

**INTRODUCTION OF DR. MEL SIMON
TO RECEIVE THE KNIGHTS of COLUMBUS HUMANITARIAN AWARD
St. Louis Parish Hall May 20, 2013**

Dr. Mel Simon is the epitome of the American Dream. As a little boy he lived under the yoke of the oppressive Japanese Occupation from 1941 to 1945. At one point he narrowly escaped being killed by an American bomb. He was there when his hero, General MacArthur kept his pledge, "I shall return".

Dr. Mel studied Medicine at the University of St. Thomas in Manila and completed his residency in Chicago. In 1966 Dr. Charles Holzer invited him to be Chief of the Department of



Urology at the hospital his father founded. Soon Dr. Simon became a very successful and eminent urologist, serving his patients on both sides of the river. He was a Colonel in the U.S. Air Force reserves and past president of the Medical Staff at the Pleasant Valley Hospital and also of the Rotary Club. Currently he is a 4th Degree member of the Knights of Columbus, the Board of the Ohio Valley Symphony, and the Board of Trustees of the University of Rio Grande.

Mel has enjoyed the fruits of his success, but is very generous with his time and financial resources in giving back so much to his parish, the twin sister communities that gave him the opportunity, and to his country of birth that raised him. As President of the Society of Philippine Surgeons in America and before, he organized an annual medical mission to the Philippines and in 1999 he strengthened the mission by obtaining the sponsorship of the Rotary Club while its District 6690 Governor. Usually every February of the past 29 years, Dr. Simon recruits a team of some 35 doctors and nurses and obtains donations of medical supplies and equipment to do diverse surgeries for a very intense two weeks.....cleft palate, some genetic deformities, tumors, eye surgery, dental surgery, etc. Each participant in the mission pays his/her own travel expenses. At the same time the team members train their counterparts in a real people to people outreach.

In our own local community he was the prime mover in the formation of the French 500 Free Clinic in Spring Valley. Since its founding in 2009 it has treated over one thousand uninsured patients of Gallia County on the last Thursday of the month. I have some brochures here for those of you who know people who cannot afford medical insurance.

All of this makes this prominent physician stand out and led to his being chosen for the Ohio Senior Citizens Hall of Fame. Today his fellow Knights and his parish have the opportunity to recognize Dr. Mel Simon for his achievements in serving humanity here and abroad. Dr. Simon, thank you for all that you have done for humanity. May each one of us follow your example in frequently serving our Church and community in little or big ways as we are able. Thus it is a privilege to present to you the very first Knights of Columbus Humanitarian Award. Dr. Simon, please step forward and Lydia as well who had a big part in it.