



Carolina Pestano de Guzman



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Carolina Pestaño de Guzman

Carolina Pestaño de Guzman passed away peacefully early on the morning of Wednesday, March 6 surrounded by her loving family following a long struggle to overcome cancer. She was a remarkably brave, strong, faithful, caring, and decent woman. All of these qualities she brought to her role as a devoted wife and mother of six, and grandmother of eight; to her profession as a nurse and leader in her field; and to the Catholic community who benefitted from her deep reverence and wise guidance. She will be deeply missed.

She is survived by her daughters and their spouses, Polly de Guzman Lim and Rolando Lim, Noemi de Guzman and Scott Gamble, and their children respectively Matthew, Katherine, and Claire Lim and Zachary and Charlie Gamble; as well as by her sons René, Jess, and Noel de Guzman; René's and Noel's spouses respectively, Marnie Burke de Guzman and Julia Lau de Guzman; and Noel's daughters, Ariel, Magdalena, and Rory de Guzman; in addition to her siblings Leonardo and Crispina Pestaño.

Carolina was born to Zacarias Gonzales Pestaño and Aurelia Padilla in the Philippines in 1932 and grew up the fifth of seven brothers and sisters in the countryside of San Leonardo during World War II. As a child, she courageously smuggled messages past Japanese military lines.

She attended the University of the Philippines in Manila where she met her beloved Roman de Guzman and many dear friends with whom she would remain close throughout her life. "Lina" and "Maning" were married on October 14, 1959. They began to raise their family as Lina honed her nursing skills and Maning took up his practice as an engineer. Even early in her career, Carolina was acknowledged for her leadership capacity working at the UP-Philippine General Hospital School of Nursing as a valued teacher and advisor.

In the mid-1960s, Carolina initiated plans for her family to come to the United States where medical care was available for their eldest son Franco who had a congenital



heart condition. She and Roman brought their professional acumen and rigorous work ethic to Oakland, California in 1968. There they connected with other wonderful Filipino families who were also embarking a pioneering adventure to widen their worlds, contribute to a burgeoning economy, and build better lives for the generations who would follow. They believed sincerely in the American Dream. Carolina began her work at Oakland's Samuel Merritt Hospital (now Alta Bates Summit Medical Center) in orthopedics and continued to intensive care before choosing a specialty in post-anesthesia care, where she attained the highest level on the registered nurse clinical ladder. She was often a guest lecturer at Samuel Merritt College of Nursing, and founded the University of the Philippines Nursing Alumni Association of Northern California where she served as president for many years. She was also a past president of the Philippine Nurses Association (PNA) of Northern California and a recipient of the PNA of America Excellence Award for Clinical Practice.

Roman and Carolina would also realize their hope of providing their children with excellent educational opportunities with many attending and graduating from the Bay Area's finest colleges including University of San Francisco, SF State University, and UC Berkeley.

Sadly, the medical care they so dearly hoped would save their eldest son could not be applied to his condition in time and Franco passed away at the age of 17 in 1980. Carolina's husband too, departed sooner than anyone in their close community would have wished, succumbing to cancer in 1991 at the age of 60.

In the years to follow, Carolina drew on her life experience, and her grief, to benefit others, deepening the practice of her Catholic faith and becoming the head of the Solo Parents ministry of Bukás Loób sa Diyós. She also continued to nurture the deep love and abiding respect of the extended family, creating delicious feasts for Barkada social gatherings and abundant holidays and providing spiritual guidance in more challenging times.

In the mid-1990s, she resumed her studies and was awarded a Masters of Nursing Management degree in 1997 from Sonoma State University. She retired in 2000 after serving for 46 years as a registered nurse in both the Philippines and the U.S. In 2007,



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the University of the Philippines Nursing Alumni Association International honored her with their most prestigious award, the Julita V. Sotejo Medallion of Honor. Even into her retirement, Carolina remained adaptable, pragmatic, and always learning. In recent years, she became a consummate Golden State Warriors fan, following the team's victories and trials closely, and keeping a constant eye on her favorite player Steph Curry.

She also took great joy in being engaged in the lives and creative and athletic pursuits of her grandchildren who would grow up to attend universities and conservatories near and far. Not one but two of Carolina's granddaughters would be selected from their college soccer teams to represent the Philippines on the FIFA Women's World Cup soccer team playing against other stellar athletes on "football" fields from Uzbekistan to Bangladesh. Her grandsons delighted her endlessly with their musical and artistic accomplishments. Her youngest granddaughters consistently lifted her spirits during the challenging days of her illness.

Her sons and daughters would also follow her example by becoming leaders in the art, faith, and athletic communities of the Bay Area.

Carolina was a woman of steadfast yet quiet conviction, and right and responsible action, who inspired respect and love through both her deeds and words. While she had strong beliefs, she always made space for others to have and share their own. Her rare and remarkable life and positive contributions, and the gracious and constant care she offered to her family and so many in her beloved community will be celebrated in a viewing on Monday, March 18 from 3 to 7 p.m. at the Chapel of the Chimes, 4499 Piedmont Avenue, Oakland; and a funeral mass at the Church of Saint Leo the Great, 176 Ridgeway Avenue, Oakland on Tuesday, March 19 at 10 a.m.



Tribute Wall

Carolina Pestano de Guzman



Toni David Wright posted:

Ate Lina, thank you for being my wings at the UPNAA. You left such a wonderful legacy to a lot of us. You will always be a part of me, most especially in my prayers. Surely, I'm going to miss you. May you rest in Peace! Pray for us !

March 17 at 4:34 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Carolina by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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