

# The Apostolic Vicariate in Brunei Darussalam



# Brunei Darussalam

Area: 5,270 sq km

Population: 429,999  
(Department of  
Economic Planning &  
Statistics)





# جباتن قرانچغن ايكونومي دان ستاتيستيك

JABATAN PERANCANGAN EKONOMI DAN STATISTIK  
KEMENTERIAN KEWANGAN DAN EKONOMI  
NEGARA BRUNEI DARUSSALAM



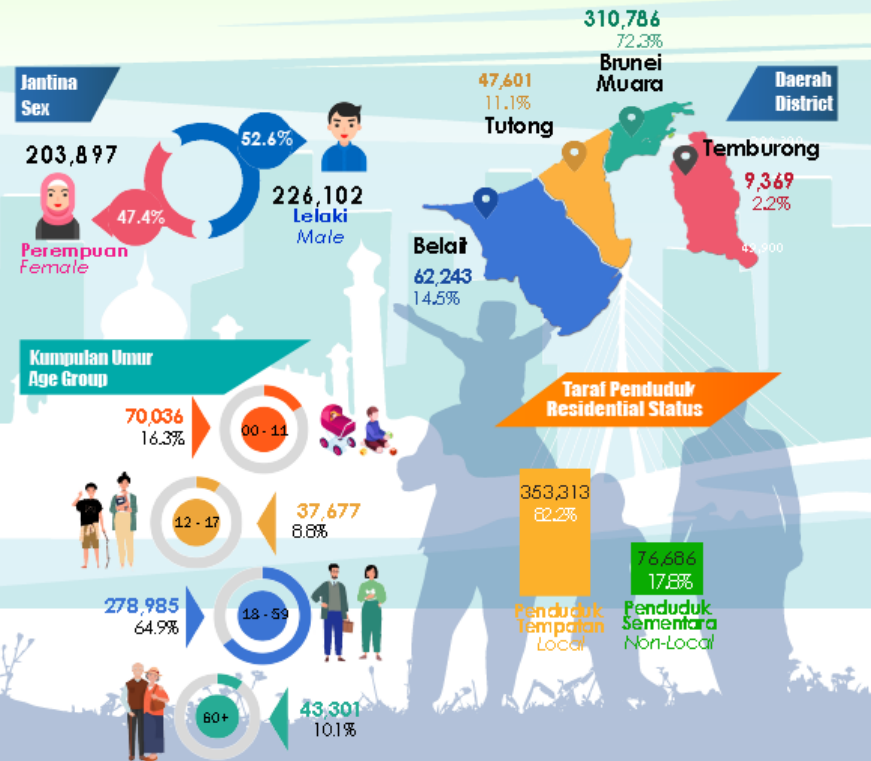
بانجي فنودودوق دان قرومهن  
BANCII PENDUDUK  
dan PERUMAHAN 2021  
Pantikan amda dhibung untuk masa depan kibari

## KIRAAAN AWAL JUMLAH PENDUDUK TAHUN 2021

The Preliminary Count of Total Population 2021

# Brunei Darussalam

Jumlah Penduduk : **429,999** orang persons  
Total Population



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## KIRAAAN AWAL JUMLAH PENDUDUK TAHUN 2021

The Preliminary Count of Total Population 2021

	2011		2016 <sup>(1)</sup>		2021 <sup>(2)</sup>		
	Bilangan Number	Peratus Percentage	Bilangan Number	Peratus Percentage	Bilangan Number	Peratus Percentage	
<b>JUMLAH PENDUDUK</b>	<b>393,372</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>417,256</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>429,999</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>TOTAL POPULATION</b>
<b>Mengikut Jantina</b>							
<i>By Sex</i>							
Lelaki	203,144	51.6	214,104	51.3	226,102	52.6	Male
Perempuan	190,228	48.4	203,152	48.7	203,897	47.4	Female
<b>Mengikut Taraf Penduduk</b>							
<i>By Residential Status</i>							
Rakyat Brunei & Penduduk Tetap	307,452	78.2	352,128	84.4	353,313	82.2	Brunei Citizens & Permanent Residents
Penduduk Sementara	85,920	21.8	65,128	15.6	76,686	17.8	Temporary Residents
<b>Mengikut Daerah</b>							
<i>By District</i>							
Brunei Muara	279,924	71.2	289,630	69.4	310,786	72.3	Brunei Muara
Belait	60,744	15.4	69,062	16.6	62,243	14.5	Belait
Tutong	43,852	11.1	48,313	11.6	47,601	11.1	Tutong
Temburong	8,852	2.3	10,251	2.5	9,369	2.2	Temburong
<b>Mengikut Kumpulan Umur</b>							
<i>By Age Group</i>							
12 tahun ke bawah	78,448	19.9	71,693	17.2	70,036	16.3	Under 12 years
12-17 tahun	42,016	10.7	43,543	10.4	37,677	8.8	12-17 years
18-59 tahun	250,522	63.7	265,830	63.7	278,985	64.9	18-59 years
60 tahun dan ke atas	22,386	5.7	36,190	8.7	43,301	10.1	60 years and over

