

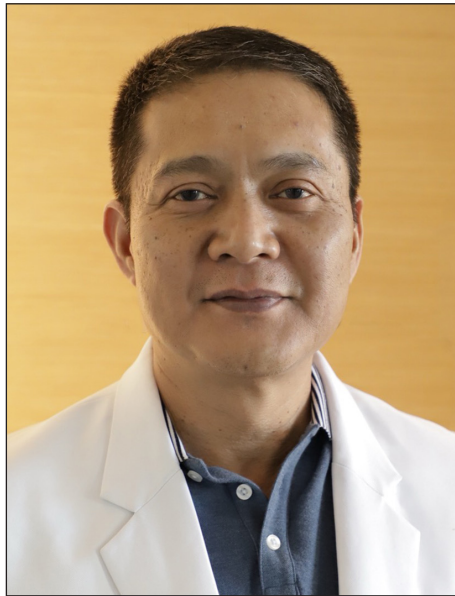


Manuel A. De Jesus, MD (1965 - 2026)

Karen Mae G. De Jesus, MD

A Life of Service and Quiet Love

Born in November 1965, he was the fifth of seven siblings to a former soldier and a strong willed housewife/storekeeper, both hailing from Cavite. He took his primary education in the Fort Bonifacio Elementary School and secondary education at Pateros Catholic School. Growing up, he was also the mischievous one in the brood and would often get punished—but he never forgot his responsibilities. Back then, they had a sari-sari store and a pig farm and as the eldest son, my dad would help my grandparents out. He would also tell stories of how he used to be a working student being a jeepney driver during summer breaks, together with my grandfather. He eventually took his pre-medicine course in Biology and finished his Doctor of Medicine degree in the University of Santo Tomas.



After passing his medical board exams, he became a field physician in an offshore oilfield company in Palawan for two years to help my grandparents financially. In 1995, he began his training in Otorhinolaryngology Head and Neck Surgery and concurrently served as Chief Resident of both the Department and the Manila Doctors Hospital during his senior year. He started his ENT practice in Claridad, Cavite City until 2006, then later settled his private practice in the Manila Doctors Hospital and Pasay City General Hospital.

He met my mom in 1994 and they would have me in the following year, with my sister coming two years after. I don't have a clear memory of those early years but there were stories of how he would bring me along to the hospital as a child where I would meet several of our alumni while he worked. This continued as I grew older - he would let me in as observer in his OR procedures, until the time finally came when I got to stand side by side with him as an ENT resident, where I witnessed his steady hands and skills firsthand. I'm immensely grateful that I got to share the same space and vocation as him.

He was a beloved mentor and a respected colleague, both in Medicine and Residency. He served as Department Training Officer in the Manila Doctors Hospital for five years, then Admissions Committee Head. He wasn't just a father to me and my sister – he was also a “father figure” for many of our alumni and residents. He was always welcoming, especially to the new trainees. What remained

constant about him is that he always had time for teaching – when he visited during OPD hours, during patient rounds, in the OR and Endoscopy Center, even at home. These values echoed through to all those who were under his guidance, even after their training.

My dad was a man of few words, as those who knew him can attest. Weekends were peaceful where he would make coffee for me and my sister. He reminded us to eat fruits at every meal. He'd bring home our laundry each Thursday. He would check up on us with simple messages like “*Uwi ka na*” (go home already) or “*Ingat kayo*” (take care). In his free time, he loved watching documentaries on the History Channel, Animal Planet, and National Geographic. This made his non-medical stock knowledge so enormous - ask him anything and he had an answer for it. He likewise loved sharing these historical facts with

us. Another beloved “hobby” of his was meticulously cleaning the family cars, obsessively cleaning and wiping every nook and cranny of the front grilles and mag wheels. During family gatherings, he would rarely follow the color theme making him stand out in photos, and at the last instant before a picture was taken, he would crack a joke, bringing out genuine smiles from everyone.

For our family, money was his love language. He believed that financial stability was the ultimate gift of security he could provide for us, and ensured that my sister and I were taken care of. I didn't fully understand it then, but that was how he showed his love for us.

One thing about my dad, though, is that he never sought consult regarding his health. His symptoms of fatigue and restlessness came about one Wednesday evening. We all came and stayed by his side and brought him to the hospital the next day. Everything happened so suddenly and he eventually joined our Creator early morning of Friday.

As a family, we continue to get through each day but at times, it still feels heavy and painful without him. We are sincerely grateful to everyone who paid their respects and offered their prayers. The support from the community that surrounded us showed just how much of an impact my dad had. His legacy of caring for patients will live on through me, my sister, and through all those he mentored and were under his wings.

You were an angel in the shape of my dad. We love you, Papa.