

Filipino or Cebuano Funeral Traditions

In the religious side of the tradition, a specific rosary for the dead (including some litanies and latin prayers) will be said every day for nine days. Liturgical Novena will also be held led by the Lay Ministers. The Gozos for the Dead 'Pahulayng Dayon' (Eternal Rest) is sung.

It is always been said that Filipino traditions are shrouded with superstitions. Here are a few funeral traditions that I notice to be practiced by my relatives especially those coming from the towns. As usual, this is as far as my elders are concerned. Fortunately, we in the family don't practice many superstitious beliefs in our home anymore (which made some of my relatives freak out). Superstitions are contradicting to what we express as faith in our God and in His will.

1. A black mourning pin is worn by the relatives of the dead person. All pins will be put on the coffin glass come burial time.
2. A container should be prepared for the "limos" (literally means alms). Since dying is expensive, this is helpful for the funeral needs.
3. No sweeping. It is common in Cebu that the funeral services are held at the home of the person who died. During the entire nine days or while the body lies in state, there should be no sweeping on the floor. If you would want to clean, just pick up the pieces of trash and you're done.
4. (In connection to cleanliness) No taking a bath and you should not comb your hair within the vicinity of the funeral. This is for the relatives of the dead person.
5. Don't let your tears drop on the coffin glass. This is for the soul to go on with his journey peacefully.
6. If a person died from a crime, a chick is put on his coffin. It is said that such act will speed up the process of attaining justice for the person's death.
7. Interment Day. All relatives should wear white or black. A child will sometimes be asked to wear red so that he will not see any apparition.
8. Before the coffin is brought to the funeral car, all relatives should pass under the coffin so that moving on is easier for the loved ones.
9. People will walk their way to the Church for final blessing, then to the cemetery. This is called "hatod" which means bringing the dead to his destination.
10. Food or snacks should've been prepared for everyone who participated in the "hatod" and these will be shared in the cemetery. Food are not supposed to be brought back home, so it should only be enough. Should there be anything left, it must be given to anyone in the cemetery, including those flower and candle vendors.
11. Everyone should pass through the smoke from the fire at the cemetery premises or at the gates (palina). This is done to shake off the dead spirits.

Ref.: <http://annpeace.wordpress.com/2009/02/17/filipino-or-cebuano-funeral-traditions/>