Nota/Notes:

1. Tahun 2016 adalah tahun kemaskini band / Year 2016 is census update year
2. Kiraan awal dan tertakluk kepada semakan lanjut / Preliminary count and subject to further revision

# The Apostolic Vicariate in Brunei Darussalam



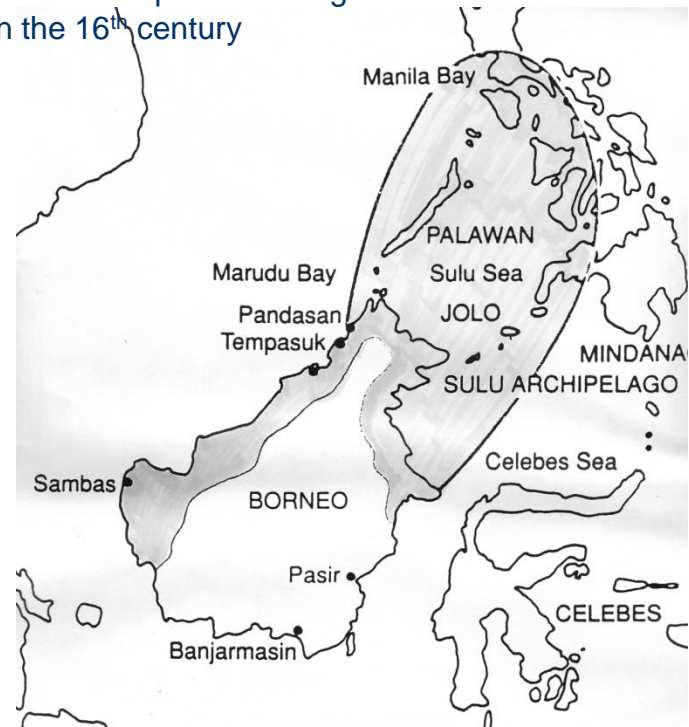
Muslim (official) 78.8%,  
Christian 8.7%,  
Buddhist 7.8%,  
other (includes  
indigenous beliefs)  
4.7% (2011 est.)

# BRUNEI CATHOLIC CHURCH HISTORY



Antonino Ventimiglia  
(Borneo, 1689-91)

Brunei's empire at its largest  
in the 16<sup>th</sup> century



# Milestones in the Brunei church history

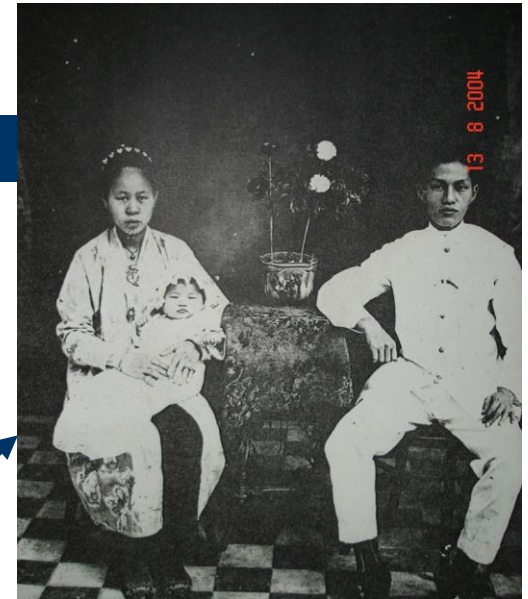
- 1325 - Odoric of Pordenone - first missionary to come to the island of Borneo
- 1587 – Two Spanish Franciscan missionaries called into Brunei – Francesco de Santa Maria and Miguel Juan de Plasencia.

