

Speech for the 75th Founding Anniversary of the Philippine Society of Pathologists with the Theme: Purpose and Solidarity

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Esteemed colleagues, honored guests, and friends,

I have the extraordinary privilege to stand before you today as we gather to celebrate an extraordinary milestone—the 75th Founding Anniversary of the Philippine Society of Pathologists. Today, we commemorate a journey that has spanned seven decades—a

journey defined by unwavering purpose, solidarity, and valuable contributions to the field of pathology and the broader medical community in our nation.

Seventy-five years ago, our predecessors laid the foundation for what we now proudly call our society, united by a shared mission: to enhance the standards of pathology, to elevate the health of our people, and to nurture the ideals of excellence, professionalism, and compassion. From the modest beginnings of a small group of dedicated individuals, the Philippine Society of Pathologists has grown into a vibrant community of experts, advocates, and pioneers, bound together by a collective purpose that transcends time and challenges.

May I just cite one aspect of the story of our Founding President, Dr. Liborio Gomez, who, despite the challenges of the early days of the Philippine Society of Pathologists, exemplified the purpose and solidarity that we celebrate today.

I quote, “Dr. Gomez was a strong and forceful influence upon thousands of young medical students, residents in Pathology and trained pathologists who came under his tutelage. He was the moving spirit in the organization of the Philippine Society of Pathologists and served as its first President. It is in his honor that the Dr. Liborio Gomez Memorial Award and Lecture was established.

An unflinching example of humility, dedication, and integrity, Dr. Gomez will always be remembered as a man whose visions had gone a long way in the realization of a dream. Dr. Liborio Gomez’ story embodies the spirit of purpose and solidarity that continues to guide us today. It reminds us that even in the face of daunting challenges, our work has the power to transform lives and uplift our practice of Pathology.”

Purpose is the heartbeat of our profession. It is the steady compass that guides our work, even in the face of uncertainty and adversity. In pathology, our purpose is clear: to seek truth through science, to diagnose with precision, to advocate for patient welfare, and to push the boundaries



of knowledge for the betterment of healthcare. We do this not for recognition or applause, but because we understand that in every specimen, in every microscopic slide, there is a life that depends on us. There is a family waiting for answers. There is a community yearning for hope.

Purpose/Mission of PSP

- To foster solidarity through proactive participation in society activities and advocacies enhanced communication and adherence to professional and ethical standards.
- To train highly competent pathologists by providing continuing education and training to our members.
- To lead the way towards the advancement in the field of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine through active participation in local and global collaborative research.
- To promote the role of socially responsible Pathologists in the healthcare system by coordinating with policy makers, stakeholders, other societies and healthcare partners in service, training and research in the local and international arena in support of the national health agenda.

Purpose/Vision of PSP

The Philippine Society of Pathologists will be a unified and cohesive force composed of highly competent, globally recognized professionals collaborating with local and international health partners, including the academe and other societies working towards the advancement of the profession of Pathology and Laboratory Medicine.

We will be at the forefront of patient care while adhering to the highest standards in service, training and research.

Yet, while purpose gives us direction, it is **solidarity** that can give us our collective strength. A shared commitment to collaboration, mentorship, and mutual support will enable us to overcome obstacles, to adapt to the ever-changing landscape of medicine, and to thrive in an environment that often demands more than we think we can give. In the past, we have weathered storms of crisis

after crisis, such as our organizational, national, and global crises. We have witnessed firsthand the need for solidarity. **Solidarity** is not merely the act of standing together; it is the spirit of lifting one another. Through **solidarity**, the coming together of minds, hearts, and hands, we amplify our impact. In our interconnected world, **collaboration** is not an option; it is a necessity. Together, we can meet the unprecedented challenges, proving that **unity** is not just a **value**, it is the greatest **asset** for organizations such as ours.

As we celebrate this momentous occasion, let us also reflect on the milestones that have shaped our journey:

- 1950:** The Philippine Society of Pathologists (PSP) was founded, with its first organizational meeting held at the Aristocrat Restaurant on Roxas Boulevard, a far cry from what it is today.
- 1966:** The Clinical Laboratory Law (RA 4688) was passed, defining the role of pathology in the country. In the same year, the PSP became an affiliate of the Philippine Medical Association. The Board of Pathology was also created.
- 1982:** The PSP became incorporated.
- 1983:** The PSP Ladies Circle and the Pathology Residents Organization were organized.
- 1984:** Through the initiatives of Past Presidents Drs. Generoso Basa, Antonia Cruz-Basa, and Arsenio Cantos, a property was purchased for the future PSP building.
- 1986:** Groundbreaking and cornerstone laying for the future PSP building. The PSP also became a member of the Asia Pacific Association of Societies of Pathologists.
- 1987:** The maiden issue of the Philippine Journal of Pathology was published. The regional chapters were also established.
- 1991:** The PSP, as a member of the Asia Pacific Association of Societies of Pathologists, hosted its convention in Manila, strengthening international collaboration.
- 2000:** On its 50th Anniversary, the PSP celebrated with renewed commitment to excellence in health service, training, and research.
- 2015:** Maria Ressa, 2021 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, was the Annual Convention speaker on "Truth in Diagnostics".
- 2019:** PSP had an enhanced use of Information Technology (IT) with a dedicated website for the conventions and virtual slide case presentations in pathology, preempting the use of IT for the PSP's Continuing Education Program and other activities during the entire pandemic period.

These milestones are a testament to the enduring legacy of the Philippine Society of Pathologists and the collective efforts of its members to elevate the practice of pathology in the Philippines.

Today, as we celebrate the remarkable achievements of the past 75 years, let us also look to the future with renewed purpose and a deeper sense of solidarity.

"Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experiences of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired, and success achieved." – Helen Keller

PSP has the defining moment of equipping its members with strategies to use to spotlight the laboratory's pivotal role across not only clinical areas but also operations and case management.

Let us continue to inspire the next generation of pathologists, to embrace innovation and technology without losing sight of our humanity, and to champion equity in healthcare for all Filipinos.

Let us remain steadfast in our resolve to uphold the highest standards of our profession, not just for ourselves, but for the countless lives that are touched by our work.

Let us strengthen our ties with the broader medical community, with policymakers, and with the public, ensuring that pathology remains at the forefront of medical progress.

Above all, let us never lose sight of why we do what we do—for the betterment of lives, for the advancement of science, and for the brighter future that we build together.

In closing, as we commemorate 75 years of excellence, let us remember that this milestone is not just a celebration of our history, but a call to action for the years ahead. What does it mean to truly leave a legacy in the field of Pathology? May the spirit of purpose and solidarity inspire us to reach greater heights, to break new ground, to thrive, to lead, and to serve as a pillar of hope and excellence in our nation's healthcare system and to leave a legacy that future generations will be proud to inherit.

As we face an uncertain future, never in our history has there been a greater need for wise, courageous, and enlightened leadership than at the present. It is to you that we must look for that leadership.

Today, on our Diamond Anniversary, is an auspicious moment to mark that challenge. I challenge you to be heroes of our time. The world is waiting for that special contribution each one of you was born to make.

So, make a difference! We all have the extraordinary coded within us waiting to be released.

Release that energy, that extraordinary within- and follow your heart, your dream, your vision.

Thank you, and congratulations to all who have been part of this incredible journey. Together, let us continue to shape a future that reflects the very best of us, of who we are and what we stand for.

Mabuhay!!! Happy 75th Anniversary!!!

God bless the **Philippine Society of Pathologists!** ■