gabrielle Tanada is a graduate of College of St. Benilde LaSalle and now works at ASSIST-Asia. )*

Never in our lives would we have thought our Lolo Bobby would be introducing us. Our esteemed Lolo going over our humble credentials is more than we had imagined at this point. In a way, it feels like a passing of the torch, telling us, "o, kayo naman."

(I agree, except, maybe I dreamt about this exact situation with us a little bit older with more successes behind each of our names. Maybe. Either way ---)

Standing on the same stage with such esteemed speakers and talking to all of you is an honor. We may have been asked because we are the great-grandchildren of the distinguished Lorenzo M. Tañada, but we are also here to address you as part of the next generation of Filipinos to inherit our beloved and sometimes bereaved country.

Many people before us have honored and praised Lolo Enchong, for his work and his service to the country. Even though we never had the chance to meet him, both of us grew up listening to stories from family and friends, learning from his legacy the same principles and ideals, and ultimately being inspired to fight the same fight (if and when necessary). Thank you, Tito Ed, for sharing these stories that will undoubtedly inspire and awe future generations of readers as well.

One of the beliefs that Lolo Enchong passed on to Lolo Bobby, who in turn taught it to us, was that of courage. Courage as the virtue that makes all other virtues possible, and courage as the virtue that makes all actions possible.

As young people, we inherit these principles from our parents and grandparents in the same way we inherit all the problems which our country faces from our predecessors. We are taught these principles so that we may address the challenges the world sets before us today. Be it topics such as the war on drugs, corruption, refugee crises, fake news, historical revision, women's rights – human rights. But also, general hate and intolerance, indifference and apathy. The list goes on.

(While watching or reading the news I go through a whole spectrum of emotions. At times, it feels overwhelming. I feel angry at the injustices and abuses a person can commit towards another. I feel sad at the extreme numbers that seem to rise at an hourly basis. I feel resigned to problems that seem like they'll never be solved. At times, it can feel exhausting to care and feel scary to hope. But we're young and we still have that youthful energy – zest, idealism!)

Tito Ed's book, *Courage!* is more than a call to action, it's a challenge – we need to be realistic, acknowledge every issue and every failed effort, and be hopeful anyways. Particularly for the youth, it is our turn to step up to the plate. We are the future, but very soon we'll be the present, taking charge and moving forward – good or bad. We can make a positive and sustainable impact if we're courageous enough.

So borrowing from Tito Ed's book and from Lolo, let us;

have the courage to think, be critical and independent;

have the courage to speak, stating real truths even to intimidating powers;

have the courage to act, to not falter or be fazed;

have the courage to protest, to give voice to the wrongs we see around us;

have the courage to engage in conversation, built on informed, educated, and intellectual discourse;

have the courage to hope for a better future;

... Then have the courage to make it happen.

## ***VII Response from the Author, Ed Garcia, 22 May 2018***

Thank you all for being here. This is a celebration of courage, and a testament to the men and women of courage assembled here.

I wish to thank first of all, my wife Bong for putting up with me all this time while I continued to work in post-retirement, and for giving me the space to do the work and writing that I have continued to do; thank you to my sons and daughter who have given their suggestions all along the way including our endless debates on whether the cover should be the color teal or maroon.

I wish to thank Jesuit Communications. It took a seventh attempt after six others had given me their polite rejections for publication of this modest manuscript; when offered *Courage!* Jesuit Communications had no hesitation. Thank you Team Fr Nono for this opportunity. Particular thanks to Joanna Ruiz who worked hard to lay out the book and design the cover together with her son Javy; and to Dit Sablan who helped to bring us all together at this launch at the newly-minted Arete. Thank you indeed to the Jesuit Communications team. To paraphrase Bishop Michael Curry who quoted the Jesuit philosopher-scientist Pierre Teilhard de Chardin during his homily at the Royal Wedding at Windsor Castle: the Jesuits truly have “fire in the belly”.

A sincere thank you to all those who participated in the program: our singer Toto Sorioso, our emcee Chris Castillo, our poet Jimmy Abad, our prof Benjie Tolosa, our adopted sister Patricia Fox, our own Erin Tanada, Marco Gutang from the Palanca Peace Program, our women of courage who sent messages, VP Leni and detained senator Leila, the young Joren Sereno, and our Bishop Ambo David who will give us the final blessings.

When Fr Nono asked me over Radyo Katipunan, what gave me the inspiration to write and publish *Courage!*, I answered by telling him the story of the first ever international human rights mission to Colombia in January 1980. Nearly four decades ago I led an Amnesty International mission to Colombia in Latin America, composed of a Spanish Magistrate Antonio Carretero Perez, and a Canadian psychiatrist, Federico Allodi. There we interviewed hundreds of political prisoners and their families, human rights advocates and journalists, religious and business leaders, lawyers and professionals, women and youth. We listened to countless testimonies of torture.

When we visited the jail of Popayan in southwestern Colombia, I saw one of the leaders of the *Consejo Regional Indigena del Cauca* in the jail still with fresh bullet wounds in the flesh. I asked him, “*Aun tiene sentido su lucha?*” Is there still meaning in your struggle. Without a moment’s hesitation, he answered, “*Aun amanece en la noche mas oscura.*” Dawn comes even after darkest night.

At that moment, *Courage* was made incarnate for me, felt in the flesh, in January 1980. His hope came from the courage of his convictions and his belief in the cause he was fighting for.