# Milestones in the Brunei church history ... continue

- 1688 – Theatine priest, Fr. Antonio Ventimiglia arrived in Borneo & became the first Vicar Apostolic
- 1858 – Barambangan mission – Fr. Riva of the Milan Foreign Missionaries (now known as PIME) was put in charge – he built a church and dedicated it to Our Lady of Every Grace
- 1881 – Mill Hill Missionaries in Labuan
- 1885 – Brunei became part of the Apostolic Prefecture of Labuan and North Borneo

# Milestones in the Brunei church history - continue

- 1915 (24<sup>th</sup> Aug.) – First recorded baptism of a Bruneian, baptism done in Labuan, Lucia Liew, by Fr. A. Williams, MHM.
- 1916 - Mr. George Newn Ah Foott with his wife Cecilia Bong and their first daughter



## The Liew Family

First Bruneian baptism – Lucia Liew (24/8/1916),  
Alice Liew (26/11/1917)

## Milestones in the Brunei church history - continue

- 1919 (5<sup>th</sup> March) – First recorded baptism in Brunei by Fr. A. Williams of Francis Newn.
- 1927 – Brunei became part of the Apostolic Prefecture of Sarawak, Labuan and Brunei.
- 1932 – First Resident priest in Brunei (Fr A. Stotter)

# Milestones in the Brunei church history - continue



1936 – Kuala Belait was made a head station – Fr. Crowther, MHM appointed the first resident priest in KB

## **Sr. Mary Agnes (Alice Liew) – 1936**

Alice Liew was educated at the Convent in Labuan and became a Carmelite nun – first Bruneian to enter a religious order

# Milestones in the Brunei church history - continue

- 1937 - Fr. Piet de Wit was appointed to assist Fr. Crowther. Fr. Piet started the first Catholic school in a rented house owned by Mr. Kay in Jalan Padang.

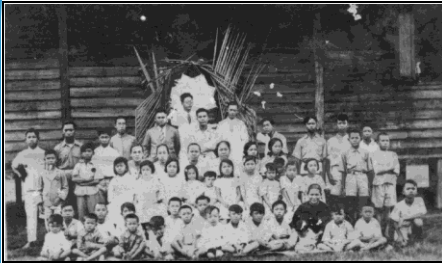


## Milestones in the Brunei church history - continue

- 1941 – Mr. George Newn Ah Foott donated a piece of land in Jalan Kumbang Pasang on which a school, a chapel and the priest living quarters was built.

## 1929 - 1940

Roman Catholic Mission was set up in Kuala Belait. The site of the Church/School was located between the present Chung Hwa Middle School and the Foo Chow Association. There was no permanent priest assigned to the Kuala Mission. Priests from the neighbouring Missions visited periodically.



December 1935 - Staff and students in front of the wooden R.C. School/Church in K.B.



Fr. A. Stotter (6th from left) served in Kuala Belait from 1930 to 1936



1936 - Celebrating Christmas at the Kuala Belait R.C. School/Church



Group photo beside school/church building. Seated from left - Fr. A. Crowther



1939/1940 - Group photo beside school/church building. Seated from left - Fr. Crowther, Msgr. Wachter and Bro. Agadius.



1939/1940 - The Rectory built by Fr. Crowther

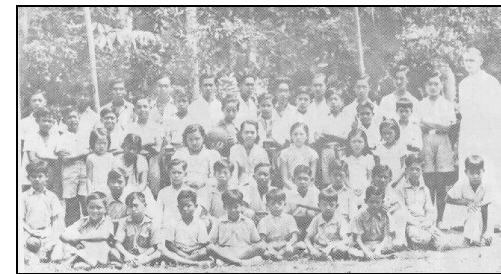


circa 1940 - Students of the Kuala Belait Roman Catholic School.

## 1941 - 1949

1941 to 1945 - All foreign missionaries were interned by the Japanese forces during World War Two. The Church and Rectory were used by the Japanese soldiers but were left in disrepair. A number of the faithful looked after the church as best they could.

