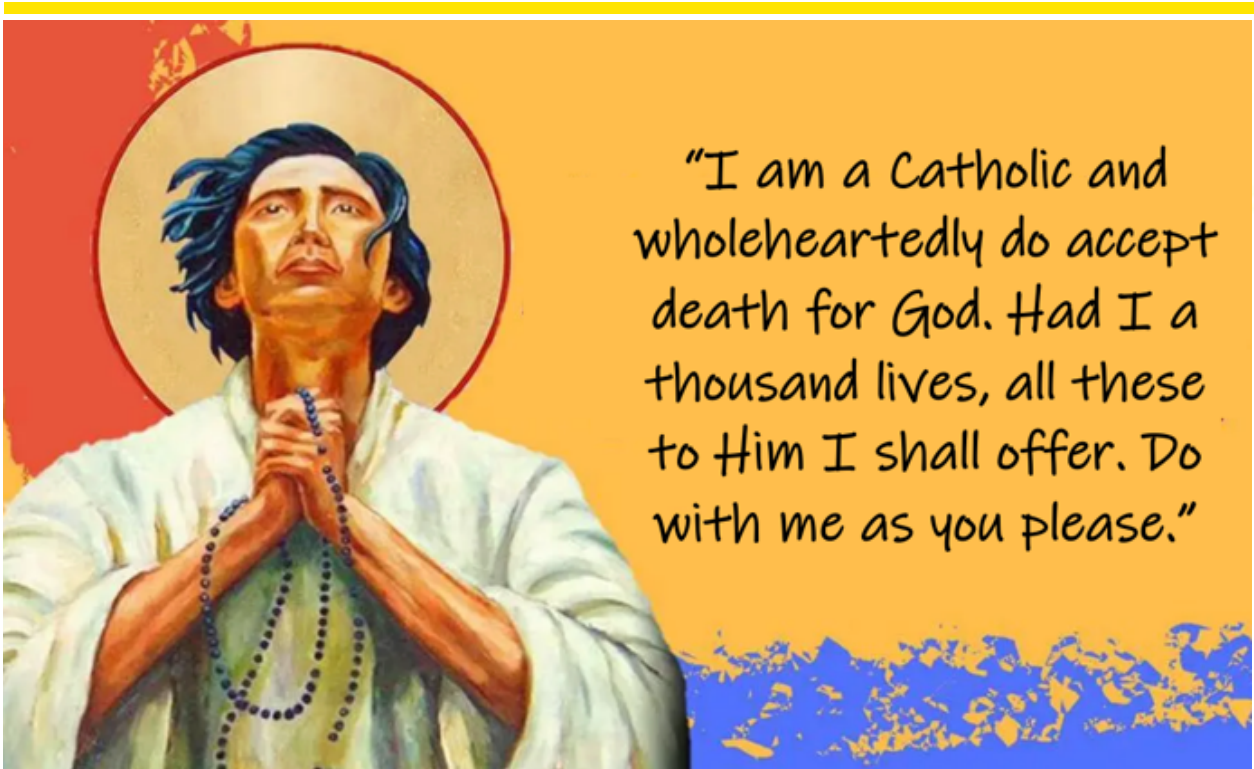


Balitang Nagbibigay Buhay

filipinoministry.ca



Archdiocese of Vancouver



500YOC: SAN LORENZO RUIZ

First Filipino Saint, privileged to be martyred in a foreign land.

by: Marie Pacheco

Celebrating 500 Years of Christianity (YOC) in the Philippines will not be complete without learning more about the country's first Filipino saint, San Lorenzo Ruiz. Get to know more about him in this issue, what you may have in common and see how he lived this quincentennial celebration's theme of being "Gifted to Give".

Who is Lorenzo Ruiz?

Lorenzo Ruiz was born in Binondo, Manila in the

1600's to a Chinese father and a Filipino mother. Both were Catholics and Lorenzo grew up as an altar boy at the Dominican Church. He studied under Dominican priests, became a calligrapher, and got married to Rosario with whom he had three children. Lorenzo lived a fairly comfortable, peaceful, and religious life. But it was while working as a clerk at the Binondo Church, when he was accused of killing a Spaniard. This forced Lorenzo to seek asylum on board a ship with the help of Dominican priests.

Their boat landed in Okinawa, Japan where they were immediately arrested on the basis of their religion. They arrived in Japan at a time when its rulers were persecuting Christians. Lorenzo and his companions were asked to denounce their faith, but they refused and were sent to prison for two years. It was in September 1637 when Lorenzo and his companions were transferred to Nagasaki and were subjected to torture.

What last words is Lorenzo famous for?

Lorenzo and his companions were tortured with water, forced into their mouths and down their throats until it goes out of their ears and noses. But despite the pain, Lorenzo and his companions refused to recant their faith.

For their execution, they were hung upside down with ropes around their ankles and their head in a pit. They had a gash cut on their forehead to prevent too much blood from gathering in their head. The cut also caused them to bleed to death over a long period of time. Lorenzo and his companions were given a chance to live; all they needed to do was raise their left hand and show an agreed symbol indicating their desire to recant their faith and live.

But Lorenzo refused to recant. A record of his death documented his last words as:

"I am a Catholic and wholeheartedly do accept death for God. Had I a thousand lives, all these to Him I shall offer. Do with me as you please."

Lorenzo was beatified by Pope John Paul II on February 18, 1981. His beatification ceremony was held in the Philippines. It was the first beatification ceremony ever held outside the Vatican. A miracle attributed to him was the cure of a 2-year-old girl suffering from a brain atrophy, after family and supporters prayed for Lorenzo Ruiz's intercession.

St. Lorenzo Ruiz was canonized by Pope John Paul II in the Vatican on October 18, 1987, making him the first Filipino saint.

Living like Lorenzo Ruiz

Like Lorenzo, many of us grew up with our faith and serve in the parishes we are members of. We have families just like Lorenzo did with his wife Rosario. But while we do not live in a time and place where Christians are killed, there is still much persecution against our faith today. How do we defend our faith and live? Do we make use of our gifts and share them in service?

A novena to San Lorenzo Ruiz will be held by the Filipino Ministry from September 17-25, 2021. There will also be a Misang Pilipino on September 25th at St. Joseph's parish in Langley.

San Lorenzo Ruiz's feast day is on September 28th.



**Novena to San Lorenzo Ruiz
Sept 17-25 Get Novena Booklet:
<https://tinyurl.com/ykbtz6a2>**

