

By Bobby Mercado-Reyes of Sorsogon City

{xtypo\_quote} And the LORD said to Moses, **(2)** 'Say to all the congregation of the people of Israel

, "You shall be holy; for I the LORD your God am holy.

**(17)**

You shall not hate your brother in your heart, but you shall reason with your neighbor, lest you bear sin because of him.

**(18)**

You shall not take vengeance or bear any grudge against the sons of your own people, but you shall love your neighbor as yourself: I am the LORD".'

– Leviticus 19: 1-2, 17-18 {/xtypo\_quote}

The First Reading in yesterday's masses in Roman Catholic Churches talked about the message of the Lord to Moses. It was quite a coincidence as today is the Presidents' Day of the United States.

Since 2002, every time Presidents' Day is celebrated in the United States (on the third Monday

## Moses and the Presidency - MabuhayRadio

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of February), I remember also Filipino President Ramon Magsaysay, who was called the “Modern-day Moses” of the

Philippines

by then Sen. Aquilino Q. “Nene” Pimentel, Jr., in a privilege speech on Aug. 28, 2001.

On Aug. 30, 2007, we published in its entirety then-Senator Pimentel’s tribute to President Magsaysay, as readers may browse in this hyperlink,

[Remembering](#)

[President Ramon Magsaysay y Del Fierro: A Modern-Day Moses](#)

## The Philippine Presidents’ Day

T wenty-nine months before we published Senator Pimentel’s privilege speech about Mr. Magsaysay, my friends joined me in celebrating the first-ever “Philippine Presidents’ Day.” We held the event on March 17, 2005, at the Filipino-American Community of Los Angeles (FACLA). Ms. Lee Cummings (now deceased) was the food sponsor of that maiden event.

Since then, we have celebrated annually the Philippine Presidents’ Day (PPD) in Los Angeles, California

The Philippine Consulate General hosted the holding of the Second PPD at its premises on March 17, 2006

. Then we went back to the FACLA for the years 2007 to 2009.

Last year, we held the Sixth PPD at the *Kapistahan Restaurant* at the Luzon Plaza, West Temple St.

,  
Los Angeles

. The

*Asian Journal*

Publications, Ms. Princess Robertson and Ms. Elizabeth Watermeier co-sponsored the event.

We are scheduled to celebrate its seventh edition again at the *Kapistahan Restaurant* on March 17, 2011

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“The nation came to revere Ramon Magsaysay as a modern-day Moses who would have led his people out of the land of bondage and scarcity into the land of freedom and plenty . . . the principles by which President Magsaysay had governed his public life: dedicated public service, honesty in government and devotion to the cause of the common man live on to this very day. I can only hope that we, the public officials of today, will guide our public lives with those principles as best we can for the welfare of our country and the well being of our people.” – Nene Pimentel

My friends and I thought that the best date to commemorate the lives of the Philippine Presidents who have passed away is March 17, the death anniversary of Ramon Magsaysay.

After all, Mr. Magsaysay remains the most-popular and perceived to be the most-honest President the Philippines ever had. March 17<sup>th</sup> is also St. Patrick's Day.

This writer, as a budding Philippine-presidential historian (or at least a serious student of history) has penned also some articles that mentioned President Magsaysay. The links to some of the articles:

[Reinventing the "Ramon Magsaysay Line" in Solving Philippine Political Problems](#)

[A Realistic History of the Barong Filipino](#)

[Where Have All the Filipino Leaders Gone? \(With Apology to Lee Iacocca\)](#)

[Even Presidents End Up in the Cemetery](#)

[Philippine Presidential Wit and Humor](#)

[Reinventing the Philippine Military to Prevent the Coming of a Junta](#)

[The Military Background of Philippine Presidents \(Part 3\)](#)

[How Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan Can Solve the Problems of Iraq, the USA, RP and the World](#)

[The SEATO Should Be Revived to Help Pakistan Secure its A-Bombs and Combat Terrorism](#)

[Three Events Lined Up at the FACLA Social Hall on March 17, Monday](#)

[The OF-led “ReVOTElation” Will Also Launch a “Wireless Revolution”](#)

**The “Moses of Mindanao”**

Eventually I described my political mentor, Sen. Nene Pimentel, as the “Moses of Mindanao.” When I wrote the tribute to Mr. Pimentel, he was the only senator from Mindanao at that time. I said that it was unfortunate that Mr. Pimentel, who authored the law on cooperatives, the Local Government Code and many important laws, never made it to the presidency. He also wrote about “Federalizing the Philippines : A Primer,” among other books. It is a pity that Nene Pimentel would only become the “best President” (sic) that the country never had.

In 2003 when then presidential-aspirant Nene Pimentel asked me to join his party’s proposed senatorial slate, Poet-pundit Fred Burce Bunao (now deceased) joked that I should be called “Joshua,” for my being one of the faithful followers of the “Moses of Mindanao.” (Senator Pimentel did not decide to run for the presidency and hence, he did not field a senatorial slate.)

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LOL and behold, on Feb. 19, 2011, my tocayo from Sydney, Australia, Bobby Mella-Lastica, sent me an e-mail about our proposed “BLeSSED” Program: “If you are the Moses of Bicol, let this humble servant become your faithful Joshua!” Egad, Nene Pimentel’s “Joshua” is now also a Moses and with a Sorsoganon-Australian friend as his own Joshua!

Will miracles never cease!

By the way, “BLeSSED” is the acronym of the “Bicol, Leyte, Samar and Sorsogon Economic Development.”

But on serious note, President Noynoy Aquino and Filipino politicians that want to become President someday must remember the story of Ramon Magsaysay as the modern “Moses” of the Philippines. They can never go wrong if they emulate Ramon Magsaysay in bringing honor to the Office of the President. # # #

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