



# Paglaurum

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## TERRY DUMOGHO: FAMILY MAN, SCHOLAR, PROFESSOR, PEERLESS ADVOCATE OF LOCAL AUTONOMY (1930-2013)



By Prof. Nene Pimentel

[A *Parangal* at the Pimentel Center for Local Governance, College of Governance and Public Policy, University of Makati, and the Pimentel Institute for Leadership and Governance, January 16, 2012]

It is said that death is the great leveler of mankind.

True in a sense. Because rich or poor, young or old, man or woman, powerful or powerless, people die.

But it is also a fact that death measures a person's worth not only in the eyes of those he or she has left behind but also in the esteem of his or her country or community.

Jose Rizal died by firing squad in 1896 during the Spanish colonization era.

He is now the national hero. Ramon Magsaysay died in a plane crash in 1957. People still remember him today as the common man's President. Ninoy Aquino was felled by an assassin's bullet in 1983. The nation grieved over his death and triggered the dismantling of the martial law regime in 1986.

Obviously, for the things they did while alive not only for themselves, but more importantly, for others.

Terry Dumogho will not qualify as a peer of the nation's foremost heroes.

But to his two daughters, Isabel and Antonia and their children; to his ten year old son, Marlo, and to his widow, Lorenda, Terry was a devoted, doting and disciplinarian

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## Fond memories of Sir Terry

By Clarisse Aquino

My first encounter with the distinguished Eleuterio Dumogho was in 1995, while studying at the PUP taking up Bachelor of Arts in Political Science Major in International Relations I was one of his students on Local Government and Fiscal Management.

The old saying tells us we should not judge a book by its cover. I must admit though, that I first misjudged Sir Terry as strict when I first met him, owing largely to the way he dressed--in a suit and tie.

My false impressions of

Sir Terry were immediately removed when, in our first session he showed us a copy of our curriculum and asked my classmates to photocopy it. He immediately gave money and told my classmate "ito ang pera kasi di naman kasama sa allowance nyo ang pagxerox nyan." After hearing those words, my friend and I said, "ay ang bait pala ni sir."

In the middle of the first semester in 1995, after my class, Sir Terry approached me asking if I would be willing

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## He fought the good fight

By Jay Dejaresco

Fresh from law school, my first job in Metro Manila was as a legislative staff of Senator Nene Pimentel, Jr. That was in 1998.

It was in the Senate that I first met the revered Eleuterio Dumogho, a man I would quickly know to be one of the most learned in the field of local governments.

In the fifteen years that I have worked with him, let me sum up some of the inspiring traits of the man, who in many respects has become a role model.

**Approachable.** While not a politician, Eleuterio Dumogho

he would easily have become one, because he could freely connect with people. In our first encounter, in no time he broke the ice, initiated conversation by telling me, "Do, I am your Tito". The term "Do" is a reference to young boys.

He then proceeded to trace our common roots. He said we both come from that sleepy town of La Libertad, North Negros Oriental, and mentioned our common relatives.

"From now on, call me your Tito" he said. In an instant, he removed all my feelings of professional stiffness, and I

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## TERRY

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head of the family who saw to their needs come typhoons, floods or other calamities.

And to the devotees of local autonomy throughout the nation – no matter what critics say - Terry Dumogho is already an icon on the altar of decentralization and devolution.

We who were his colleagues in the academe or in government know that Terry spent all of his working hours to thinking, researching, writing and teaching what local autonomy is all about.

Perhaps, the most important piece of legislation that the Senate of 1990 churned out was the Local Government Code. In the crafting of the Code, Terry did the spade work -literally without counting the hours – that got the Code passed after more than four years of debates in the Senate and the unusually numerous bicameral conferences that eventually threshed out the differences between the House and the Senate versions of the Code.

If the Code is now recognized as a progressive legal document that has led to the modernization and development of many a forgotten community, a great part of the honor belongs to Terry.

Sancho Panza incarnate

Few people know it. But tilting against the windmills of centralization in the 1980s



Dir. Terry as model personnel of the year (December 11, 2005).

to reverse the direction of the winds of change towards local governments was deemed to be an impossible quest.

But because there was a streak of a Sancho Panza in Terry Dumogho, he dared to dream the impossible dream, and helped to push for local autonomy without counting the cost along with his quixotic friends in the halls of the Legislature.

And what was then mere fantasy in the minds of many is now a tool of development and modernization in the hands of our local government officials for the well-being of the people.

I have known Terry for most of my life as a national lawmaker.

I must confess that now that he is gone ahead of us, it will be difficult to find another one like him - humble,

patient, unassuming, hard-working, honest, idea-driven, unmindful of time, perks or money in the discharge of whatever duties fell upon his lap.

