

# The Life of Saint Lorenzo Ruiz de Manila

Saint Lorenzo Ruiz, aka San Lorenzo de Manila (1600 September 29, 1637) is the first Filipino saint (protomartyr) venerated in the Roman Catholic Church. He was martyred during persecution of Japanese Christians under the Tokugawa Shogunate in the 17th century.

Born in Binondo, Manila, Lorenzo Ruiz was of mixed Chinese and Filipino descent (chinito). His Chinese father taught him Chinese, and his Filipino mother taught him Tagalog. Both of his parents were Catholic.

Ruiz served as an altar boy at the convent of Binondo church. After being educated by the Dominican friars for a few years, Ruiz earned the title of escribano (stenographer) because of his skillful hand and unsurpassed penmanship. He became a member of the Confraternity of the Rosary. In 1636, while working as a clerk at the Binondo Church, Ruiz was falsely accused of killing a Spaniard. Prior to this incident, his life with his Filipino wife, two sons and a daughter was peaceful, religious and full of contentment. But after the allegation, Ruiz sought asylum on board a ship with three Dominican priests: Saint Antonio Gonzalez, Saint Guillermo Courtet, and Saint Miguel de Aozaraza, a Japanese priest, Saint Vicente Shiwozuka de la Cruz, and a layman named Saint Lazaro of Kyoto, a leper. Ruiz and his companions left for Japan on June 10, 1636 with the aid of the Dominican fathers and Sr. Domingo Gonzales.

[edit] Exile to Japan

The boat landed at Okinawa and the group was arrested and persecuted because of their Christian religion. They were brought to Nagasaki on July 10, 1636. They were tortured through hanging by their feet, by submerging in water until near death, and by water torture. Needles were also inserted under their finger nails and they were beaten until unconscious. These methods made some of Ruiz's companions recant their faith, but Ruiz never did. On September 27, 1637, Ruiz and his companions were taken to the "Mountain of Martyrs", where they were hung upside down into a pit known as horca y hoyo. This mode of torture was considered as the most painful way to die at the time because it involved the use of rocks to add weight to the person being punished. The individual being tortured suffocated quickly while being crushed by his own weight. Two days after, Ruiz died from hemorrhage and suffocation. His body was cremated and his ashes were thrown into the sea

Lorenzo Ruiz was beatified in Manila on February 18, 1981 by Pope John Paul II during his Papal visit to Manila, the first beatification ceremony held outside the Vatican. San Lorenzo Ruiz was elevated to Sainthood and canonized by Pope John Paul II in the Vatican City, Rome on October 18, 1987 making him the first Filipino saint and a martyr.

Thank YOU and god BLESS!