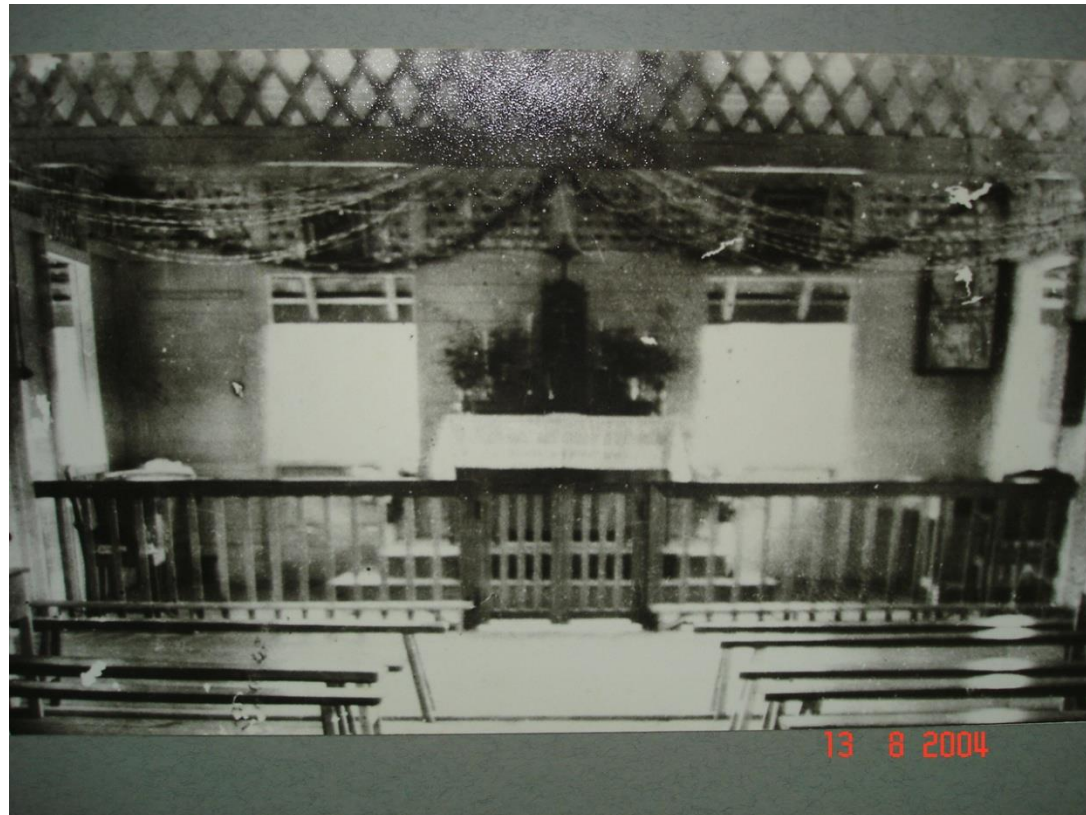
Fr. A. Crowther and Fr. Piet de Wit return to Brunei in 1945 and 1947 respectively. Fr. de Wit was appointed the Rector for Kuala Belait/Seria Mission and he set up the Seria English school by arrangement with the British Malayan Petroleum (now Brunei Shell Petroleum) Company. Fr. Crowther was placed in charge of the Mission/School for the State of Brunei.



Fr. Piet de Wit with R.C. School children in Brunei Town (probably 1941).

1949 - Fr. McCarthy was appointed as Rector for Kuala Belait/Seria Mission.

# 1941 - Chapel



# Milestones in the Brunei church history - continue

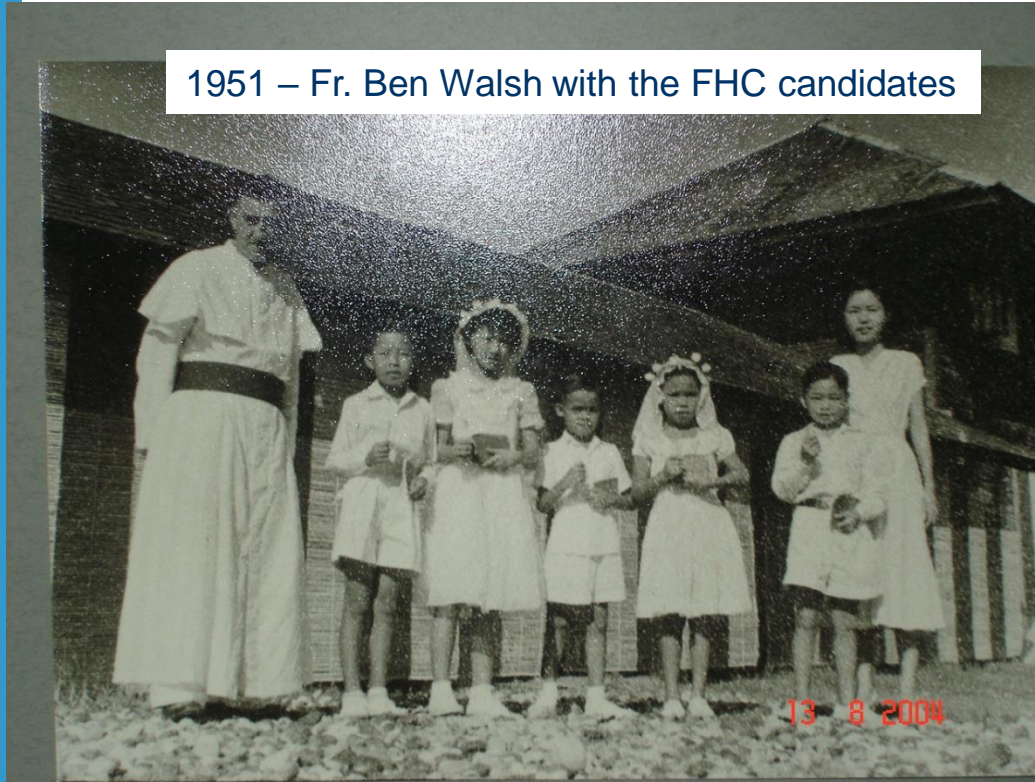
- 1952 – Brunei became part of the Apostolic Vicariate of Kuching.
- 1953 – Fr. Herman Plattner officially open the church in Kuala Belait.
- 1956 – The Convent in Seria was set up by the Sisters of St. Joseph.
- 1957 – Seria became the head station.
- 1959 (19<sup>th</sup> Dec.) – The Vicar Apostolic of Miri-Brunei was formed with Bishop Anthony Galvin as Vicar Apostolic.

