

Our names are Katuska Paulino, Ivelisse Cornielle, Gustavo, Julik and Samuel Paulino, we are the Mother, Grandmother, Grandfather, and uncles of Lee Manuel Viloría-Paulino.

On November 18, 2016, our world was irreversibly changed when Lee was taken from us. He was just 16 years old when he was murdered. And every day we struggle with the fact that his life was cut so short, when he was on the cusp of so much. But, that wasn't enough for the criminal that took his life. As found by the jury through the evidence presented in this trial, our Lee Manuel's murder was not only premeditated, but carried out with extreme atrocity and cruelty.

In the weeks before his remains were found and the years leading up to this conviction, we drove ourselves crazy trying to make sense of what had been done. We wondered hopelessly, what we could have done differently and tried to understand why someone would plan to commit such a horrible crime to such an amazing person. From the moment that the news became public, all we've heard is an outpouring of sentiments echoing the facts that we knew to be true: LEE MANUEL VILORIA-PAULINO was a sincere, loving, responsible, charismatic and altruistic young man on the verge of seizing life that had many, many goals truncated.

With the assassination of Lee Manuel we were also assassinated, because Lee was everything for this family. Katuska's first born son, Gustavo and Ivelisse's first grandchild, and Samuel and Julik's first nephew. Lee Manuel has always been immensely important to us, but now with him gone, we feel like we can't breathe. Lee Manuel was, and will continue to be our oxygen. He has been the soul of this family since he was born, and in spite of us standing here today, we are the living dead after he was brutally ripped from our side.

There are no more dreams for the dreamer, the brother, the writer, and the poet that was Lee Manuel Viloría-Paulino, because the mind of this criminal landed on him as a target and decided to take his life. There are no more trips for us with Lee, and there is no more happy home projects if we cannot include him. Our lovely one, Lee Manuel, was the driving force behind so many of the activities we used to do and loved bringing the family together. Sharing a meal as a family was one of his favorite things and because of this, he always looked forward to Thanksgiving celebration. We will never again have a thanksgiving dinner, because Lee Manuel was torn from our arms just a few days before thanksgiving of 2016.

Lee Manuel Viloría-Paulino was a great servant at our church, where he volunteered full of love and dedication. Everybody there misses him dearly. He put his soul into the last activity they had about a month before this tragedy, where he painted more than a hundred twenty glasses with a beautiful, positive message to the youth.

Despite whatever sentence is decided upon, we understand that nothing will bring Lee back to us. However, we feel that this criminal deserves to spend his life incarcerated so at the very least, it serves to keep him off the streets. He should never have the opportunity to kill again, to

rob another person of their life like he did Lee Manuel, in such a horrible and sad way. We hope that the sentence handed down serves to help him find remorse and repentance in his life.

We reaffirm that the assassin of Lee Manuel Vitoria-Paulino should receive the maximum sentence.