

Pilar, Oseas Cerezo (b. 1927)

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Carmine Danae P. Rosales is a volunteer of Hope Channel–North Philippine Union Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and a faculty member at Manila Adventist College Senior High School. She holds a B.S. in biology from Southern Luzon State University, Lucban, Quezon, Philippines. She finished a B.S. in secondary education-biological sciences from Leon Guinto Memorial College, Atimonan, Quezon. She has previously served as a SULADS missionary of Socio-economic Uplift, Literacy, Anthropological, and Developmental Services (SULADS) Comprehensive High School for the Lumads in Bukidnon under the South Philippine Union Conference. She is married to Kevin Vincent Rosales.

Oseas Cerezo Pilar was an Adventist physician, medical director, and an honored diplomate of anesthesiology, leader, and educator in the Philippines.

Early Life

Oseas Pilar was born in Pangasinan, known as the “land of salt,” in the city of Urdaneta on August 16, 1927. Raised in a Seventh-day Adventist home, Oseas Pilar was the son of a minister, Pastor R. A. Pilar, and well brought up by his mother, Sebastiana Pilar.¹ Oseas Pilar attended elementary school at Artacho Elementary School in Sison, Pangasinan, from 1934 to 1940. Though Second World War started in the Philippines in 1941, he studied at Northern Luzon Academy from 1940 to 1946. At 14 years old, he accepted Christ as his personal Savior and was baptized by Pastor Ragsdale on February 4, 1941, while enrolled in the academy²

Education and Marriage

Pilar held a Bachelor of Science in Education with a major in biology completed in 1951 at Philippine Union College (PUC). Later that year, on April 19, 1951, he married Adoracion Rabanal, a fellow Adventist from Ballesteros, Cagayan. Their marriage was blessed with a daughter Nela Doreen R. Pilar born in Santiago Isabela on November 10, 1952.³

Ministry

From June 1951 to March 1955, Pilar taught at his alma mater, Northern Luzon Academy (NLA) He served as the principal of the NLA elementary department from June 1955 to March 1956.⁴ Passionate for Christian education, Pilar served as the educational superintendent of the Northeast Luzon Mission in 1954-1955 and concurrently district leader of Northern Isabela.

He was teaching at NLA when he decided to study medicine in 1957 at Manila Central University from which he graduated on March 23, 1961.⁵ When he started his medical education, he was also serving as president of the

PUC Alumni Association.

Pilar's career in the medical field started in December 1962 when he began his residency at Manila Sanitarium and Hospital (now Adventist Medical Center Manila). Upon completion of his residency in December 1965, Pilar became a staff physician and chief anesthesiologist at Manila Sanitarium and Hospital (MSH) where he worked until June 14, 1971.

On June 15, 1971, Pilar was called to serve in a much larger capacity as the medical director of the Cagayan Valley Sanitarium and Hospital from June 15, 1971, to April 16, 1972. His leadership continued as he was appointed the medical director of Manila Sanitarium and Hospital on April 17, 1972, until December 17, 1974⁵. He remained a staff physician at MSH from December 18, 1974, to April 22, 1975. On April 22, 1975, he became head of the anesthesiology department until December 31, 1978, when he returned a position as staff physician from He was reappointed head of anesthesiology from June 1, 1982, until November 25, 1987⁶.

Among his accomplishments as the head of the anesthesiology department, Pilar was among several diplomates in anesthesiology honored by the First Lady of the Philippines, Imelda Romualdez Marcos, in 1976. Pilar was also elected president of the Philippine College of Anesthesiology, a member organization of the American Society of Anesthesiology.⁷

His expertise had led him to attend the Third Asian and Australian Congress of Anesthesiology from September 19 to 23, 1970, held at Canberra, Australia, where he traveled with his wife. Pilar also attended the post congress meeting in Melbourne on September 25 and 26. His trip to Australia also included a visit to Adventist educational and medical institutions and health food factories. Pilar was the only Adventist among thirty delegates from the Philippines. His trip was sponsored by the Manila Sanitarium and Hospital.⁸

On June 9, 1972, Pilar was invited to the inauguration of the Palawan Adventist Clinic. His remarks on this occasion explained the objectives of the medical work of Seventh-day Adventists and pledged the support of the Manila Sanitarium for the new clinic.⁹

Legacy

Under his term as the medical director, a brand-new 1973 Pontiac model ambulance was purchased for the Manila Sanitarium and Hospital through Seventh-day Adventist World Service, now ADRA. The vehicle was dedicated on September 21, 1973, with hospital chaplains offering the dedicatory prayers. The new ambulance gave MSH more prestige and made it in great demand among the hospital's patient clientele.¹⁰

Pilar was also part of the third and last renovation-expansion program of Manila Sanitarium and Hospital. The project expanded the pediatric department on the fourth floor and the number of operating rooms on third floor. Additional operating rooms with scrub areas, a larger sterile room, workroom, nurses' lounge, surgeons' lounge, cast room, storage room, pathology room, and conference room were included.¹¹

Moreover, during his years of being the head of the anesthesiology department of Manila Sanitarium and Hospital and concurrently president of the Philippine College of Anesthesiology Society in 1976, he was able to represent the Philippines to the 6th World Congress of Anesthesiology in Mexico City along with nine other delegates. He actively participated in the discussions with authorities in the field of anesthesiology at the symposium and also shared his knowledge as head of the anesthesiology department at the Manila Sanitarium, which was also making an excellent name for itself among the country's best hospitals during those years. His three-month itinerary included speaking engagements among the Adventist people in Mexico and across the United States, reporting news about the tremendous success of the Advent work in the Philippines. He was also able to observe the latest techniques of medicine in the affluent hospitals in Texas.¹²

Pilar dedicated his life in full service and commitment to ministry in the medical field. He was re-elected twice to be the head of the anesthesiology department and as a medical director in two different hospitals. He was been an ambassador for the Manila Sanitarium and Hospital in various seminars, congresses, and church programs. He was a physician, an honored diplomate of anesthesiologists in the Philippines, a leader, and an educator.

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NOTES

1. Personal Employee Service Record of Oscar Cerezo Pilar, Manila Sanitarium and Hospital Archives.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.
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