# Early 1950's – First Holy Communion party in Seria.

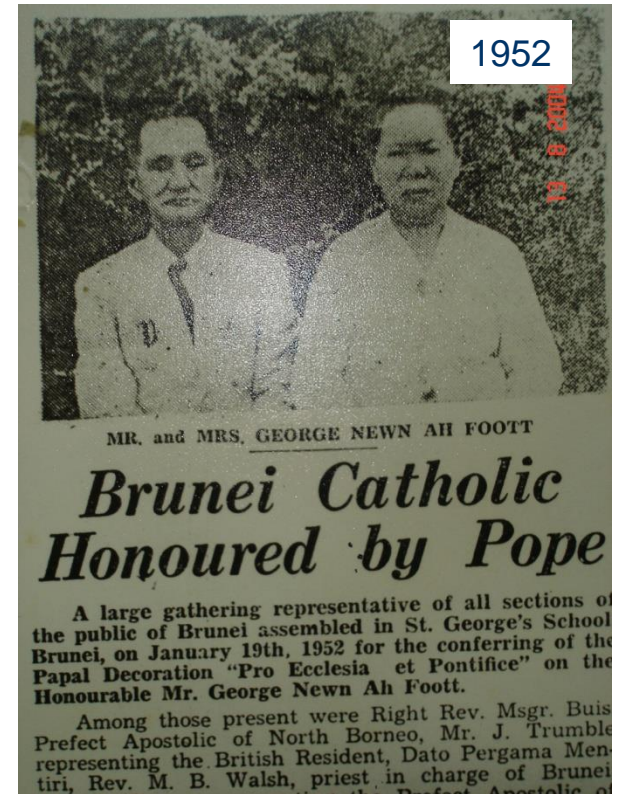


# Milestones in the Brunei church history - continue

1951 – Fr. Ben Walsh with the FHC candidates



1952



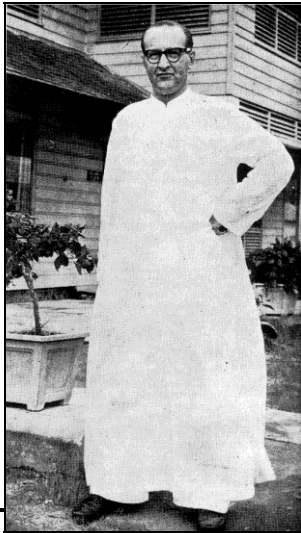
# Msgr Buis, Fr. Barry, Fr. Walsh and Fr. Smit - 1952



# First extension to St. George's School – early 50's



## 1950 - 1954

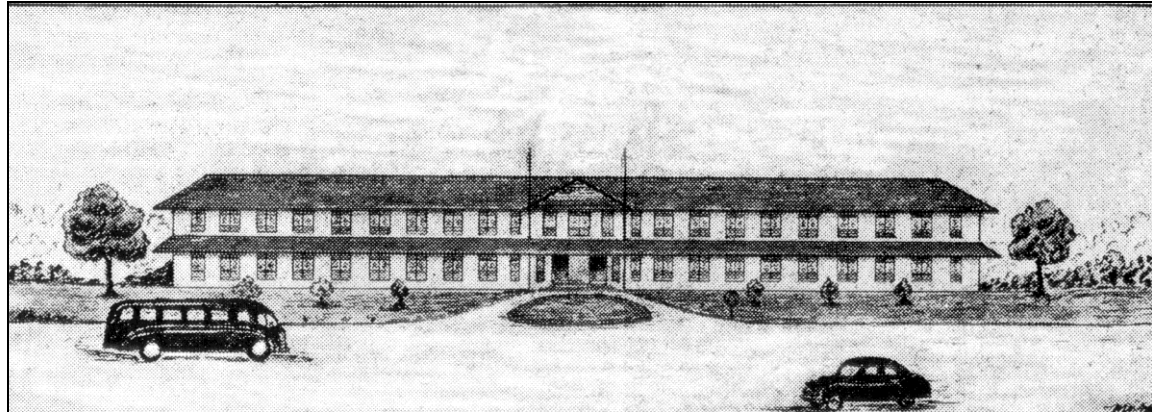


1950 - Fr. Gerard Rottinghuis appointed Principal of Kuala Belait and Seria English Schools.



