



## **A SURPRISE SHOWER OF BLESSINGS**

The PGH MFI Century Club re-launches at Barbara's

*By: Ms. Nena Benigno*

It was a happy reunion of old and cherished friends, a lunch treats of sumptuous Lechon Kawali, Caldereta, Palitaw assorted salads and desserts and other Barbara's Heritage House specialties, (ending) concluding with an impassioned performance by lovely and lively Flamenco dancers.

(But most of all) Most importantly, it was a call to heal and save lives, give hope to the hopeless, serve the King of Kings who said "whatever you did for one of the least of these, my brethren, you have done it unto me." (Matthew 25:40)

"Jesus Christ has a heart for the poor, and that's what brings us here today," explained Barbara Gordon de los Reyes last June 30, 2024 at a fundraising event in her restaurant in Intramuros, Manila. The occasion was the launch of the local PGH MFI Century Club, a non-profit organization created to raise support for needy patients of the Philippine General Hospital.

Each year, PGH serves around 600,000 patients, with 98 percent considered indigent and marginalized. There is a constant need for medicines, supplies and updated equipment to meet the growing demand for free medical care.

Linda Cambia thanked Barbara for providing the venue, inviting her longtime friends and accepting the challenge to move the foundation forward as its new Chairperson. "It's a cause that's been very close to my heart," Barbara shared. "At this stage in my life, I have come to realize that true fulfillment comes from serving those in need."

The PGH MFI Century Club was first launched in 2015 in celebration of the centennial anniversary of the UP Medical Alumni Society of America (UPMASA) by a group of doctors spearheaded by Dr. Greg Mariano, Jr., and which was formally introduced by the then President of the PGH Medical Foundation, Inc. (PGHMFI), Dr. Greg T. Alvior, Jr., to some Filipino doctors working in the Philippines who wanted to help support the charity services of the Philippine General Hospital. But it was that afternoon when the committee members of the PGH MFI Century Club led by its Chair, Mrs. Barbara Gordon delos Reyes, re-launched the Century Club to invite new members and to increase awareness of the purpose of the Century Club in helping the charity patients of the hospital.

The Club's unique pitch is for potential supporters to join as a Donor Member who may give any amount at any time; or a Core Member who will give a minimum amount of P5000 during their birthdays. It's a symbolic gift of thanks, an act of giving for receiving a new year of life.

The donations that came in that short afternoon, a six-figure sum, was a truly blessed outpouring. “It far exceeded our expectations, *sobra!*” enthused Gloria Rio, a Finance Officer of the PGHMFI for 10 years. She further commented that, “We expected four to five people to come, but all who were invited, 40 (?) people came, and over half have signed up to become members,” Gloria shared delightedly.

What moved them to give so generously?

“I believe in the project,” shared businesswoman Maite Bayot.” The PGH doctors are good and our poor deserve the best. If only people could see the long lines of charity patients applying for treatment at PGH, their hearts would be touched to give.”

“PGH is known for helping the poor. My sister was operated on some years back and she was not charged, it was all for free”, recalled Liberty Talusan. “So, I’m giving back blessing for blessing.”

“I always look for an opportunity to give back to the Lord,” shares businesswoman (businesswoman?) Michelle Yu.” “He has poured out His blessings so fully, so totally, so generously to us. So even though I’m so busy at work, this is one affair I didn’t want to miss.”

“It’s my birthday next week and I want to make it special,” enthused Mimi de los Reyes. “It won’t just be about (my new year of life) but about giving to (extend the lives) of others. That gives my birthday so much more meaning and purpose”.

Barbara thanked her guests for coming, even on a rainy afternoon, and contributing their own downpour of blessings from heaven to charity patients of PGH. “I’m so happy and touched to see you face to face... I know this group will grow because anything that has life will grow. To quote the words of the Apostle Paul to the Corinthian church: “And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things, at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.”

(2 Corinthians 9:8)

And as Dr. Greg Alviar, Jr., first President of the PGH Medical Foundation Inc., puts it: “Philanthropy is not a monopoly of the rich, but an act of deep concern for others.”

For PGH and the PGH MFI Century Club in the Philippines, the generous outpouring of provision that afternoon at Barbara’s was just the beginning...for More!!!

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