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Escrivá School in the Philippines

An educator fulfills her dreams of "educating children in the mind and in the heart". She finds inspiration from the Values Education program of the University of Asia and the Pacific and the teachings of St. Josemaría Escrivá.

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For Leonora Vinluan, MA Values Education alumna, running her own school had been a longtime dream. In 2005, after finishing her studies at

the University of Asia and the Pacific, in the Philippines, that dream was realized with a little help from her brother, the inspiration and instruction she gained from the University, and a lot of hard work. Ms. Vinluan put up St. Josemaría Escrivá School in her hometown Paniqui, Tarlac where she now fulfills her aspiration of “educating the children in the mind and in the heart” while doing public service by helping in community projects.

“I believe that MAVE is the key that opened the gateway to my dream,” she says. “The wisdom I gained from the professors and teachings of St. Josemaría moved me and inspired me to work better and dream higher.”

Ms. Vinluan began her teaching career at Mt. Carmel Montesorri in Baguio City. Eventually moving back to Paniqui, she taught at a public

school in a barrio for six years before moving to Del Valle Elementary School, her old alma mater, where she taught for another four years. It was during this time that she found out about the MAVE program and decided to take a chance.

“At first, I was undecided, but eventually I gave it a try and took the entrance exam. Fortunately, I qualified,” she says. “While I was undergoing my MAVE course, I felt more inspired and started visualizing myself running a school. Our discussions in the classes of Dr. Gladys Golo, Dr. Severina Villegas and Dr. Zenon Udani put me in a ‘future state.’ Every time we discussed, I imagined myself administering and managing my dream school. I always told myself that if I had my own school, I would run it the way I was being taught.”

Taking the lessons of the program to heart, Ms. Vinluan, with the advice of a fellow Tarlac native and MAVE graduate, decided to name her school after St. Josemaría Escrivá whose teachings she had learned through MAVE. “When we started our marketing and promotion here (in Paniqui), everybody was asking who St. Josemaría was. I realized, maybe it was my mission to spread the words and life story of St. Josemaría. I believe God sent me to MAVE for this reason.

“My brother helped me financially in putting up the school. We are not rich. We had no big capital when we put this up. It was a matter of faith and determination. It was a very challenging and tough endeavor,” she says. “We started operating on June 13, 2005 with only 50 pupils and three teachers. We’ve gone up to 145 pupils now and with 10 members of the teaching staff, including myself,

and four non-teaching and utility workers. We offer Pre-Elementary Courses (Nursery, Kindergarten and Preparatory) and complete elementary (Grades 1-6).”

According to Ms. Vinluan, “The school is guided by its vision and mission towards a culture of excellence. My MAVE experiences and learning are my power tools in running the school.”

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