1952 - Fr. Leo Barry took over as Rector Kuala Belait and Seria Missions.

1954 - Fr. John Maher joined the Seria English School as member of teaching staff and as assistant to the Rector. and Seria Missions.



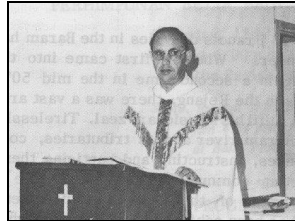
Artist Impression of the New Seria English School.

1954 - The Seria English School was officially named St. Michael's School.

### K. B. AND SERIA R. C. CHURCHES NAMED

The Vicar Apostolic of Kuching, Monseigneur Vos, has agreed that the Roman Catholic Church at Kuala Belait shall come under the Patronage of Saint John the Evangelist. When a new Roman Catholic Church is built at Seria (as part of the Seria/Kuala Belait Mission's plan for erecting a new Seria English School, a convent school, a church and a rectory) it will be known as the Church of Our Lady.

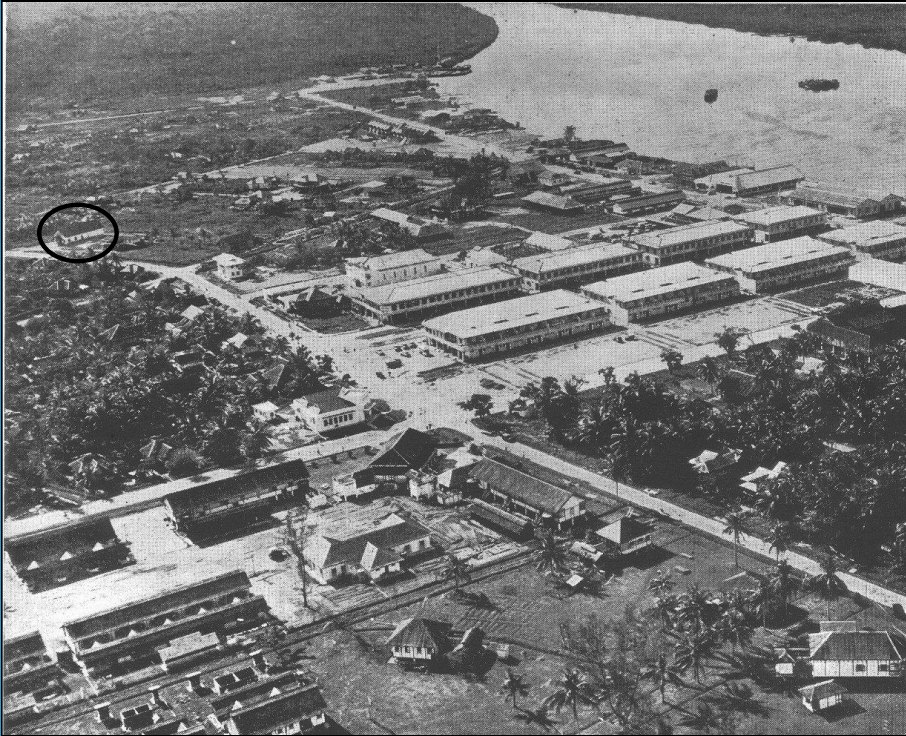
November 1954 - Kuala Belait R.C Church officially named St. John's and the yet to be built Seria R.C Church named, Church of Our Lady.



The Kuala Belait R.C Church, officially opened Christmas 1953 during the time of Fr. Herman Plattner (top left), was later named St. John's.



1954 - 1956



1954 - Aerial view of K.B. Town showing St. John's Church (circled top left in picture).



November, 1955 - Student's of St. Michael's School Seria bid farewell to Fr. G. Rottinghuis.

