

José Rizal
A Man of Justice
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José Rizal (1861–96) was a physician, philosopher, author and human rights advocate, who remains today a national hero for the key role he played in inspiring his fellow Filipinos to rise and claim their independence from colonial rule.

In his 20s, Rizal traveled to Europe where he studied literature, medicine and philosophy. He went on to become a prolific writer who, armed with the power of the pen, fought for the freedom and self-determination of his country. Though his books were banned in his homeland, his message still reached the people, kindling within their hearts the flame for independence.

Rizal was not only a citizen of his beloved homeland but also a global citizen. He was familiar with international affairs, spoke many languages, and urged his fellow Filipinos to open themselves up to the great cultures and ideas of the world.

Rizal endured persecution and exile, and was executed by the colonial authorities in 1896 at the age of 35 for his revolutionary activities. His martyrdom paved the way for the promulgation of the Declaration of Philippine Independence on June 12, 1898.

The Order of the Knights of Rizal, a civic cultural group based in Manila, was established in 1916 to promote Rizal's philosophy and ideas.

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