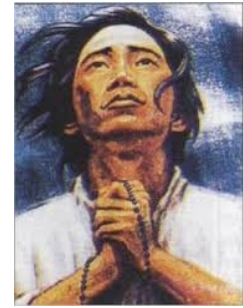




## Saint of the Month



### Saint Lorenzo Ruiz Feast Day: September 28

**Goal:** To provide a lesson for children about a saint or saints who exemplify a deep relationship with God and the ability to share it with others.

**Materials Needed:** This lesson plan, accompanying story, and any necessary materials for follow up activities.

#### Objectives:

1. To assist children in developing the understanding that all of God's people are called to a life of holiness
2. To help children respond appropriately to the question: What is a saint?  
One who:
  - is proclaimed by the Church, after their death, to have lived a life of holiness
  - teaches others about Jesus by their example
  - lives like Jesus
3. To introduce one of our Church's saints, Saint Lorenzo Ruiz, (say Roo-**EEZ**) telling as much of, or parts of, the story that you feel will interest the children at your grade level
4. To learn that Lorenzo was a saint because he lived in a way that respected the Gospel of Jesus
5. To learn that we are called by God to share the Gospel with our lives
6. To help the children develop listening skills
7. To expand children's vocabulary, as appropriate: **Philippines, Manila, Dominican, sacristan, penmanship, rosary, clandestine, missionaries, Tagalog, wholeheartedly, clerk, calligraphy, catechism**

#### Procedure:

1. Prepare the children to listen to Lorenzo Ruiz's story. (Have map posted or globe available)
2. Read, or have read, the attached story of Saint Lorenzo Ruiz. Elaborate/abbreviate as necessary for time constraints or age level of listeners.
3. **Pray: Saint Lorenzo Ruiz, you chose to give up your life rather than publicly reject your faith in Jesus Christ. Help us to know that when we are faced with hard choices in our lives that God will give us the grace to make the right decisions and follow Him. We pray that through your story we may grow in strength of faith daily. Amen.**
4. Use the follow up questions (below)
5. Present follow-up activity below (optional). Any follow-up activity can be substituted

#### Saint Lorenzo Ruiz

Lorenzo Ruiz was born between 1600 and 1610 in Manila, the capital city of the Philippines, to a Chinese mother and Filipino father. He spoke the languages of both his parents (Chinese and Tagalog). As his mom and dad were Catholic, Lorenzo was raised in a deeply faithful house. He became an altar boy at a very young age. It was there that he was influenced by Dominican missionaries who not only taught him Spanish but also to be a sacristan in the church. Known for his beautiful penmanship, Lorenzo became a clerk for the Dominicans, writing many of their official documents in elegant calligraphy. He also became a member of the *Cofradia del Santissimo Rosario* (Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosario) - an international group whose members promise to say the rosary every day, completing all the mysteries in a week, if possible. He learned his catechism well. Lorenzo grew up to marry a

Filipina woman named Rosario; they had two sons and a daughter. The Ruiz family, from all accounts, lived a peaceful, faith filled life.

In 1636, a crime was committed in Manila—a life was taken. Lorenzo was mistakenly thought to be somehow involved. Afraid of being wrongfully arrested, Lorenzo Ruiz sought asylum aboard a ship with three Dominican priests. He thought he would leave the ship at one of its first stops and earn money to send home to support his family; he was unaware that the three missionaries were on a clandestine assignment to land in Japan to spread the Christian faith—something that was against the law there. When he learned of the destination, he accepted it and decided to join the missionaries in spreading the Good News, knowing of the danger. Upon landing in Japan, the four were arrested, imprisoned and tortured because of their faith. This went on for a year. Finally, they were taken to the city of Nagasaki where they were executed.

According to missionary accounts, Lorenzo Ruiz's last words on September 27, 1637 were these: "I am a Catholic and wholeheartedly do accept death for the Lord; if I had a thousand lives, all these I shall offer to Him."

Saint Lorenzo Ruiz's Feast Day is September 28. He is the first Filipino saint.

**Follow-up Questions:** (add, omit, re-word as appropriate for your grade level)

1. Saint Lorenzo could have remained on the boat and not set foot in Japan. He chose God and spreading the faith over his own safety. Why would someone make that choice? What are the pros and cons of that decision?
2. Lorenzo's faith was a big part of his life from an early age. How does staying close to God help you to make the right choices?
3. Imagine you are Saint Lorenzo's wife or children. What would you say to him? Would you be proud or mad? Think about being one of his descendants—how would it feel to have a saint in the family? Why?

**Follow-up Activities:**

**Younger students:**

1. For 14 months, Saint Lorenzo and his fellow missionaries were imprisoned and treated cruelly. To honor their time, walk around your school/church 14 times while reciting the World Mission Rosary.
2. Make a class altar for St. Lorenzo during September. Include a map of the Philippines, a small boat (to symbolize his missionary journey), a bible, a rosary, and palms (to symbolize martyrdom). Pray the prayer to Saint Lorenzo daily.

**Older students:**

1. Every day, life gives us many chances to deny ourselves and do something for God. Choose a "Sacrifice Day" - spend it doing for others! Hold the door, give up the best seat, put yourself last, clean up someone else's mess without being asked and without looking to be thanked. Offer your actions to God, asking for the grace to be more "sacrificial" for others on a daily basis.
2. Research the country of the Philippines. Learn about the multiple ethnicities there, the early Spanish colonization and the arrival of Christianity. Read about the new Cardinal Archbishop of Manila: Luis Antonio Tagle. He is young for a Cardinal (55) and often uses social media to spread the faith. Here are some links to articles about him:

<http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/465681/ph-catholic-church-must-set-example-for-simple-humble-life-cardinal-tagle>

<http://www.ucanews.com/news/cardinal-tagle-the-truth-behind-the-tears/68530>

**All students:**

1. St. Lorenzo Ruiz was a member of the *Cofradia del Santissimo Rosario* (Confraternity of the Most Holy Rosary), an international organization that promotes saying the rosary daily. Make a commitment to the World Mission Rosary in your school/parish. (learn more here <http://www.onefamilyinmission.org/society-propfaith/world-mission-rosary.html>). Even by saying just one of the prayers every day, you will have prayed for the whole world in just over 2 months!