## KUCHING NUNS HERE FOR S.E.S. TALKS

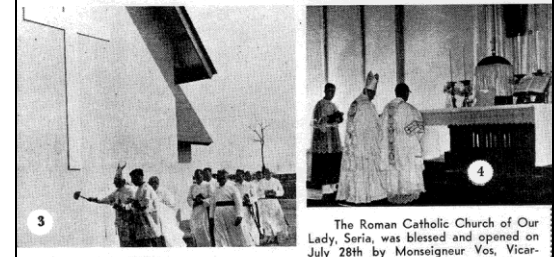
Two Franciscan Nuns, Mother Tarcisus and Sister Joseph, are visiting Seria/N.S.D. from Kuching to look at educational work in the area, and for talks with the Rector Father Barry, on arrangements for the girls' section of the new Seria English School.

Mother Tarcisus is the Mother Superior of the Franciscan Nuns in Kuching, an organisation founded towards the end of the last century by Cardinal Vaughan to assist the Mill Hill Fathers with their mission work in Borneo. Sister Joseph is headmistress of St. Theresa's Convent School Kuching.

Work has already begun on the building of a new Seria English School on a site near Seria Bazaar. When the building is ready, the existing co-educational school will be split into a boys' section (to be run by Brothers from Kuching), and into a girls' section to be run by the Franciscan Nuns. Both portions of the school will have facilities for boarding pupils who live in areas too far distant for daily travel.

Mother Tarcisus and Sister Joseph visited Miri yesterday, and plan to return to Kuching via Sibul on Monday.

Franciscan Nuns, Mother Tarcisus and Sister Joseph visited Seria to discuss future of education for Catholic girls.



The Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady, Seria, was blessed and opened on July 28th by Monseigneur Vos, Vicar-

28th July, 1956 - Church of Our Lady, Seria blessed and opened by Monseigneur Vos, Vicar Apostolic of Kuching.

# Milestones in the Brunei church history - continue



**1956 – newly completed Church of Our Lady of Immaculate Conception, Seria**

# Milestones in the Brunei church history - continue



The opening of the new church, St. George's Church by Bishop John Vos on Easter Sunday 1957

1957 - 1959

January 1957 - Fr. John Van de Laar appointed Rector and Principal of St. John's Church and School.



Seated: Bishop Anthony Galvin (L) and Fr. Van de Laar (R), with St. John's teachers.



Fr. Van de Laar with St. John's School children

SALAM, December 21, 1957.

## NEW SERIA SCHOOL FOR GIRLS... TO OPEN IN 1958

*St. Angela's Convent Opened On Wednesday*

The first stage of the building of a new girls' school in Seria has now been reached with the opening this Wednesday, December 18, of the \$123,000 St. Angela's Convent — the home in Brunei of the Franciscan Missionary Sisters of St. Joseph of the Catholic Mission, Seria.

The girls' school, which will relieve congestion at St. Michael's School, Seria (where girls and boys are attending combined classes), is expected to be completed at the end of 1958. It is hoped that work on the buildings which have been planned by the architects, Messrs. Booty and Edwards, will begin shortly. It will be built adjacent to the Convent, and will comprise of two double-storey blocks, each of nine classrooms, and an administrative block.

Later, it is hoped to build a Boarding Apartment, a Domestic Science Block, and a

School Hall. The school when completed, will cater for girls from Kindergarten to General Certificate of Education standard.

### CONVENT BUILDING

The convent building was planned by Mr. C.B. Fenner, who previously worked with B.S.P. Co. Ltd., and work on it was supervised by Mr. E.R.H. Selley of B.S.P.'s Engineering Department.

The building contains six bedrooms, a private chapel, guest room, study, dining and recreation rooms and servants' quarters.

## New School Opening On January 15

SERIA — The new St. Angela's Convent School here, which has just been completed, will be opened on Thursday, January 15, according to an announcement by the school authorities.

On Sunday, January 18, there will be an open day for parents relatives of the girls attending the school.

*January 1959 - St. Angela's Convent School for girls to open.*

*18th December 1957 - St. Angela's Convent officially opened. School for girls planned.*

THE BORNEO BULLETIN, January 17, 1959.

# THE BATTLE FOR EDUCATION OF BRUNEI GIRLS

## No Victory Until As Many Girls As Boys

SERIA. — The fight for the education of girls in Brunei was referred to by the British Resident, Mr. D. C. White, and by the State Education Officer, Mr. H. Padmore, here on Thursday when the new buildings of St. Angela's Girls' School were formally opened by the Resident.

Mr. Padmore said: "We have not won the battle for girls' education here yet, and we shall not win the battle until we have as many girls as boys attending schools here."

Before cutting a white ribbon in front of the new school buildings, Mr. White referred to "the sensational increase in the number of girls going to school." Five years ago, he said, there were four boys to one girl. Now there were two boys to one girl and he was confident that they would soon reach parity — an excellent goal to strive for because literate boys would clearly aspire to literate wives.

