

The Sesquicentennial of Thomasian Medical Education: A Celebration of Grit, Gratitude and Glory



Ma. Lourdes P. Domingo-Maglinao, MD

Greetings in the name of Saints Cosmas and Damian!

The year 2021 marks a pivotal time in the history of the UST Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, a time envisioned to be the beginning of a new chapter in the illustrious history of the oldest existing Catholic University in the Philippines.

“Legacy is not about leaving something behind for people, it is about leaving something in them. Legacy is more than about being exalted, it is about being remembered.”

One hundred fifty (150) years of a story told and retold. The commemoration of our alma mater’s 150th year of existence is not only a tribute to its rich heritage, but a proclamation of how it has evolved through time.

A story of men and women imbued with the desire to heal and inspired by a calling to serve and decorate the colorful pages of our alma mater’s history.

A narrative culled by men and women who after being blessed with medical education decided to change their lives by changing the lives of others using a mindset anchored on competence, commitment and compassion.

This year, we will tell the world of the Thomasian legacy being lived more than the legacy being left.

✉ Ma. Lourdes Maglinao
mdmaglinao@ust.edu.ph

Dean, Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, UST,
Manila, Philippines
UST Medicine Class of 1986

The continuing saga of modern-day Thomasian medical education is truly an interesting story to be told. The legacy of the UST Faculty of Medicine and Surgery lives in every excellence exemplified, proof of which is the stream of highly successful Thomasian medical graduates conquering the world and bringing honor to the Thomasian medical community.

As we brave through the challenges of coexisting with a pandemic, we draw inspiration from the twists and turns of our very own history, searching for anchors of faith, holding on to handles of hope, and basking in stories of charity that brought the best in and out of the Thomasian medical community.

“Geography does not necessarily change genealogy. Where we are, should not change who we are.”

Our story is proof that through our Thomasian heritage, every Thomasian physician who thrived in a place under the sun, has in fact helped change the geography of the place, destiny gave them to cultivate.

Our story is a living testament that the Thomasian imprint has contributed to the improvement of demography and betterment of communities every Thomasian physician has chosen to serve.

Our Thomasian DNA is a template created by the great men and women who came before us and who live within each one of us whether we are aware of it or not.

This year, we celebrate that lineage of greatness in Thomasian medical education by looking back and moving forward.

Unshaken by challenges posed by the pandemic, we shall find innovative ways and means to be united in solidarity as we celebrate this once-in-a-lifetime event.

We will find a way and make this memory happen.

“The core of humanity is one’s identity. We need to be ourselves because everyone else is taken.”

Being faithful to who we are is an important source of strength; in fact, we must make our identity as our strength.

We must arm ourselves with who we truly are so that our identity will never be our weakness and will never be used to hurt us.

Our history is not perfect, but it prides itself with having survived the rigors of time and having navigated itself safely through the turbulence of change.

Our history is not problem-free, but it beams with accomplishments that stood the tests of rivalry and remained grounded as solid contributions to modern-day science and medicine.

We were there FIRST and the rest followed.

We blazed trails and carved paths for the journey of others.

We took risks and rolled with the punches to prove our resilience, agility and flexibility.

We stood our ground and proved that destiny is both a holy blessing and human undertaking.

We were there when only darkness prevailed such that when we ignited the glare of light, the rest discovered who they were and how bright they can become.

We were there when walls were plain and blank such that the instance we started writing and experimenting with the meaning of science and medicine, the rest understood what medical education should be about.

We celebrate the story of our alma mater. The luster of its name, the splendidness of its stature, and the pride it has given every one of us who had the fortune to be a true “Thomasian physician.”

This year, we pay tribute to that glorious Thomasian identity that has broken physical boundaries and conquered places beyond what the eyes could see.

This year, we pay homage to the great Thomasian physicians who made our alma mater the **“Cradle of Philippine Medicine and the birthplace of Filipino physician heroes.”**

“The sesquicentennial of the UST Faculty of Medicine and Surgery is a celebration of Thomasian grit, gratitude and glory. It is a renewal of a lifelong quest to be the biggest, the brightest and the best in medical education.”

