

History

Getting to Know Inocencio Magtoto

I never really knew Inocencio Magtoto, my father. I was barely three and a half years old when he died. What is only vivid in my mind was the scene where a lot of people were inside our house and an aunt told me that my father has died because the finger of the image of the Sacred Heart (which I accidentally broke while playing it) was placed inside his nose and this cause him difficulty in breathing until he died. It was only later that I learned of the real cause of his death but until then I had that feeling of guilt inside me.

I never really knew him. It was my mother who told me a lot of things about him - his simple life, his work, his dreams for us, for others. One thing struck me among these and it was this: "Nukarin ko man miras, e yu kakalinguan nung nukarin kayu menibat." (Whatever you accomplish in life, do not forget your roots.) And our roots are grounded in the countryside, in poverty.

Through the stories my mother, my older sisters and family friends told me in my childhood days. I gradually got to know my father.

My father was an ordinary rural folk who lived an ordinary simple life. Born in barrio Calulut, San Fernando, Pampanga on November 11, 1914, he was of poor peasant origin but was able to touch the lives of many people. He was married to my mother, the late Modesta Lorenzo, a hard working woman. It was my mother who selflessly brought us up (the ten of us) when father died of cancer on November 16, 1956.

Hard work, resourceful-ness and daringness helped him succeed in his economic ventures. He generously shared the fruits of his success not only to his family but to others in need and deprived of basic opportunities in life. Finishing only the fourth grade, he became a victim of fraud by his trusted "intellectual" friends who acquired ownership of his properties with just the stroke of a pen. This inculcated in him the strong value of good and quality education for his children, lest they too become victims of selfish interests.

Thirty five years after his death and with the guidance and inspiration of our

mother Modesta, we, his children, decided to carry out his dream of equal rights and opportunities for the poor and the less fortunate in life. At the same time, we wanted to express our gratitude to all the goodness and blessings that God has bestowed upon us by sharing them with the least of our brethren. This gave birth to Inocencio Magtoto Memorial Foundation, Inc.

People

often ask if my father suffered from any form of physical disability. This may be because IMMFI caters to children with disabilities. The answer is no. IMMFI focused on childhood disability concerns because data gathered by the family in 1991 showed that people with disabilities in Pampanga were the least fortunate in terms of access to social services and opportunities for growth and development both from the government and private sectors.

My

father was not a perfect man. He, too, had his own imperfections and misgivings just like anybody else. So is IMMFI. It has just finished its first decade of existence. It still has a long way to go, a lot more rooms for improvement for a more efficient, effective and relevant delivery of services to people with disabilities. What is of prime importance now is that it has started and has initiated breaking some of the difficult economic, political and socio-cultural barriers that has long deprived children with disabilities of equal rights and opportunities to grow, learn and develop to their fullest capacity.

My

father has long been dead. He was joined by his beloved Modesta ten years ago. My sisters, my only brother and I miss their physical presence so much. But their spirit always shines upon us, their children, and in every special child whose quality of life IMMFI has in one way or another helped improve. Their legacy lives on in our continuing commitment to make IMMFI's vision come true. If only for this, I would be very happy to join them in Eternal Life when the day of reckoning comes.

Vision

IMMFI envisions a just and humane society where enabled children with disabilities enjoy equal rights and opportunities

Mission

To break barriers and build hope for children with disabilities and their families by:

1. Addressing the causal factors of impairments and disabilities
2. Promoting early detection and intervention of disabilities
3. Mainstreaming children with disabilities in Philippine society; and
4. Advocating for and defending the rights of children with disabilities

Goals

1. To improve the quality of life of children with disabilities through better access to basic rehabilitation services;
2. To form and strengthen community support organizations for children with disabilities.
3. To advocate positive attitudes towards people with disabilities.
4. To forge linkages with various agencies and organizations for resource mobilization, delivery of services and advocacy of disability issues.
5. To serve as a resource center on children, health and disability concerns.