

People loved Cory thrice

by ABIGAIL KWOK
Inquirer.net

"If Ninoy fell in love with her three times, that same lady loved the people three times."

ONE of the final messages to former president Corazon Aquino read in a giant tarpaulin set up outside the Manila Cathedral.

Although public viewing has already been closed, thousands of Filipinos still lined up outside the Manila Cathedral in Intramuros, hoping to catch a glimpse of former president Corazon Aquino one last time.

Aquino supporters lined up as early as 5am to wait for the funeral procession of Aquino from Manila Cathedral to the Manila Memorial Park at 11am on August 5.

Police estimates pegged the number of people surrounding the Cathedral at 10,000, said Superintendent Rommel Miranda, spokesman of National Capital Region police office.

Heide Baniqued, 34, patiently waited in line as early as 5 am and braved the rain to show her support to Aquino.

"Sakripisyo din pero para kay Tita Cory, ito na lang yung pinakaambag ko para kahit sa ganitong paraan ay naipapakita namin ang pakikiramay (This is sacrifice for Tita Cory, this is my contribution so that this way we can share in the family's grief)," she said.

Baniqued said she would

join the funeral procession up until Roxas Boulevard.

This was Baniqued's second time back to the Cathedral. She said she went to see Aquino on Monday, lined up as early as 8pm and only got inside the church at past 1am Tuesday.

When she saw Aquino's body, Baniqued said she cried. "Naiyak ako pero masaya din kasi tapos na yung pain na nararamdaman niya (I cried but happy nonetheless because her pain is over)," Baniqued said.

She said she was too young to have witnessed the Edsa People Power Revolution, but

said that her impression of the former president was that of a "doting mother and a president that was not stained by corruption."

Meanwhile, Lisa Morada also recalled how she watched the bloodless revolt from her home near Camp Crame.

With this memory, she said she would like to thank Aquino and bid her goodbye by joining the funeral procession as well.

"Ito na ang

aking huling paalam (This is my last goodbye)," Morada said.

People from all ages and walks of life surround the vicinity of the Cathedral to see Aquino.

Donned in yellow, with yellow ribbons and bandanas



on their bodies, Filipinos were unmindful of the weather.

Police spokesman Miranda said that despite of the huge crowds, no untoward incidents have been reported as of this time.

In front of the Cathedral, a huge tarpaulin was set up where Filipinos can write their message to the former president and to the Aquino family.

The 20-by-25-foot tarpaulin, which showed Aquino smiling and flashing the Laban sign, was set up by volunteer firefighters.

It said, "Her Excellency Corazon Aquino, Maraming Salamat po sa Kalayaan at Demokrasya (Thank you for the freedom and democracy)!"

Some of the messages on the tarpaulin read:

"Salamat sa demokrasya, kalayaan at pagkakaisa (Thank you for the democracy, freedom, and unity)!"

"The only president that gave pride and honor to the Philippines."

Aquino's funeral procession is set at 11am on August 5.

Jojo Cartajano also stood with a huge charcoal painting of Aquino in front of the Cathedral. He said he painted Aquino overnight using an image of Aquino from a tabloid.

Aquino's only son, Senator Benigno Noytoy Aquino III, signed the painting.

Cartajano said he would keep the painting as a souvenir.

"This is history," he added. ■

I have fallen in love with the same woman three times; In a day spanning 19 years of tearful joys and joyful tears. I loved her first when she was young, enchanting and vibrant, eternally new. She was brilliant, fragrant, and cool as the morning dew. I fell in love with her the second time; when first she bore her child and mine always by my side, the source of my strength, helping to turn the tide. But there were candles to burn the world was my concern; while our home was her domain. and the people were mine while the children were hers to maintain; So it was in those eighteen years and a day. 'till I was detained; forced in prison to stay. Suddenly she's our sole support; source of comfort, our wellspring of Hope. on her shoulders felt the burden of Life. I fell in love again, with the same woman the third time. Looming from the battle, her courage will never fade Amidst the hardships she has remained, undaunted and unafraid. she is calm and composed, she is God's lovely maid - Ninoy's love poem for Cory

How Cory made...

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he felt a shiver through his body and a rush of emotions.

"Can you believe that? She approached me, tapped my shoulder and called me by my first name."

Later that day, he was called to Montelibano's office where he was told the President had ordered three truckloads of relief goods to be sent to Gabaldon and nearby areas.

There was another message for him, one that touched him even more.

"My boss told me the President said I should bring the goods myself to Gabaldon and the other towns," he said. ■



"The Magsaysay family joins the Aquinos in mourning the passing of President Corazon Aquino. She brought grace, courage and moral strength to a country desperately in need of hope—and in doing so she won the love and respect of the nation. Let us honor her by continuing to defend the freedom she worked so hard for."

—Former Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr.



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