

## December 30, 1959 HONORING Dr. JOSE RIZAL

### JOSE RIZAL (THE GREATEST FILIPINO HERO)

Among the Filipino heroes, the most revered name in Philippine history is that of Dr. Jose Rizal.

Jose Rizal was born on June 19, 1861 in the town of Calamba, Laguna, the seventh child of a well-to-do couple, Francisco Mercado and Teodora Alonzo. He inherited his genius from his mother. From his father, he inherited his free soul. At the age of nine, Rizal was sent to a boy's school in Biñan and at eleven was enrolled in the College of Ateneo de Manila. He received the degree of Bachelor of Arts with highest honors on March 23, 1877, not yet sixteen years old.

From the Ateneo, he took up medicine at the University of Santo Tomas. His desire to cure his mother's blindness and the desperate longing of his free soul to help his oppressed Motherland made him choose this profession. At the same time, he poured out his instinctive love for art and the natural sciences by writing. His poems and plays were all directed against the Spaniards. He made enemies and made their number grow because of his philosophical writings.

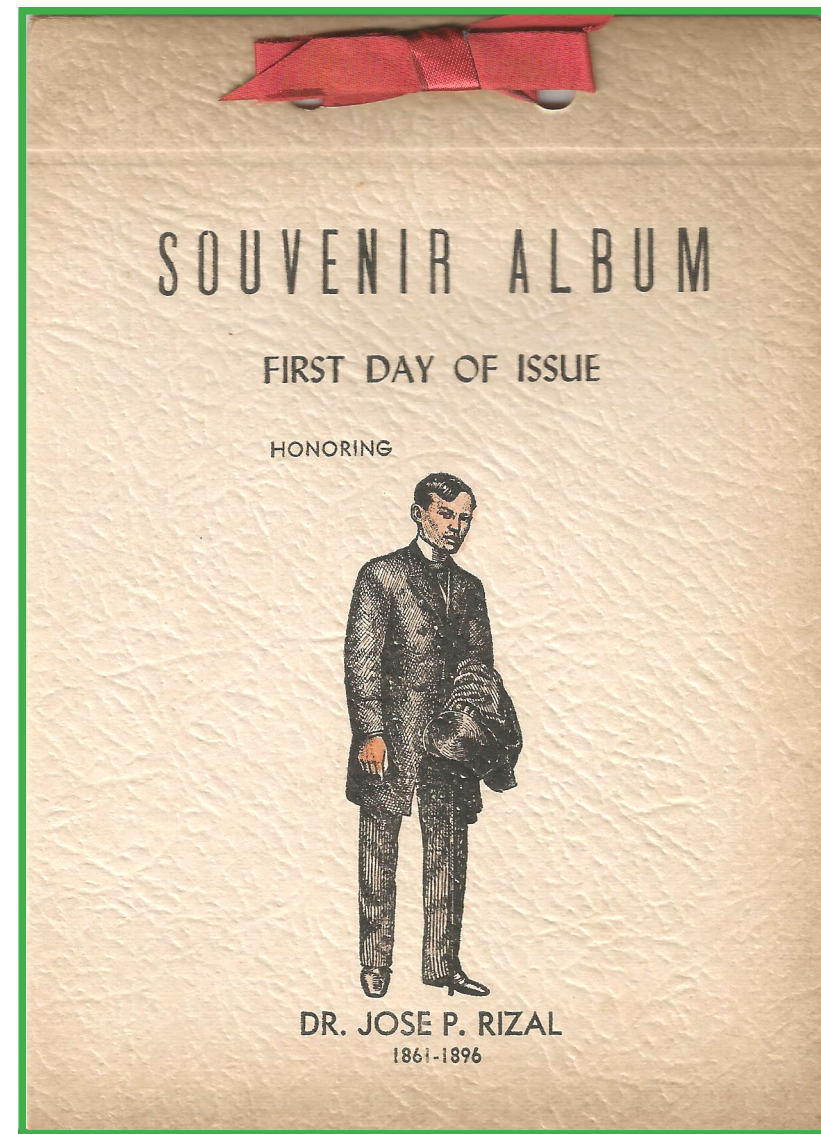
He fled from the country for Barcelona, Spain and then to Madrid, where he continued his studies in medicine, philosophy, literature and modern languages. The hard times and difficulties he encountered were numerous, but in spite of these, he received his Licentiate in Medicine in 1885, at the age of twenty-four, he became "Dr." Rizal.