When I had the privilege of running the then Ministry of Local Government in 1986, I was looking for a man I could trust to handle a very sensitive agency dealing with the Bids and Awards of supplies of the Ministry.

In the graft ridden culture of the nation then, it was important for us in the Cabinet of Cory Aquino, the new President, that we be seen by the nation as capable of delivering services to our people without the stigma of corruption.

My eyes fell on Terry Dumogho. And I can say that I had no reason to regret it.

May the Lord God give

Terry rest. May his example light up the path of those who would dare to take up the challenges of good citizenship as he had done unequivocally in his journey through life.

Now that Terry has gone ahead of us, like John Donne, we must admit that his “death diminishes (us), for (we are) involved in mankind.” And, therefore, we need not ask ‘For whom the bell tolls’ because ‘it tolls for’ you and me.

It is in this spirit that the Pimentel Center for Local Governance in collaboration with the College of Governance, and Public Policy and the Pimentel Institute for Leadership and Governance offer to him this humble Parangal as our tribute to a family man, a scholar, a professor, a public servant, and a peerless man in the field of local governance, **ELEUTERIO ‘TERRY’ DUMOGHO**.



Picture taken before opening of the Senate session. (July 27, 2009).



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## FOND

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to be his student researcher. He told me that every year he observes his students who among them had the potential to be trained for professional work.

At first I was hesitant to accept the offer because I knew that being a researcher would require me to go from one place to another to conduct research work, and I wasn't familiar with the places even though I had been staying in Manila for more than three years already at that time. After giving it some thought I agreed to be his researcher and I became one until I graduated from College.

March 1, 1996, even before I graduated Sir Terry recommended me to Caloocan City Hall for my first job. Sir Terry was the Chief of Staff in the Office of Mayor Reynaldo Malonzo and I became his secretary. Being a secretary of Sir Terry, I must say is a great privilege. He was so generous in teaching me everything I needed to learn.

Being my boss, I introduced Sir Terry to my parents and they immediately became close friends. Often times we visited him in his house at Cubao and even when he transferred to Caloocan. We would always bring him his favorite pasalubong, *kapeng barako*, *saging na saba* and *jackfruit*.

One of my most memo-

orable times with Sir Terry was on May 26, 1996. It was his birthday. Since my family had become close with Sir Terry, we invited him to celebrate his birthday in our place in the province of Batangas. We prepared a small party for him and he was very happy. I didn't realize how happy Sir Terry was, with that simple birthday party we honored him with, until just before Sir Terry died.

A week before Sir Terry died, my mother showed me the letter that Sir Terry mailed to her way back June 4, 1996 in appreciation of our simple *handaan* to mark his birthday. The letter reads:

INTERNATIONAL BROKERS  
AND  
TRADERS  
DUMOGHO INTERNATIONALE  
4000 North St., Cubao, Q.C.  
Tel: 424-2003  
Telex No. 42821 Dinter PM

Dear Rene & Daisy

"Don't search for happiness for only the Architect of destiny determines it for you in His own time," a Biblical injunction goes.

For two years the observance of my birthdays every May 26 lost its meaning and celebrating it has no more relevance to the life of the celebrant

I have then decided to let last May 26 pass as any ordinary day, spent in solitary confinement within my own thoughts.

However, the day has given me new meaning for without searching that elusive frame of mind in connection with celebrating a very important day, a family of new found friends has given the correct dimension in celebrating my birthday.

I am extremely happy, and heartfully shared with my two daughters, Maybel and Joy, that the Rene and Daisy Lascano of Taal family has given me the happiness in connection with my birthday last May 26. Of course I have to attribute the meaningful event to Clarissa who became the bridge in the development of cordial and friendly relationship between your family and myself.

Although I have two daughters who have families of their own, I consider myself alone, and the enjoyment I experienced at La Familia beach will be a part of the events worthy of hoping for in the future.

With sincerest thanks and warmest regards to the Lascano family including my friends Mr. & Mrs. Francisco de Castro, I am

Very sincerely yours,

*Terry*  
E.C. Dumogho  
6-4-96

So the friendship continued.

Sir Terry also introduced me to his daughters Ate Maebel and Ate Joy and even to his grandchildren who were still young at that time, Bianca, Monchit, Popo, Nico,



Clarisse Aquino and Dir. Terry Dumogho at the Senate (June 8, 2006).

and Yasha.

Sir Terry often told stories of her late wife Inday Baby. He told me how he pampered Mommy Inday. She has her

own *kasambahay* to attend to all her needs. She had her own telephone exclusive for the use of Mommy Inday. There was also time that my sister Ate Maricris and I joined Sir Terry together with his Apo's Thalian and Yasha to stay in Holy Cross overnight to be with Mommy Baby during All Saint's day. We spent overnight stay on Oct. 31 before we went home to our province.

