



# An encounter written in the stars

**LIFE'S INSPIRATIONS:**  
 "... That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh..." (Genesis 2:24, the Holy Bible).

**AN ENCOUNTER WRITTEN IN THE STARS:** It was, by all indications, an encounter written in the stars. The man, in 1956, was then working as a clerk-typist at a law firm in Sampaloc, Manila. He was 22 years of age, was still unmarried, and was carefree and enjoying his bachelorhood. He had, in fact, just come from the province, trying to find his destiny in the city with his knowledge of typing and a little stenography.

The young lady was just starting to bloom into full womanhood at 20 years of

age, even as she was about to graduate from a normal school in Manila, clinching a degree in elementary education in the process. She has barely left her child-like demeanor, cloistered and sheltered as she was by her close relatives from the North, but this did not prevent her from venting her displeasure over the loud talking that a man and a fellow passenger was making in the bus she had taken to bring her home in the house of her parents in Quezon City that fateful day.

"Your voices are way too loud," the young lady told the man who was then sitting at the seat directly at her back. When she said this, she tried to glance at the man, and she saw that he was wearing a white long-sleeves polo. white slacks.

and white shoes. He was talking to the man seated next to him, in her own dialect which was the language of her people from the North, the Ilocano dialect.

**STORIES OF YOUNG LOVE IN A PASSENGER BUS:** "It seems to me you are also Ilocanos, so why are you talking so loud?" the lady asked in Ilocano, directly addressing the man who, she thought then, could have been someone who was modeling a white attire. At that point, the man apologized, in Ilocano too, to the young woman. He then hurried to explain, rather sheepishly, that he and his friend were talking in loud voices because they wanted precisely to grab her attention.

When she heard what the man said, the young lady blushed, telling him and his friend that what they were doing was distracting her attempt to study while she was travelling in the bus. She said she had to study even while she was on board the bus because she was then preparing for her final exams before her graduation ceremonies.

The man again offered his apologies, and then maintained his silence.

When the bus reached a place in Quezon City, the woman alighted, and the man strained his neck to look at the place, which was an apartment in Project 3, Quezon City. While the young woman was going into the apartment, the man saw that she looked back to where he was, and, to his amazement, she threw a demure smile at him. The man's heart suddenly overflowed with a joy previously unknown to him, leading him to make a vow to wait for the lady once again to board her bus for home the following day.

**A PLEA FOR A PRAYER  
OR TWO FOR OUR PAR-  
ENTS:** The man and the  
young lady became good  
friends since. And as the  
days progressed into  
weeks, and weeks into  
months, they found them-  
selves meeting more often.  
In one of their meetings, the  
man confessed that he, in  
reality, had been endeavor-  
ing to wait on her everyday

## Group backs CBCP stand on renewable energy use

**MANILA** -- An environmental think-tank on Thursday supported the stand of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) to "divest dirty energy" sources such as coal.

The Center for Energy, Ecology, and Development (CEED), a group advocating for the use of renewable energy, lauded the efforts of the bishops' group to protect the environment.

“The moral leadership of the Church lends great weight to our cause for a coal-free Philippines,” CEED executive director Gerry Arances in a statement.

"No amount of short-term profit justifies the long-term compromise of the health of our people and the Earth's climate," he added.

Arance added that he hopes this will pave the way for a trend "where all investors will reject coal and other fossil fuels " and choose the Earth's welfare over profit.

On Wednesday, the CBCP announced its decision on the matter after their three-day Plenary Assembly in Manila last weekend.

Fr. Edwin Gariguez, Caritas Philippines executive secretary, said the divestment is included in their 10 action points for Laudato Si' campaign that the CBCP adopted.

He noted that the dioceses would instead place its money in renewable sources of energy.

The Catholic priest admitted that divestment will take some time to accomplish since there are legal procedures that must be observed.

The Philippines is one of the countries that are most vulnerable to climate change, yet it is also one of the few countries in the world where investments in coal continue to rise.

In 2015, the Vatican published *Laudato si'* (Praise Be to You), an encyclical subtitled "On care for a common home," which stated that the warming of the planet is a symptom of the world pursuing short-term economic gains at the expense of harming the planet.

The bishops of Belgium, Ireland, and Australia have preceded the CBCP in these divestments, along with 120 other Catholic institutions around the world.

The CBCP holds its plenary assembly in January and July of every year. (PNA)