

Placido L. Mapa, Jr. (June 24, 1932 to May 5, 2019)

Jess Estanislao remembers Placido (Cidito) Mapa, the first Filipino supernumerary member of Opus Dei. He met Opus Dei in the US.

05/12/2019

I received the news of Cidito's passing into the next world with mixed emotions: sadness for our loss, thankfulness for all the good he did in life; and reflection on the lessons

we can all learn from his exemplary life.

This being May, and the place where I am (Barcelona) being dotted with many churches, I opted to go on a special pilgrimage to an image of our Lady at the Monastir de Pedralbes. I offered special prayers for Cidito there.

While at prayer before the image of Our Lady, I reflected on a few of the key lessons I have been privileged to learn from the exemplary life Cidito lived.

I recalled that he was the first faithful of the Opus Dei Prelature I met on a street in Cambridge. He offered me the room he was vacating since he had finished his Ph.D., while I was just entering the Economics Department of Harvard University. I then caught up with him when he was the Deputy Director General of the Program Implementation Agency,

where I landed a job soon after my return from graduate studies. We parted ways since he chose to stay on in government, and in two of the many positions he held--- as Chairman of the Development Bank of the Philippines, and later on as Director General of the National & Economic Development Authority--- I would follow him as one of his successors. Subsequently, when I was President of the University of Asia & the Pacific, Cidito became the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the university. Subsequently, when he was Vice Chairman of Metro Bank, Chairman George Ty asked him to invite me to serve in the Board of Directors of that bank. In many different ways, then, Cidito was always ahead of me, giving me a great example, which is now ours to treasure as well as our duty to share and pass on.

Here are three examples I learned from following Cidito:

- An example of a reassuring smile. Cidito was always there, ready to help and encourage, always with a smile that came from within. I know where it came from: he was always deeply conscious of God being his Father, who could and would take very good care of him and of whatever affairs that may intrude into our sphere of concerns.
- An example of humble deference to a higher authority. Cidito always looked at positions, no matter how high, as platforms for serving others. He was never there for himself or for his own personal agenda. There was always a higher cause to fight for, and a bigger agenda to work for, formulated as they may have been by a higher authority. The loyalty and discretion that he observed have been legendary, and he richly

deserved the enormous trust and confidence he always enjoyed. Like Jesus, who was at the very center of his life, he chose not to do his will, but the will of someone higher.

- An example of quiet elegance. Cidito was never rambunctious, never a loud "show-off". With all of his competence and high-level professional skills, he knew how to listen attentively and keep his composure. He let others speak, but when necessary, he would intervene from a higher perch, and with great authority open newer and wider horizons for others to explore. He always struck me as having the calm and the prudence of Mary: unobtrusive, confident, and effective.

These examples I learned from following Cidito are well worth treasuring, absorbing into our life, and passing on to others.

As we feel the pain of losing such a great friend, and as we thank God for the benefits he has showered upon us by Cidito's example, we ask the Father to welcome Cidito into his bosom, in the company of Jesus, and under the maternal care of Mary.

Jesus P. Estanislao

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june-4-1932-to-may-5-2019/](https://opusdei.org/en-ph/article/placido-l-mapa-jr-june-4-1932-to-may-5-2019/) (02/14/2026)