

Profile of Renato “Ka Rene” Penas

We will always remember the Walk for Sumilao Land, Walk for Justice Campaign where 55 farmers from Barangay San Vicente, Sumilao, Bukidnon walked from Bukidnon to Manila for 2 months with a distance of 1700 kilometers. 10 years before this walk, the Sumilao Farmers likewise staged a 28-day hunger strike in front of DAR Central Office in Quezon City and Cagayan de Oro City. Ka Rene Penas was one of those farmers who boldly registered their disgust to the government for inefficient implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

The enactment of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law was thought to benefit the small farmers as the law intends to respect their dignity. Though sad to note, this law is sometimes used for the benefit of the few land owners and to infringe the rights of the small farmers. Ka Rene Penas shares this situation. He was, and still is, expose to various injustices happening to small farmers. This is the very reason why Ka Rene never loses hope that someday he will have his own farmland and personally till it, so that his family could have a better life.

Ka Rene is a farmer since birth. As such, he is devoted to uplift the lives of his fellows. He is known for his land reform advocacy not only in Sumilao, Bukidnon but across the country. He has been an active member and a leader to various farmers’ organizations and federations both in the local and national level. At present, he is one of the **Board Members of Mapadayunong Panaghiusa sa mga Lumad Alang sa Damlag (MAPALAD)**, **Chairperson of Panaghiusa sa Lalawigang Mag-uuma sa Bukidnon (PALAMBU)** and of **Pambansang Kilusan ng mga Magsasaka (PAKISAMA)**. Likewise, he is serving for his 2nd term as Barangay Kagawad (Councilor) of Barangay San Vicente, Sumilao, Bukidnon. He uses these venues and opportunities as a tool advocating for the respect, protection and fulfillment of the rights of the small farmers.

The farmers’ organizations and federations mentioned where Ka Rene is a member, are pushing for the extension and reform of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program.

Ka Rene is married to Evangeline Penas and a father of 4 children.