

## Honor Thy Mother and Father - MabuhayRadio

Written by Victoria P. Garchitorena

Monday, 23 June 2008 22:37 - Last Updated Monday, 23 June 2008 22:48

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How often we recited these words as part of our learning our catechism!

The Fourth Commandment "Honor thy father and thy mother" is probably one of the easiest commandments to fulfill, especially for Filipinos. It resonates with us because it is also so much an integral part of our culture. Past generations held their parents in great esteem, not daring to cross them, to answer back, to disobey.

Parents then held complete sway over children. One look was enough to stop a fight or argument among the children. We quaked in our shoes when we were discovered to have failed in school, or to have fought in the streets, or to have told a lie.

Editor's Notes: The author is the president of the Ayala Foundation in the Philippines and the Ayala Foundation-USA. She used to head the Presidential Management Staff of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. She resigned to go back to the private sector. We learned from our parents the eternal values of speaking the truth, of fair play, of honesty, of keeping our word, of striving for excellence, of the importance of education, of taking care of our families, including the many relatives three or four times removed.

Today, alas, many of these values have been watered down by the incessant messages of individualism, of independence, of personal freedoms, of changing social mores, many of them brought to the extreme.

As if to counter these, we celebrate Mother's Day and Father's Day, perhaps to remind us to recognize our debt of gratitude to the two people in the world who cared for us when we were babies, who cleaned up our wounds when we were young and immortal, who helped us mend our broken hearts perhaps by sharing their own stories, who saw us through school and gave us a boost to start our careers.

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But really we should remember our parents, not just on two days of the year, but throughout our lives.

It might also be a gesture of our deep appreciation of what they did for us to do something a little grander than sending them flowers or treating them to Sunday brunch.

What about creating a legacy in their name?

Many of the parents of Filipinos in the US were born or raised in some city or town in the Philippines. Today, you can honor them by funding a GILAS lab in a school in their hometown, perhaps even the very school where they studied. A full GILAS lab (10 computers, LAN, DSL access for a year) costs \$6,500.

But you don't have to do it alone. You can start your own personal fund raising campaign and we can teach you how to do it. You can start with yourself, your brothers and sisters, your children who are already working, your cousins and nieces and nephews. You can celebrate your birthday and ask your guests to donate to GILAS instead of gifts. There are many ways of honoring your Mother and Father.

Funding a GILAS school in their name honors them in perpetuity and helps at least 500 students a year to learn computer and Internet literacy skills that will prepare them for a brighter future. It is a gift to your parents, to their school, to their town, and to the country.

Email us at [garchitorena.vp@ayala.com](mailto:garchitorena.vp@ayala.com).ph or [letty@af-usa.org](mailto:letty@af-usa.org) if you want to HONOR THY MOTHER AND FATHER. We will work with you to achieve this legacy project in their name.

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Here is a testimony from Raymond Mendez, a GILAS donor based in New York, USA:

My mother worked her whole life in multiple, very different roles: as an at-home mother raising three kids, as a healthcare facility chief operating officer, as the wife of a diplomat. Constant throughout her life was her belief in the primacy of education, and the importance of giving back to the community. My mother applied this philosophy to her own life, even as she and my father put their children through some of the best schools in the United States.

Ever since my mother died in 1998, I had been searching for a way to honor her memory and essence properly. Almost a decade passed before I found out about the Ayala Foundation's GILAS initiative. GILAS' mission statement defined goals that my mother would have supported enthusiastically: technological literacy as education that gives throughout one's life, and enriching the lives of others

My mother was a wonderful, warm and effusive person, one who touched all those around her. My wife, Katherine Fuller, my daughter Cordelia and I are fortunate to be able to honor Maria Filipinas Resurreccion Mendez with a gift to GILAS to be used in her home town of Kawit, Cavite.

**Editor's Notes:** Raymond Mendez funded the purchase of 10 additional computers for the Emiliano Tria Tirona Memorial National High School in the name of his mother, Maria Filipinas Mendez Resurreccion. With Raymond's help, the school, which is one of the 2 public high schools in Kawit, Cavite, now has 50 computers benefiting more than 5,000 students.

"Honor Thy Mother and Father" is a project spearheaded by the New York/Tri-State Team that empowers you to take the initiative and help build a computer lab at the local public high school

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of the Philippine town where your mother and/or father grew up in. GILAS will assist you in raising funds to build and name a computer lab in honor of your mother and father. Now you too can continue on their legacy of selflessness by advancing education and exposure to technology for young Filipinos. Access to computers and the wonders of the Internet can open a world of information for these students and can help prepare them to become more skilled workers capable of competing in a technologically-driven world.

The project includes the computer lab complete with Internet access and IT training. All US donations to your computer lab can be coursed through Ayala Foundation USA, a registered 501(c)3. Donations are tax-deductible in the US. To find out how you can be part of this worthwhile endeavor, just log on to the [GILAS website](#) or visit [Ayala Foundation USA](#).

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