

REMEMBERING THE EDSA REVOLUTION

February 25, 2021 will be the 35th anniversary of the EDSA Revolution, the People Power Movement that toppled a dictatorship and restored democracy to the long-beleaguered Philippines. It was a spontaneous movement that caught fire and awakened the Filipinos to the call for change. It was a historical event that put the Philippines on the world map.

Does remembering People Power still matter today? Last year, Tony Katigbak, a columnist of *The Philippine Star*, wrote, "Yes, more than ever. We need to be able to remember our history so that we don't repeat it. We can continue to support our government and at the same time, exercise our right to question certain decisions that don't seem right. In fact, as a democracy, it is our duty to do so. We just need to look at all the evidence and ask the right questions. I believe that openness and transparency is the only way forward for both the government and the people. If we can work together, we can still achieve great things."

This issue, we are featuring two Paulinians who played important roles in the EDSA Revolution—for the benefit of the present-day SPU Manila community members who may not be aware of their contributions to the cause of freedom in our beloved country.

June Keithley-Castro



June was a 1965 High School graduate, who made headlines for her portrayal of Maria in *The Sound of Music*, a Broadway musical which was directed by Fr. James B. Reuter SJ and which has been acclaimed as having merited for St. Paul College of Manila the sobriquet "Broadway on Herran."

She went to the US a couple of years later, but soon returned to the Philippines. She married broadcaster Angelo Castro, Jr. in 1973 and the couple had three children: Diego, an actor and anchor of UNTV, Gabriella, and Angelica.

This was June's role in the EDSA Revolution:

Filipinos know the name June Keithley: the voice that sparked the first peaceful people power revolution in the world that brought the long-ensconced Marcos dictatorship to its knees.

Broadcasting nonstop for 14 hours, from Radio Veritas and then from DZRJ, then camouflaged as Radyo Bandido (after the former was bombed by the Marcos military), Keithley called upon the people to gather at EDSA to protect the ragtag band of rebel soldiers in Camp Aguinaldo, led by then Defense Minister, now Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile and then Constabulary Chief Lt. Gen. Fidel V. Ramos, who went on to become President, succeeding Corazon C. Aquino.



It is a name that has left an indelible mark in contemporary Philippine history and, for her tenacious courage, a grateful nation gifted her the Legion of Honor, the highest honor bestowed on civilians. In 2013, she and Fr. Reuter were given a plaque of recognition and the Spirit of EDSA award during the 27th year commemoration of the EDSA People Power Revolution.



June died of cancer at the young age of 66. As befits a hero of the EDSA Revolution, her body lay in state at the military headquarters in Camp Aguinaldo in Quezon City. On Thursday morning, her body was taken to ABS-CBN, where necrological services and a Mass were held for her at 6:00 P.M. The military gave her full honors at her funeral in the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina City. Lt. Col. Ramon Zagala, spokesman for the military, said the honors would include pallbearers, the playing of the Taps and a gun salute.

(Wikipedia)

(This teacher remembers June as a not-so-ordinary student, who was not particularly attentive in class because she was always reading. Her stepfather was the manager of Philippine Education Company—PECO—so she would read all kinds of books before they were put on sale. This was probably where she got her deep insights into life and what matters in it. She gave the teacher a copy of *The Little Prince*, with the dedication, “for you have drawn me a sheep.”)

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There was another Paulinian who played a role in the EDSA Revolution but is not known to many. She is an alumna of St. Paul College of Quezon City, Virna Lisa Mananzan (now Loberiza).



Virna Lisa Mananzan became famous for singing the song “Magkaisa,” which to many is synonymous with the People Power revolt in 1986. The song that shot her to fame won her a new audience with the death of former President Corazon “Cory” Aquino.

Many do not know that Virna Lisa Loberiza is an American citizen although her parents are both Filipinos. Virna acquired her U.S. citizenship because she was born in New York. Her song “Nagkaisa” has captivated millions of freedom-loving Filipinos in the Philippines and abroad, which could have catapulted her to stardom, but she prefers to remain in the background and chose to become a social worker, where her heart belongs. By all probability, not too many Filipinos—young and old—could make an instant recall the name of the then 20-year-old Virna Lisa 21 years after she sang “Nagkaisa,” that became a gold record despite being an obscure singer.

She is married to Snowden Mananzan, a Filipino banker, who is the vice president of United Commercial Bank in New York. They got married in California in 1990 and have three children, Jaco, 15, Toby, 13, and only girl whom they named Frankie, 8.

She finished her studies in the Philippines at St. Paul's College, Adamson University and later at the University of Sto. Tomas where she took up architecture but never graduated because she was a "Green Card" holder. Lisa's father, Joey Loberiza, was formerly connected with Toyota Tamaraw, and her mother is the former movie actress, Aura Aurea. (*Wikipedia*)



Virna is an active board member of the Paulinian Global Foundation and donor for SPU Manila advocacies.

Here are the lyrics of the song, composed by Tito Sotto and sung by Virna Lisa, which moved many Filipinos to tears at that time:

Ngayon ganap ang hirap sa mundo
Unawa ang kailangan ng tao
Ang pagmamahal sa kapwa'y ilaan
Isa lang ang ugat na ating pinagmulan
Tayong lahat ay magkakalahi
Sa unos at agos ay huwag padadala

Chorus

Panahon na (may pag-asa kang matatanaw)
Ng pagkakaisa (bagong umaga, bagong araw)
Kahit ito (sa atin Siya'y nagmamahal)
Ay hirap at dusa
Magkaisa (may pag-asa kang matatanaw)
At magsama (bagong umaga, bagong araw)
Kapit-kamay (sa atin Siya'y nagmamahal)
Sa bagong pag-asa

Ngayon may pag-asang natatanaw
May bagong araw, bagong umaga
Pagmamahal ng Diyos, isipin mo tuwina

(Repeat Chorus)

Magkaisa (may pag-asa kang matatanaw)
At magsama (bagong umaga, bagong araw)
Kapit-kamay (sa atin Siya'y nagmamahal)
Sa bagong pag-asa

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!



Sr. Miriam Victoriano, SPC celebrated her 100th birthday on 18 February 2021 in the SPC Vigil House in Taytay.

Sr. Miriam had been Grade School Principal in St. Paul Manila and pioneered St. Paul Pasig.

She also served as President of SPCM in the late 1980s.