

A Mother's Day greeting

Written by Atty. Michael J. Gurfinkel

Mother's Day is a time when everyone should reflect on all the wonderful things and the sacrifices their mothers have made for them. It is also the time when Mothers feel blessed with the gift of motherhood, and feel the indescribable joy of being surrounded by their children. Unfortunately, for some mothers who are in the US in illegal status, Mother's Day is not such a happy time. Instead, it is a time of sadness and emptiness. Many Filipina mothers come to me for consultation, and share the same sad story of the sacrifices they have made for the sake of their children: They were forced to leave their young children behind in the Philippines, for a chance to give them a better future, to be able to send them to good schools, for their food, clothes, and education.

And yet these mothers would do anything just to be with their children again. Now that these mothers are settled in this foreign land of America, they want to concentrate on bringing their family here in the United States: to be able to hug and hold them, and share with their children every single moment of happiness, triumph, and success.

Every mother who had to leave their children in the care of relatives or friends goes through unimaginable loneliness and anxiety, as they work endless hours to provide a better life for their family back home in the Philippines. The need and desire to provide a better future for their children ironically cause untold suffering for both the mother who left, and the children left behind.

The mother comes home from work, finding an empty house, devoid of the love and laughter of her children. She calls her children, especially during important occasions, such as Christmas Day, New Year's Day, birthdays, graduations, sharing with them the happiness of the occasion. But as soon as the mother puts down the phone, the joy fades, and the pain of separation becomes even more deep. She sees friends' children, and remembers her own children back home.

The children who are left behind, on the other hand, grow up without the love, care and guidance of a loving mother. True, they are able to go to the best schools, buy clothes, and eat good meals every day, but all they really want is to be with "Mommy."

Every time I go to the Philippines, I see Filipinos who can buy their clothes and food because many of them have mothers, or fathers, or children who are working abroad, sending them dollars for their upkeep. But behind their capacity to buy material things, lies that empty feeling caused by the absence of their parents or children.

I have had the privilege of seeing many mothers and children reunited in America, and I can tell you that there is no better joy in knowing that they can continue pursuing better opportunities together without being away from each other again. There have been many joyful reunions between mothers and children that I am happy and proud to have been a part of.

It's Mother's Day again this Sunday, and I continue to look forward to helping more mothers get their ultimate Mother's Day wish — to be with their children again.

For some mothers in the United States, the wait for the magical reunion with their children seems endless. Because of their lack of immigration status, they must spend year after year away from their children. I hope that they are doing something to legalize their status, so that they can spend Mother's Day and other important holidays with their children in the future.

On this Mother's Day, I send my love and greetings to my own mother, who was an immigrant herself, who left her country, family and friends to look for a better life in America. I am very much able to understand what my clients have gone through, since my parents were immigrants

A Mother's Day greeting

Written by Atty. Michael J. Gurfinkel

and they have gone through the same experiences as my clients. Special greetings go to my Filipina mother-in-law, whom I call "Nanay." Most of all, to the mothers who made the supreme sacrifice of separation, for the sake of their own children.

To all the mothers of the world, Happy Mother's Day!

Michael J. Gurfinkel is licensed, and an active member of the State Bar of California and New York. All immigration services are provided by, or under the supervision of, an active member of the State Bar of California. Each case is different. The information contained herein (including testimonials, "Success Stories," endorsements and re-enactments) is of a general nature, and is not intended to apply to any particular case, and does not constitute a prediction, warranty, guarantee or legal advice regarding the outcome of your legal matter. No attorney-client relationship is, or shall be, established with any reader.

WEBSITE: www.gurfinkel.com

Call Toll free to schedule a consultation for anywhere in the US: 1-866-487-3465

(866) - GURFINKEL

Four offices to serve you:

LOS ANGELES • SAN FRANCISCO • NEW YORK • PHILIPPINES