



LAST RESPECTS. Members of the Iglesia ni Cristo flock to the main church in Quezon City where the body of their leader lies on Sept. 3. Manalo passed away on Monday due to cardiac arrest at the age of 84. Inquirer.net photo by Raffy Lerma

Ka Erdy interment set on Monday

by ABIGAIL KWOK
Inquirer.net

MANILA – The funeral of Iglesia ni Cristo Executive Minister Erano “Ka Erdy” Manalo is set on 12 noon Monday, a spokesman for the religious group said on Friday.

The interment will be held at the Tabernacle located near the Central Temple along Com-

monwealth Avenue, Quezon City, said Bienveni-

do Santiago. Manalo’s remains will eventually be transferred to a mausoleum that will be built near the monument of his late father, Felix Manalo, also located within the grounds of the Iglesia ni Cristo Central Complex, Santiago said.

Malacañang has announced that September 7 will be a non-working holiday. ■

Mar-Korina wedding still on

by AUREA CALICA
Philstar.com

MANILA – The most anticipated wedding of the year is still on.

Sen. Manuel Roxas II said on September 2 he was looking forward to his wedding to broadcast journalist Korina Sanchez on Oct. 23 as he continued to work on the slate of the Liberal Party with Sen. Benigno “Noynoy” Aquino III now the likely standard-bearer instead of him.

“Siyempre naman. Ang pulitika, pulitika. Iba ang puso (Of course, politics is politics. The heart is different),” Roxas said when asked in an interview over GMA -7’s morning show, *Unang Hirit*, if his wedding next month was still on.

Roxas is aware that his upcoming wedding is being tied to his presidential plans because of Sanchez’s popularity.

In the 2004 senatorial elections, Sanchez was even considered his lucky charm when he emerged as number one.

Roxas said Sanchez assured him that she would stand by him no matter what.

“She told me I love you no matter what,” Roxas said after he quit the presidential race to give way to Aquino.

Sanchez, for her part, said in a radio interview over dzMM that they will now have more time to work on their wedding.

“I told him that I love him and now we can concentrate on the wedding. Hindi na masyado yung (There’s less) tension, hirap ng katawan at pag-iisip. Mar is a very decent man. Whatever is true to his heart is what I want for him. I don’t worry about him. I know he was very hurt at one point but no matter how much it hurt him, the decision was painful but swift. That is a leader,” she said.

Decision not easy

But Roxas admitted he and his family were hurting because of the difficult decision he made.

“Of course it’s not easy. We Korina, we talk not just as sweethearts but as husband and wife, which we will be in a few weeks. Of course it hurts, but as Korina said to me, ‘you do what is right, you do what is in your heart.’ And for me, that was the foremost consideration,” Roxas said.

He also clarified it was not definite yet whether he would be Aquino’s running mate or if he would run for re-election as senator since the first thing they’ve settled was the presidency and the party’s unity.

“We didn’t talk about that. There was no trading, no commitment. I told Noy, let’s not cheapen this with horse trading. We entered public service, so let’s think about what’s best for the country. Now after you have looked into yourself, whatever you decide, then let’s talk again,” Roxas said.

Roxas maintained he was at peace with his decision and that he could face his forebears and all those who trusted him knowing that he made a sacrifice for the sake of the nation.

“The interest of Mar Roxas was not foremost. Aand that’s probably what you saw in me, that’s why you trusted me,” Roxas said.

Roxas said his mother, Judy Araneta-Roxas, commended him after he announced his withdrawal.

“Hindi mo matatanggal ‘yung You can’t remove the emotions: sadness, of course there’s disappointment, I’m just human. But when I came down the stage, I passed my mother and she said ‘I am proud of you,’” Roxas said.

Mar wants to help Noynoy

Roxas added that he would help Aquino and would like him to win because he would like the “magic” of former President Corazon Aquino and what she fought for along with her husband, the late senator and national hero, Benigno “Ninoy” Aquino Jr. not to be lost.

He also maintained there was no tension between him and Aquino.

“We have a long history so so there’s o double-talk, no fake moves, we really had heart-to-heart talks,” Roxas said.

“I trust Noynoy, he just wants what’s best for the country. That’s also how I feel, so it was very easy for us to go to the bottom line. What do we want for the country? We set aside our personal situations. This isn’t easy for Noy either, to carry on the legacy of his parents,” Roxas said.

What about intrigues? Asked whether there were people inside the LP whose statements or moves hurt him and forced him to withdraw, Roxas stressed there were none.

“No, this was my decision. And as I said, we’re friends. We’re seatmates in the Senate. Our sisters were classmates. When we were growing up our fathers knew each other. We were together in marches, anti-Marcos, Cory-Cory, so there was no reason for us not to be honest with each other from the start. So our discussions were quick,” Roxas said. ■

38-year-old new Comelec commissioner

by ANNA VALMERO
Inquirer.net

elections next year.

Larrazabal, who turns 38 years old this month, said his youth and his experience as Comelec regional director would be his joining the Comelec en banc.

Larrazabal, who also chairs the Comelec Regional Election Directors Organization that includes all REDs nationwide, previously served as provincial election supervisor in Bulacan, Camarines Sur, and Basilan, and as regional election director in Bicol.

Larrazabal said he can also offer his experience in automated elections, particularly in the 2008 automated elections in the Autonomous region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and his recent visit to the US automated elections under the International Volunteers Leadership Program.

Larrazabal said he will await

his confirmation before serving as commissioner until February 2, 2011, the remaining term of Leonardo Leonida, who was bypassed twice for the position and is now with Philex Mining Corp. ■

Malacañang keeps distance from Mikey property issue

by MARVIN SY
Philstar.com

MANILA – Malacañang is maintaining a hands-off policy on the controversy over presidential son Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel “Mikey” Arroyo’s assets, including a house in the United States.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said that Rep. Arroyo could explain the matter himself just like he had already done in recent interviews.

Ermita said that the younger Arroyo and the House of Representatives, where he is congressman of Pampanga, should address the issue.

“For one thing, it’s a personal matter for

the congressman. He explained himself before media but other than that all I can say is we will leave it to the lower house,” Ermita said.

He declined to comment on the statements made by Arroyo about his assets and the accumulation of wealth that took place from 2002 to 2008.

“I wouldn’t wish to make my own impressions about that so just leave it at that. I think it’s not proper for me to make a comment on that particular matter,” Ermita said.

Ermita said the Palace is not too concerned about the public perception of the Office of the President brought about by the presidential son’s wealth.

He said that as long as Rep. Arroyo is confident that he can explain the issues and that everything is aboveboard, then everybody should “just take his information as that.”

“If people think otherwise then they have their recourse, but I’d rather not give details on impressions,” Ermita said.

Based on the statement of assets, liabilities and net worth of Arroyo, his net worth went up from P5 million in 2002 to P99 million in 2008.

He admitted that campaign donations and wedding gifts enabled him to acquire a \$1.32-million (P63.7 million) waterfront house in California. ■

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