When I came back to the Philippines to join in the struggle against the Marcos dictatorship, I witnessed an incident on 25 September 1984, that is forever etched in my heart. There he was, the old man Tanada then in his 80s, braving teargas, water cannons, bullets and he would not be moved -- not once but thrice, and when the dust settled, he went to the soldiers to tell them: In God's name, stop. And, the soldiers and police put down their arms. Again, this was a lesson in courage – in the flesh.

Today, courage is made real by our people, young and not so young, around this room and by some others who have sent messages about the meaning and importance of courage in their lives, and countless others in the streets of our cities and the paths in our towns and barrios who remain nameless. Yes, courage is well and alive in our country. Indeed, courage is a verb, and the noun is the Filipino.

***The Author's Response, 1 June 2018:***

We have had a celebration of courage; and I wish to thank everyone who shared his or her story, and transformed this stage into a platform for men and women with courage.

We are in the last two minutes; thus, we do what must be done.

Thanks to *all of you* for joining us today, and, in particular to *Jesuit Communications*, the *Ateneo Law School* and to my classmates in the *Ateneo Grupo '58* who are this year's Diamond Jubilarians for organizing this mini-launch.

And, to *all who played a part in today's program*, thank you:

*Deans Sedfrey, Mel and Chel* who have battled bravely to uphold the rule of law and our Constitution;

*Companions Jess, Timmy* and all my other classmates who have joined us in this gathering;

*Sister Patricia Fox*, NDS, who found a way “to stay her execution” at the hands of the Bureau of Immigration to be here with us today and my sister *Samira Gutoc* who came all the way from Marawi to grace this launch with courage;

My companions in the framing of the 1987 Constitution, former Chief Justice *Jun Davide*, Chancellor *Adolf Azcuna*, Atty. *Dick Romulo* and CHR chair *Chito Gascon*; and, former senator *Jun Magsaysay*.

My dear friend *Bobby and his grandchildren Paolo and Gabby*, thanks.

Finally, and most especially *to my wife Bong* who has given me the space, the support and the love to continue working in post-retirement, not just in the “*last two minutes*” of *my life*, but in the “*overtime period*”, many thanks, many times over, with all my heart.

### ***VIII Final Blessing:***

#### ***Given by Bishop Ambo David, Bishop of the Diocese of Kalookan***

*Before the final blessing, Bishop Ambo mentioned that he came from the diocese that had become “ground zero” in the government’s drug war which has claimed thousands of victims. He then read two statements related to the President’s recent public declaration saying that he had a matrix speculating that the murdered priest had suspected relationships with several women – a charge that caused both the Archbishop of Tuguegarao and the Bishop of Kalookan on 21 May to issue statements which Bishop Ambo then proceeded to read:*

#### ***Statement from the Archdiocese of Tuguegarao on the Death of Fr Mark Ventura:***

“Our brother priest, the late Fr. Mark Anthony Ventura, was a dedicated priest, a zealous pastor, a missionary to the “peripheries”. He was beloved by all who knew him. He was an affectionate person, sympathetic, close and intimate to many people: rich and poor, men and women, young and old. We miss his infectious smile and untiring zeal.

“Obviously, he had enemies. We do not know who they are or why they had to kill him. The Police is investigating the killing from all angles. We do not want to speculate on what the reasons are for his death. Neither do we want that the investigation be muddled by the spreading of unfounded rumors and malicious insinuations. We trust that the PNP is faithfully doing their job. We wish them success, to come out with solid evidence, to apprehend the killers and determine the mastermind. We hope and pray that the real truth will come out so that justice for Fr. Mark will finally be served.

The truth will set us free. (John 8, 32.)

+Sergio L. Utleg, D.D.

Archbishop of Tuguegarao,

#### ***Bishop Ambo then read his own statement:***

#### ***Letter to the Priests of the Diocese of Kalookan on the recent events surrounding the killing of Fr Mark Anthony Ventura;***

“It pains me to note that Fr. Mark Anthony Ventura of Tuguegarao is being “murdered” for a second time. In his statement, Archbishop Sergio Utleg deplored what he called “the spreading of unfounded rumors and and malicious insinuations” against Fr. Mark who he maintains was “a dedicated priest, a zealous pastor, a missionary to the peripheries...” beloved by all who knew him.

“We have rung our Church bells for one week on account of his first murder. Let us ring them again to call our people to prayer on account of his second murder. Let us

support His Eminence Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, as head of the Metropolitan Province we belong to, in his exhortation against the spreading of fake news!

“Let us continue to call on our parish communities to prayer by resuming the ringing of our Church bells for five minutes, from 8:00-8:05pm every night from Wednesday, May 23 until Thursday, May 31.”

+Pablo Virgilio S. David, Bishop of Kalookan

***Bishop Ambo likewise shared the final readings from the Epistles of St. Paul:***

***Readings from 2 Corinthians 4:7-10, 16-18:***

“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God’s and not of us. We are hard-pressed on every side, yet not crushed; we are perplexed but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed – always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus, also be manifested in our body.

“Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things that are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”

***The final greeting of St Paul in Romans 15:13:***

“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

The assembly then formally closed with the awarding of tokens to the guests, the singing of “*Handog ng Pilipinas sa Mundo*” and other anthems, before the signing of the books.

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