Allow me to thank the Order of Preachers, the Dominican heritage of leadership and governance, which from the very beginning was the foundation of this institution’s history. One hundred fifty (150) years of nurturing a community that has changed the landscape of science and medicine, not only in the Philippines but also in the world. The Dominican commitment to education has remained both a seed of an unending quest for excellence and a beacon of Christ-centered learning that has illuminated and captivated the minds and hearts of its Thomasian citizens. This formidable institution of higher learning in science and medicine became, become, and will always be the gift of the Dominican community to mankind.

Truly imbued with unending grace for a promise will soon be realized. The Sts. Cosmas and Damian Simulation and Research Building will rise very soon.

The contribution of every Thomasian physician who walked the halls of the St. Martin de Porres Building, who went on duty at the San Juan De Dios Hospital and UST Hospital and who hurdled the Revalida deserves to be acknowledged during this celebration.

All Thomasian physicians from the past one hundred fifty (150) years perpetuated the Thomasian insigne of excellence and planted the seeds of the Thomasian medical mindset in every nook and corner of the world.

Allow me to express our heartfelt gratitude to our dearest Thomasian medical alumni in America for being steadfast in their commitment, sharing their lifelong blessings, unfaltering in their support and magnanimity for the advancement and furtherance of Thomasian medical education with the goal of keeping us at par with the world’s best. Forever indebted to the Anargyroi founders for putting up a foundation that exclusively and solely supports the projects and initiatives of the FMS, putting forth immense endowment that will sustain our medical

scholarship program in perpetuity thus assures us that there will be a Thomasian doctor in all and every generation to come.

Profound gratitude to our dear Thomasian medical alumni in the more than 7100 islands of Philippines who in great ways became part of our alma mater's evolution as a formidable institution of higher learning in medicine. You are our modern day heroes and one of our greatest contributors to present day history.

Allow me to thank the Past Deans, Regents and Administrators of the UST Faculty of Medicine and Surgery who with courage and character held the fort and allowed our alma mater to be where it is today.

Appreciation to our faculty then and now for being the role model and inspiration, and serving as a guide and compass in honing and giving the future Thomasian physicians limitless opportunities for learning.

Our support staff for making sure that the environment for learning remains conducive and contributive to all Thomasian medical learners.

To our current 1,883 medical students and future medical learners, your dreams are valid. There is the promise of tomorrow for every single dreamer and achiever that there is in the halls of the St. Martin de Porres Building. That is your tomorrow as future torchbearers of the medical school, a future that is bright with opportunities to be captains of your ships, masters of your crafts, makers of your dreams and navigators of your own lives.

This year is a memorable year and making it as such is both a personal and communal experience.

We celebrate the **grit** that brought us here, how tough times didn't last and how tough Thomasian physicians did.

We celebrate the **gratitude** that continues to bind us, making sure we give love as we get love.

We celebrate the **glory** that is the Thomasian physician, reminiscing the past, basking in the

present and hoping in a future that will only bring us to loftier dreams and greater achievements.

And today, I invite you to stand by our side as I try to sustain the momentum of our collective efforts to remain entrenched on the top, to help me continue our deliberate steps to leave a legacy that will not only last, but will eventually change the course of our history to one that will make us relevant and resilient through time.

Remember, as I always say ...the UST Faculty of Medicine and Surgery will live beyond us... beyond all of us... in every corner of the world. And every successful Thomasian doctor is a reflection of the Thomasian spirit that made us a breed of our own. In the end, the UST Faculty of Medicine and Surgery will continue to live as long as a Thomasian physician is there to keep its ideals living and burning.

As human existence is predetermined and we all have a cut-off date, the goal therefore is for us not to live forever but to create something that will. This is the essence of the sesquicentennial spirit we must all take into heart. Let our initiatives usher and herald us to a future that will perpetuate the Thomasian brand of excellence in Medicine in the next 150 years.

Cheers to 150 years and beyond! MABUHAY ANG TOMASINONG MANGGAGAMOT!



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