

# Cory to have surgery; bishop urges prayers

by FE ZAMORA  
Inquirer.net

FORMER President Corazon Aquino will undergo a medical procedure to remove a portion of her colon afflicted with cancer cells, her social secretary Margie Juico said last April 30.

Balanga Bishop Socrates Villegas called for a rosary prayer crusade "for the total healing" of Aquino.

Villegas urged the public to pray the rosary and receive Holy Communion every day from May 1, the feast of St. Joseph the Worker, until May 13, the feast of Our Lady of Fatima.

According to Juico, the family of the former president has been trying to convince her to undergo the procedure. Juico said the doctors had found that Aquino's cancer cells were confined to a section in the colon.



File photo Former President Cory Aquino (AP)

**Rosary made by Sister Lucia**  
"When I was yet private secretary of the late Jaime Cardinal Sin, I had the privilege to meet with Sister Lucia, one of the

Fatima visionaries. The saintly visionary told Cardinal Sin to give President Cory a rosary that Sister Lucia herself made in the monastery. She told Cardinal Sin

to tell President Cory that "You, Corazon, are a blessing for the Philippines," Villegas recounted.

**Acts of charity**

"By the power of the rosary, we won our freedom at EDSA in 1986. By the power of the same rosary, let us ask for the total healing and full cure of her who was a symbol of God's blessings for the Philippines," the bishop said.

Villegas added: "I personally know how devoted President Cory is to the rosary and Our Lady of Fatima. Let this prayer crusade be our expression of love for her and our expression of faith in the Lord."

Aside from praying the rosary and receiving communion, Villegas also urged those who will join the prayer crusade to "make acts of charity for the poor and give alms to the least, the last and the lost in our midst." ■

# Villar emerges as top opposition bet

by CHRISTINA MENDEZ  
Philstar.com



File photo Sen. Manuel Villar Jr.

(senate.gov.ph)

SEN. Manuel Villar Jr. is the top choice from the opposition slate to succeed President Arroyo in 2010, according to the latest Social Weather Stations (SWS) survey.

In a survey conducted Feb. 20-23 among 1,200 respondents, Villar was the foremost option whom Filipinos would vote for when asked who they think is the best opposition leader to replace Mrs. Arroyo in 2010.

The survey question read: "Who do you think are good leaders who should succeed Pres. Arroyo as President? You may give up to three names."

Responding to the question, 13 percent named Villar—the highest rating among the presidential candidates in the opposition.

Senators Francis Escudero got 11 percent; Loren Legarda, 11 percent; former President Joseph Estrada, 9 percent; Senators Panfilo Lacson, 6 percent and Manuel Roxas II, 5 percent.

Meanwhile, 18 percent picked administration presidential candidate Vice President Noli de Castro.

The latest SWS report further bolstered speculations of a possible Villar-De Castro tandem in next year's elections. Both De Castro and Villar, members of the Wednesday Club at the Senate, have been mum on the reported team-up.

Sen. Alan Peter Cayetano, an ally of Villar in the Nacionalista Party, said this could be the reason why some senators eyeing the presidency in 2010 are trying to discredit Villar.

"If the opposition will follow the suggestion of former President Erap that whoever will get the highest rating in the polls or surveys should be the one supported by everyone in the opposition line-up, then it just goes to show that Villar should be the one pitted by the opposition versus the administration," Cayetano said in a statement.

Villar is facing controversy over the alleged double insertion of P200 million for a road extension project.

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# Job fairs but no pay hike on Labor Day

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eral Santos, Dipolog and Iligan.

**On full alert**

The Philippine National Police upped its deployment for the Labor Day activities.

Chief Supt. Nicanor Bartolome, the PNP spokesperson, said the National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) deployed 5,000 cops in the metropolis.

Around 300 troops each from Regions 1, 2, 3, 4-A and 5, and the Cordillera Administrative Region, were sent to augment the

NCRPO's anti-riot police force. A contingent from the elite Special Action Force was also deployed for good measure.

Bartolome said the deployment was concentrated on the city of Manila, where labor groups were expected to hold large protest actions.

He said the 125,000-strong PNP was on full alert starting at 6 a.m. This meant all PNP personnel were supposed to report to and stay at their post at all times.

Last April 30, the PNP was only on heightened alert, he said.

In a statement, PNP Director General Jesus Verzosa said the "no permit, no rally" policy was strictly implemented in all regions to maintain peace and order.

"The PNP will respect the workers' right to peacefully assemble and express their grievances. Maximum tolerance will be exercised during the Labor Day celebrations," Verzosa said. ■

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