From Madrid, he continued his tour of Europe to get the best education he could find, going first to Paris then to Germany, where he studied ophthalmology, psychology and history. He was then writing his first book, the "Noli Me Tangere".

In February 22, 1887 while in Berlin, he completed "Noli Me Tangere". The book was published and disguised as merchandise, his friends succeeded in getting them into the Philippines. It deeply stired his countrymen and intensely antagonized the Spaniards. Now, already known and admired as a brilliant scholar, an outstanding scientist and a many-sided Filipino genius, Rizal was taken on a world trip by Dr. Maximo Viola, a friend who helped publish the "Noli".

He decided to come home on July 5, 1887 to operate upon the cataracts of his mother's eyes. But back in the Philippines, he was advised to leave the country at once. He went to America and from there he went to London, keeping right on with his study and his denunciations of the Spanish misrule. His writings continued to be smuggled into the Philippines. He stayed long enough in Europe to publish his next book, "El Filibusterismo".

He stepped on Philippine soil again on June 26, 1896, only to be accused of carrying with him seditious papers. On this pretext, he was imprisoned at Fort Santiago and later shipped to Dapitan. After four years in Dapitan, in 1896, he answered a call of distress in Cuba. However, when his ship reached Suez, he was immediately arrested and heavily guarded, returned to Fort Santiago in Manila, for trial on November 3, 1896.

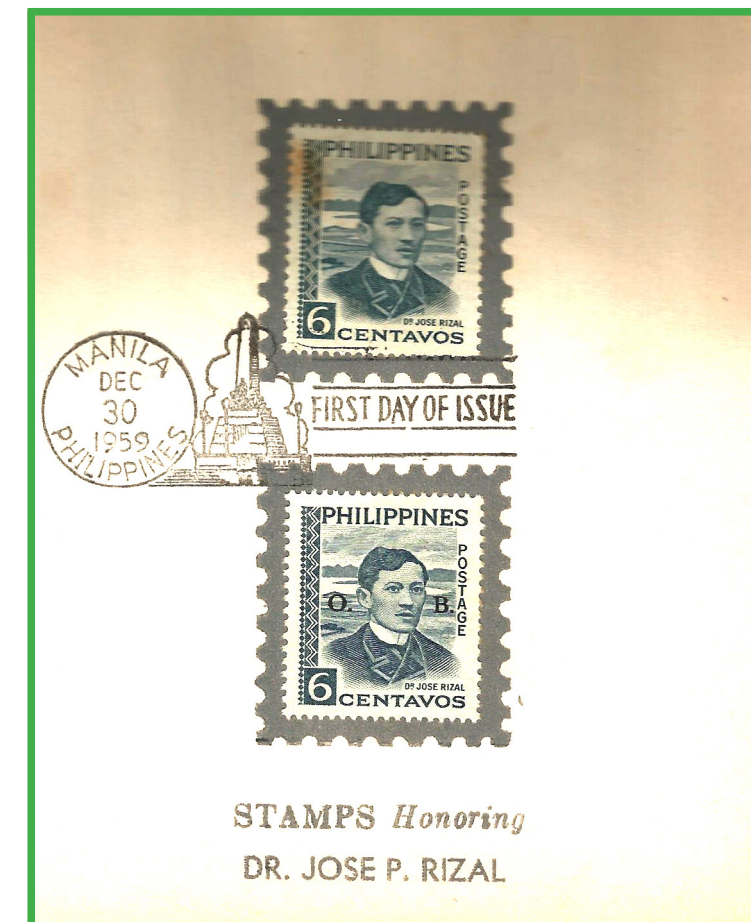


The trial began on December 3, 1896 before the Spanish Military Court Martial. The charge was that he was the principal organizer and living soul of the Filipino insurrection.

The death sentence was read to him on December 29, 1896. At exactly three minutes past seven in the morning of December 30, 1896, Rizal was executed before a firing squad.

This profoundly significant date shall forever remind us of the greatest Filipino hero, Dr. Jose Rizal, sawant, author, doctor of medicine, artist and martyr ..... the first Filipino hero who gave his life for the cause of freedom.

That the Philippines may constantly be reminded of him, we once again issue a stamp, depicting his famous countenance, with the beautiful Laguna Bay, the lake that runs alongside his birthplace, the town of Calamba, at the background, at a denomination of 6 centavos. The stamp is one of the Great Filipino Series being issued by the Bureau of Posts.



STAMPS Honoring  
DR. JOSE P. RIZAL