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POSTED BY HERMES JOY TUNAC

Time to say goodbye

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The well-loved diplomat and former Italian Ambassador to the Philippines Massimo Roscigno has recently succumbed to cancer according to a Facebook post by his daughter Ursula.



Former Italian Ambassador to the Philippines Massimo Roscigno/ Photo by Jar Concengco

“It is with a heavy heart that we announce our beloved Massimo’s demise after his second battle with cancer on Aug. 11. Massimo fought like a lion, but he now rests peacefully in our creator’s hands as our guardian angel. We love you, Papa, you can rest now. Wait for us. We will see each other again when our time comes,” Ursula shared on Facebook.

Massimo was first assigned to the Philippines as counsellor and deputy head of mission of the Embassy of Italy in 1988, before he left for other postings in 1992. He then returned to the Philippines more than two decades later as the Italian Ambassador in February 2013. The late ambassador ended his tour of duty when he paid President Rodrigo Duterte a farewell visit in 2017.



The late Massimo Roscigno and wife Agnes as featured in PeopleAsia's Feb-March 2014 issue/ Photo by Jar Concengco

Massimo, together with his Filipino wife Agnes Ventura, was featured in *PeopleAsia's* romance issue (February 2014), where the two shared their love story to contributing writer Joyce Reyes Aguila. The late ambassador said that the greatest *storia d'amore* (love story) is told with a healthy serving of laughter. Massimo asserted that such was definitely the case for him and Agnes.

"It's like a comic book," the writer quoted Massimo. "Our love story's a comedy, that's what I can say," Agnes agreed.

The Roscignos' tale started in 1988 when Agnes' family ventured into the construction business and need some machinery sourced from Italy.

"My opening line to him was, 'if we buy the machines from Italy, are you coming along with them as a bonus?'," Agnes shared. Massimo replied, "Yes, for my country, I'll do it as a sacrifice."

They, together with daughter Urusula would eventually travel the world together for the Ambassador's postings, which included stops in China, Italy, the United States.



Ambassador Roscigno, Tony Rufino and PeopleAsia publisher and Philippine Ambassador to the United States Jose Manuel Romualdez during Massimo's farewell event in 2017