

# Padapadakam Ritual

**ILOCANO, ILOCOS NORTE, ILOCOS SUR AND ABRA PROVINCES, NORTHWESTERN LUZON ISLAND, NORTHERN PHILIPPINES.** *To honor, welcome or celebrate the birthday of a person or a group significant to a community, the padapada is performed within the circles of an Ilocano community, whether in the nuclear region or in a dispersed urban situation. A similar celebration is practiced in the island of Marinduque in central Philippines called putungan, meaning to confer a crown.*



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THE CELEBRATOR is seated in front of the central gathering of the community. Sprigs of flowers are distributed among those present. The rites start with the placing of a garland of flowers on the head of the celebrator, simultaneously with the community singing of the *padapadakam* song, repeated continuously as the proceedings go on. The community lines up in a single file and then, one by one, present the celebrator with a spray of flowers. He keeps all these in hand until the flower presentation is completed. Sometimes, the celebrator is then asked to say a brief message. After the feting, the celebrator receives a shower of rice grains for more blessings.



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Personal Collection

(top photo) Lola Monang, a homebody centenarian grandmother with her great great grandchildren, a pioneer Philippine public relations octogenarian, Max Edralin (bottom), and Hadrian (opposite page), among cousins. All three were crowned with flowers and serenaded with a traditional song during a padapada ritual to celebrate their birthdays.

The lyrics of the *padapadakam* is as follows:

*Padapadakam a siraragsak  
A kumabblan, mangipudnyakyak  
Ta nagtengan ti aldaw a pannakkaiyanak  
Da (Sam) ken (Max) a napnuan gasat  
Balangat a naurnos dagiti sagsabong  
Nga umay mi kenka isaad ita ulom*

*Casta met nga iyawat mi kenka  
Toy naindayawan unay a palma  
Tapno isu ti mangipakita  
Ti ragragsak mi amin a sangapada*

*Sapay iti Dios ta ilayonna  
Ta salun-at mo, biag ken regta  
Ken ta singpet mo a nagpaiduma  
Nga ap-apalan dagiti kas kenka*

(We are overwhelmed with joy  
As we extend these greetings  
And proclaim this day of birth  
Of a friend so dear

We have put this crown together  
That we now place on your head  
As well as present this blessed palm  
As a symbol of our rejoicing  
All proof of the overwhelming joy  
That we feel on this occasion

We pray to God that he will keep you  
In good health and spirit  
As well as your zest for life  
That has been the envy of your peers).

JTP