Nermal, Luciano T., Jr. (1948–2010)

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Alfred E. Labadisos, M.A. in religion with emphasis on New Testament (Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies), was a missionary member of the 1000 Missionary Movement, Silang, Cavite, from 2006-2008 and a missionary teacher at Chuuk Seventh-day Adventist School, Chuuk, Federated States of Micronesia, from 2013-2015. After his missionary term ended, he went to Thailand and worked as a human resource-generalist at MediaKids Academy, Pathum Thani, Thailand. He is married to Ferndelle Leegh H. Barret.

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Luciano Trasga Nermal, Jr. was a dynamic Adventist leader, pastor, and church administrator.

Early Life, Education and Marriage

Luciano Trasga Nermal, Jr. was born on June 29, 1948, in Hinigaran, Negros Occidental, to Luciano A. Nermal Sr. and Esther Q. Tariaga, his mother was a Seventh-day Adventist. Although his father was a Roman Catholic during Nermal's childhood, he was later baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church.[1]

Nermal completed his elementary education at Canonoy Elementary School, Hinigaran, Negros Occidental.[2] His secondary education was obtained at Mountain View College Academy, Valencia City, Bukidnon. He also completed his tertiary education at the same college, graduating in 1974 with a Bachelor of Arts degree with majors in theology and history, and a minor in English.[3] Nermal was baptized into the Seventh-day Adventist Church on April 10, 1965, in the Mountain View College church by N. C. Fadri.[4] He also earned a master's degree in religious studies from Philippine Union College (now Adventist University of the Philippines) in Silang, Cavite, in 1985.[5]

On December 30, 1975, Nermal, married Linda C. Ursaiz in Molave, Zamboanga Del Sur. Linda Ursaiz was a registered nurse by profession, who was staunchly supportive of Nermal in his career as they both firmly believed that merging the gospel and health ministry could further the gospel of Jesus Christ.[6] The Nermals were blessed with two sons, Dexter and Luthar Ian, who were born to them in 1976 and 1978 respectively.[7] Both worked in the gospel and health ministries in adulthood.

Ministry

Nermal joined the denominational work as a ministerial intern in the Western Mindanao Mission (now Western Mindanao Conference) on June 1, 1974.[8] The following year he was listed among the licensed ministers of the Western Mindanao Mission and was ordained to the ministry on March 12, 1981.[9] He served as a district leader

for various areas of the mission from January 1, 1976, to March of 1984.[10] In April 1984, he was sent to do graduate studies at the Far East Seventh-day Adventist Seminary at Philippine Union College (now Adventist University of the Philippines).[11] Upon completing his graduate studies, he returned to Western Mindanao Academy where he served as Bible teacher from January to December 1986.[12]

Nermal's commitment and dedication to the ministry led him to hold different leadership positions in the church. From 1987 until 1990, Nermal served as director of the church ministries department of the Western Mindanao Mission.[13] On January 1, 1991, he was called to serve as director of the youth, National Service Organization, and stewardship departments of the South Philippine Union Conference, a position he held until December 31, 1993.[14] In 1994, he was chosen to serve as the president of Northeastern Mindanao Mission until December of 1997.[15] From 1998 until 2000, he served as president of the Western Mindanao Conference.[16] He was called back to serve the Northeastern Mindanao Mission as president from 2001 until the middle of 2003.[17] He then served as head of the chaplaincy department of Mindanao Sanitarium and Hospital from August 1, 2003, to December 31, 2005. At the turn of 2006, he was called to serve as president of the newly established mission of Southwestern Mindanao-Attached Field in 2006, which is now Zamboanga Peninsula Mission.[18]

The following year, Nermal returned to the Western Mindanao Conference to serve as president from January 1, 2007, to December 31, 2007. In January 2008, he was elected executive secretary of the South Philippine Union Conference in which capacity he served until his retirement in June 2008.[19] Nermal served the Adventist Church for thirty-three years and nine months.[20]

Later Life

After retirement, Nermal continued to be engaged in various ministries of the Church. His advice was much sought after because he had a sincere listening ear and genuine heart to move the gospel work forward. He was preceded in death by his wife, Linda, on August 13, 2009. He died on April 4, 2010.[21]

Contribution

Nermal was remembered by his colleagues, associates, and friends as a man who stood, lived, and died with his principles, always ready and willing to suffer for what he thought and knew to be right. He was a mentor and a source of inspiration to younger ministers, some of whom became exceptional church leaders. Able to relate to all ages, Nermal was a bold leader who was also firm, loving, and playful. He was unafraid to reprimand, yet was able to do so tactfully. He was repeatedly appointed to administrative positions because of his aptitude for solving problems. Loyal and fun-loving, he was a true friend in all his dealings, both in active service and in retirement. He was a tireless promoter of philanthropic activities for Adventist ministries.[22]

One of his greatest assets was his generosity. He had a great passion for helping people in need. His concern for the needy prompted him to share his blessings, not only with his friends but also with strangers.[23] His family remembered him as a patriarch who faithfully fulfilled his duty as priest of his home and a provider. He had a humorous way of showing affection to his wife and children. He was a stern, yet extraordinarily compassionate, disciplinarian whose only goal was for his children to succeed in life.

Nermal organized a tennis club for fellow believers and extended the organization to public officials, businessmen, doctors, farmers, teachers, utility workers, and to anyone who had the enthusiasm to play and to develop the spirit of sportsmanship. His mission was to reach out to people through friendship games.[24]

SOURCES

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NOTES

1. Personal Workers Record of Luciano T. Nermal, Southern-Asia Pacific Division Archives.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Retirement Fund Application, Luciano T. Nermal, Southern-Asia Pacific Division Archives.
10. Personal Worker's Record.

11. Ibid.

12. Personal Worker's Record; "Western Mindanao Academy," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1986), 479.

13. "Western Mindanao Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1989), 128.

14. Personal Workers Record.

15. "Northeastern Mindanao Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1996), 88.

16. "Western Mindanao Conference," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1999), 339.

17. "Northeastern Mindanao Mission," *Seventh-day Adventist Yearbook* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 2002), 354.

18. Retirement Fund Application.

19. Personal Worker's Record.

20. Retirement Fund Application.

21. Ibid.

22. Luthar Ian U. Nermal, son of Luciano Nermal, Jr., email to Segundino R. Asoy, June 15, 2020.

23. Quirante Q. Rosales, friend of Luciano T. Nermal, Jr., telephone interview by Segundino Asoy, June 13, 2020.

24. Rosanne L. Paylaga, personal friend of Luciano T. Nermal, Jr., Facebook Messenger to Segundino R. Asoy, June 15, 2020.

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