In 1998 Sir Terry joined the group of Sen. Nene Pimentel in the Senate and I was so happy that he recommended me again to assist him. Again, I became his secretary. I assisted him in his work on the amendments of the Local Government Code. Until I became the secretary of Atty. Gwen Gana and later in the year 2000 I was assigned as the secretary of Senator Nene Pimentel.

There are many memorable stories to tell about Sir Terry. Many good words to utter but I know they are not enough.

Although I was no longer directly under his supervision, we would still communicate with each other. He continued to request me to assist him in his presentations and speeches. We continued to have open communication lines. If he needed anything he would call me. If I needed to consult about work I would call him. He never failed to greet me and my family in every special occasion. I will never forget his favorite line everytime I felt bad "*Relax lang bata! You cannot please everybody, what is important is that your are doing your best*". Sir Terry is a very appreciative man, he is always thankful in everything little things that a person does to him.

Tears rolled down my eyes as I write this because I know I would not see the smiling face Sir Terry again. Yet I ended this piece with a smile in my face because I know that he already joined our creator in heaven.

To Sir Terry...time may have passed...but your memories remain in our heart. I can truly say I would not have been where I am today without your generosity, guidance and support. You are my **Professor**, my **Mentor**, my **Friend** and a **Father**.

Thank you for everything that you have taught me... about work... about family... and about life.



## He fought

From Page 1

felt easy and relaxed on him as he was on me. He was quick at breaking barriers that usually pervades during early professional acquaintances.

**Humble.** When I started in the Senate, Tito Terry was a senior officer in Senator Nene Pimentel's office. Yet he never displayed it. Instead he would always take his meals at the staff canteen on the ground floor, and not in the Senate Lounge frequented by senators and important people, or people wanting or pretending to be seen as important. He loved to mix with the ordinary employees at mealtime, rather than hobnob with a lot of 'great pretenders' malingering at the lounge. Terry was deeply and directly in touch with the common man. He's showed one and all that was where he would prefer to be.

**Highly knowledgeable.** Very early my stint as a Senate staff, I already knew Tito Terry to be highly knowledge-

able, particularly in the field of local governance. One of my duties then was to respond to letters and queries from constituents seeking opinions and interpretations on local governments issues. We always ended up seeking Tito Terry's insights on the questions that were raised. He always had valuable inputs in responding to questions. Tito Terry woke, ate, lived and slept with the local government law. Terry's knowledge of the local government code extended to aspects beyond the confines of the letter of the law. His vast experience on many aspects of local governance gave flesh to the law. He was always able to extract the law from vague abstracts into the realm of practical day-to-day experience. For indeed, what else is the purpose of the law?

**Integrity.** I saw Tito Terry as a man of integrity. Many have complex definitions of integrity, but I think a man of integrity is one who simply does the right thing, specially at times when he knows no

one is watching. I never saw Tito Terry deviate from doing things right. A straight man, as people would say. He would have none of those shady meetings.

**Generous.** Many may not know that Tito Terry helped so many of his students in so many ways. He was a professor at Polytechnic University of the Philippines. I noted he had young assistants tailing him in the office. I learned they were his students who helped him in the leg work of his various research work. These students were privileged because they learned directly from Tito Terry. Not only that, these young apprentices moved on to be absorbed as Senate staff members. Having started in clerical desks as computer encoders, these young apprentices were promoted to positions of greater responsibilities. This is a testament to Tito Terry's knack of being able to spot potential talents. Tito Terry paved the way for great opportunities to knock on young people's doors.

I think that was generous of Tito Terry.

**Missing Tito Terry.** I will definitely miss Tito Terry. I will miss his consistent greeting "Do, kumusta ka na?", always evoking that imposing aura of fatherly concern. I will miss Tito Terry's data and figures on many aspects in the local governments, that only he could make. Only Tito Terry can be ready to supply with hard data and computations, that would fortify arguments and positions, whether it be past, current or projected figures involving local governments. For really, how can one argue against solid facts and figures?

Looking back at those unforgettable moments with Tito Terry, and the life he so well lived, I can only heave a sigh of confidence at my sureness of his final destination --- to the Father. Tito Terry, you fought the good fight. You finished the race. You have kept the faith. So long for now, Tito Terry. Till we meet again.

Shalom.

# A Glimpse of a life well lived



Dir. Terry Dumogho with Sen. Nene Pimentel and Staff. (2006)



Dir. Terry announces the winner ART FOR CHANGE with Eppie Sonjaco. Seated immediately behind him Mrs. Bing Pimentel. (November 2008)



Wife Loren and Terry at home (August 2008)



(L-R) Terry's daughters Maebel Rivas, Joy Sebastian with son Marco (partly covered), Terry and his son Marlon (October 2008)