

## MESSAGE

Ginugunita natin ngayong araw ang ika-98 taon ng kamatayan ng ating pambansang bayani. si Dr. Jose Rizal -- isang martir na naghandog ng buhay upang ang dugong tumigis sa kanyang sugat na likha ng punglo ng mga manlulupig ay magsilbing agos sa pagpapasibol ng unang makabagong Republika sa Asya.

Rizal was the quintessential Filipino and patriot. But so too was he a universal man with a remarkable breadth of intellectual, cultural and artistic pursuits. With the deepest sense of patriotic pride, he believed that the Filipino was inferior to no one in the world. Born in an age of revolution, but fearing that the slaves of today would be the tyrants of tomorrow; he called on his countrymen, particularly the youth, to consecrate "their golden hours, their illusions and their enthusiasm" to the building of a new Philippines.

Above all, Rizal was a true democrat who believed in the equality of man. He had faith in the Filipino nation whose foundation he helped build with his vision and sense of national community.

'Today, the challenge of rebuilding a resurgent Filipino nation is no less dramatic and urgent. We must emulate the deeds of our heroic forebears in a changed setting, away from the bloody turmoil of the revolution. We must accelerate national reconstruction and reformation, creatively combining the imperatives of material progress and moral regeneration with the demands of popular democracy.

Ganyan ang kadakilaan ni Rizal, ang magiting na Pilipino na pinag-uukulan natin ng alaala't parangal sa araw na ito. Ganyan ang pamanang ipinasa niya sa atin -- isang pananagutang nararapat tugunin at paggugulan ng buong linaw ng ating pag-iisip at kaalaban ng ating puso.

sgd/PFVR

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