

December 8, 1958
COMMEMORATING THE INAUGURATION OF THE REBUILT MANILA CATHEDRAL

THE MANILA CATHEDRAL COMMEMORATIVE STAMP

OUT OF the rubble of the Second World War has risen up the reconstructed Manila Cathedral. To be inaugurated today, December 8, 1958, the Manila Cathedral will stand once more as a dominant landmark of Catholic Philippines.

The history of the Manila Cathedral is, in one sense, parallel to the history of the city: a fascinating chronicle of birth and death and rebirth. For the Cathedral grew up with the city, although the city was founded ten years earlier, by Legaspi in 1571, while the Cathedral was built by Bishop Domingo Salazar, O.P., in 1581. Since then, as the city met disasters, natural or manmade, the Cathedral fell - only to stand up once more.

The first wooden edifice of Bishop Salazar was destroyed by the great fire of 1582. Rebuilt in 1591, it suffered minor damages in earthquake of 1599, then finally collapsed in the greater shake of December 31, 1600. Under Archbishop Miguel de Benavides, it was reconstructed now more imposingly but the tremendous tremor of December 30, 1645 demolished it again.

Upon Archbishop Miguel de Poblete's arrival, a new structure was planned and it was completed in 1662. For two centuries it stood up, a true rock of Faith so it seemed until the earthquake of June 3, 1863 toppled it. The last reconstruction prior to the present was 1879. This resisted Nature's onslaught but in the Battle of Intramuros, February 1945, modern weapons reduced it to heaps.

In 1953, Archbishop Rufino J. Santos of Manila initiated the Cathedral's re-building. The work is the crowning achievement of Filipino Architect Fernando Ocampo. It is the concrete fruit of generosity from many quarters - Spanish, Japanese, Chinese, Americans as well as Filipino.

Cognizant of the Manila Cathedral's vital bearing on the religious life of our people, the Bureau of Posts issuing a commemorative stamp depicting the new edifice. On the stamp's upper right side is a vignette of the Immaculate Conception, Patroness of the Cathedral. In five-centavos denomination, this stamp was designed by Philatelic Designer Nemesio Dimanlig, Jr.

