

DATELINE PHILIPPINES

The Wedding of the Year: Sen. Mar Roxas, Korina Sanchez tie knot; more than 10,000 greet, watch at Sto. Domingo Church

by LOUIE JON A. SANCHEZ, MARIE ANGELI SYJUECO
AJPress Manila

MANILA—The bride, as they say, took her time. The proceedings didn't go on schedule and only started at around 4pm Tuesday at the historic Sto. Domingo Church in Quezon City because the bride, star broadcaster Korina Maria Sanchez, wanted to show her parents her Pepito Albert serpentina gown.

It was a memorable, even poignant moment; her parents have passed away in 2004, and would never be able to attend their only daughter's wedding. Sanchez tearfully paid her respects to her parents at the Heritage Park in Taguig City, before wading through the usual traffic afternoon at Edsa.

"Please pray that I don't trip," she said to ABS-CBN News, before getting back into her bridal car. This was the same thing she texted her groom, Sen. Mar Roxas, a few days before the ceremonies. Roxas himself

When she marched, she was nothing but graceful. Observers in all media described her as "mala-diyosa" (goddess-like), especially after the drape covering her was removed at the church door, and as she walked in the white roses, sampaguita, and jasmine-filled aisle. Her brothers Mike and Emmanuel Sanchez, took turns bringing her to the altar. The Manila Symphony Orchestra's rendition of Ray An Fuentes' "Umagang Kay Ganda" played in the background.

Sen. Roxas awaited her bride at the altar with his best man, 16-year old son Paolo Zaldariaga. When Sanchez made her final approach, the man who is currently running for vice president under the Liberal Party banner, made a salute. The wedding began.

Roxas and Sanchez finally made their "magical moment" come alive, as 10,000 crowded Quezon Boulevard and waited outside the church to witness what many observers called "the wedding of the year." The main wedding homilist, the Jesuit Fr. Tito Caluag described it as "the most anticipated wedding."

"In Omnibus Servire, In Omnibus Amore," told Fr. Caluag in his blessing for the couple. "Sa lahat ng bagay maglingkod, sa lahat ng bagay umibig," he added. At least seven bishops, led by

Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippine President and Iloilo Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, officiated the wedding vows. As the two exchange their personal vows, some spectators watching at four video walls mounted outside the church shed tears and were moved.

Touching vows

A transcript of the couple's vows was posted in ABS-CBN News.com. "Korina, I take you as God's precious gift. I love you as you are. You are precious to me. I am happy we are together and truly thank you for taking me and putting up with me. I give myself to you



TALK OF THE TOWN. With arms raised in a victory campaign mode, bride and groom face the public for the first time as Sen. and Mrs. Mar Roxas (nee Korina Sanchez) after Tuesday's wedding rites at Santo Domingo Church. Inquirer photo by Edwin Bacasmas

as your best friend, to applaud when you succeed and encourage when you stumble. I offer myself to you as your husband in respect and in trust. Today I take you to be my wife, I promise to be with you and be true to you in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health. I will love and honor you all the days of my life," Sen. Roxas said.

Sanchez replied: "Minamahal kong Mar, matagal ang panahong lumipas na tayo ay nag-sarili ng landas at naghintay ng pagkakataong ito. Tayo ngayon ay pinagpala ng tadhana at ng Panginoon na mahanap ang isa't isa. Tootoo pala na ang pangarap ay nagaganap."

"Ikaw ang katuparan ng lahat ng aking hinintay at minimithi ng aking puso na maging kasama, karamay, kaibigan at kakampi. Ikaw ang aking pinili upang alayan ng lahat ng iyong kakailanganin sa isang kasama at katabi sa buhay sa abot ng aking makakaya. Dumaan man ang unos, mga pagsubok, ang sakit, ang kabiguan, ako ay mananatiling dikit sa iyong dibdib kahawak ng mahigpit ng iyong mga kamay. Ngunit sabay din tayong lalakbay sa landas na itinahak ng Panginoon sa atin.

Magkasama tayong ngingiti, tatawa, hahalakhak sa malakiman na tagumpay at sa pinakamababaw na biro.

"Mar, ang pangako ko sa iyo, saksi ang aking mga yumaong magulang na si Celia at Ramon, katuwang ng aking buong pamilya at lahat ng nagmamahal sa ating dalawa, basbas ng langit ang aking pagmamahal sa iyo at kasama ng Panginoon kahapon, ngayon at bukas, ako'y iyong-iyong."

Guests from all over

There were more than 2,000 guests inside the church, including several high profile individuals from both media and politics. The couple's principal sponsors were Supreme Court Chief Justice Reynato Puno, Liberal Party stalwart and former Senate President Jovito Salonga, ABS-CBN top CEO Eugenio Lopez III, Roxas's uncle, Jorge Araneta, actress and philanthropist Rosa Rosal, Roxas' aunts Ruby Roxas and Maria Fores, journalist Cecilia "Che Che" Lazaro, and Helen Costales, the best friend of Sanchez's late mother. Liberal Party standard-bearer, Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, Roxas' running mate, replaced his mother, former President Cory Aquino, who died last August.

ABS-CBN anchors Ging Reyes and Pinky Webb were brides-

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Why Escudero quit NPC?

by LIRA DALANGIN-FERNANDEZ
Inquirer.net

MANILA—Could the "measly" P200 million contribution to his campaign kitty be the reason for Senator Francis "Chiz" Escudero's departure from the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC)?

Without much fancy, Escudero announced on Wednesday he's leaving the NPC, his political party of 11 years, a move that surprised even party members. This leaves the party headed by business tycoon Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco without a prospective presidential candidate for the May 2010 election, even as Senator Loren Legarda, Escudero's supposed running

mate, gave assurances she would stay with the party.

An NPC insider said that one of the reasons for Escudero's decision could be the party's "inability to raise funds for his campaign."

As per his estimate, a presidential candidate would need at least P2 billion to launch a nationwide campaign. But Cojuangco could commit only P200 million to Escudero, said the NPC insider who refused to be identified.


This was refuted by Escudero's father, Sorsogon Representative Salvador Escudero III.

"Pure speculation," he said in a phone interview when asked about the funding problem. He said there was even a report his son was offered P1 billion to withdraw, but this was not true as well.

Senator Escudero formally

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