The British Resident added that he knew the convent schools had always put a high priority on domestic science and this seemed to him to be an adequate reason for educating boys and girls separately, in spite of all the controversy that had raged and still raged in various countries over co-education. In any case, he said, girls trained in domestic science would be able to keep their husbands happy for he had been told that the way to keep a husband at home was to make him comfortable and feed him well.

With the tremendous expansion in the education of girls, there had come the attendant problem of trained women teachers, said the Resident. He reminded the schoolgirls present that teaching was a most rewarding profession — not always, perhaps, to the pocket — but always in the satisfaction that could be obtained from shaping the characters and lives of future citizens in the State.

Tributes to the devoted work of the Reverend Mother John Bosco and of the Sisters of St. Angela's were paid by the Resident, Mr. Padmore, the Right Reverend Monsignor J. Vos, Bishop of Sarawak, and Father Barry, Rector of Seria.

In his address, Monsignor Vos said that, until now, boys and girls had been educated together at St. Michael's School, Seria, but he was glad that the time had come for the girls to have a separate school. A curriculum entirely suited to their needs was impossible in a mixed school.

The primary aim of Catholic education, he said, remained the same: the preparation for life. "We want the pupils of our schools to leave not only with an education, which would



The British Resident, Mr. D.C. White, cuts the white ribbon formally to open the new St. Angela's Convent School in Seria.

equip them to find a livelihood, but with a clear knowledge of their duty towards God in the first place, and their duty as good citizens of the State."

### SISTERS ZEAL

He said that the work of the Sisters in the educational sphere needed no acknowledgement. For 70 years, they had worked side by side with the Fathers in schools in Borneo, and the schools they had established spoke for themselves. St. Angela's was their first school in Brunei State and he was confident that, in their first establishment there, they would show the same untiring zeal and reach the same high standards as they had already shown in their schools in Sarawak, North Borneo and elsewhere.

Both the Bishop and the Rev. Father Barry referred to generous help from the Brunei Government, from the Brunei Shell Petroleum Co. Ltd. and from local benefactors.

*January 1959 - St. Angela's Convent School for girls officially opened by the British Resident, Mr. D.C. White.*

1957 - 1959

THE BORNEO BULLETIN, February 7, 1959.

PARENTS' COMPLAINTS

# Girls' School Head Answers Charges Of "Excessive Extras"

SERIA. — In an effort to instil a sense of cleanliness in the minds of the pupils, most of whom had "no respect whatsoever for other people's property," children attending St. Angela's Girls' School here have been asked to contribute towards the purchase of cleaning utensils.

This was revealed by Mother John Bosco of St. Angela's this week when she was approached by The Borneo Bulletin to answer charges — made by parents to this newspaper — that, in addition to school fees, local families were being asked to pay "excessive extra charges."

Answering a complaint from one father that each child had been requested to take one yard of oil-cloth to school to cover desks, and to provide a feather duster each, Mother John told The Bulletin that this was incorrect.

She said that the new school buildings and furniture were rapidly being spoiled by the children who, though they were clean in their dress, were exceptionally untidy otherwise. The result was that classrooms, the tuck shop and other places were left every day in an extremely dirty condition because of the lack of a sense of tidiness in the girls.

As a result, Mother John Bosco said, each child had been asked to cover her desk with half a yard of plastic material. And each class had been asked to provide one dust-pan, one small brush and a tin of kerosene oil for cleaning windows — a total cost of about 5 cents each.

The idea, said the Mother Superior, was to try to teach the girls to respect other people's property and to give them a sense of pride in keeping their own school clean and tidy.

Answering another complaint from a father, who said that he had paid school fees of \$21 for his three daughters at St. Angela's, but that there had also been extra charges of \$3 for the sports fund,

\$3 for the library and another extra charge for needlework, Mother John explained that if a man had three daughters at the school, full fees were paid for two children and the third was allowed to study at half-fees. If there were additional children, then no fees would be charged at all.

She added that \$2 each was being asked for the sports fund, payable in April, and that the sum of \$3 asked for the library fund was necessary in order that the school, which had a heavy debt, might build up a useful store of books for the use of the girls.

As far as a charge of \$3 for needlework was concerned, Mother Bosco said that this was payable in March, but that if any parent was unable to do so all he had to do was to notify the school authorities and he would receive sympathetic consideration.

These charges, it was explained, covered the whole year and were necessary in order to provide the facilities which the school itself could not provide out of its own funds for the advancement of the girls in several spheres.

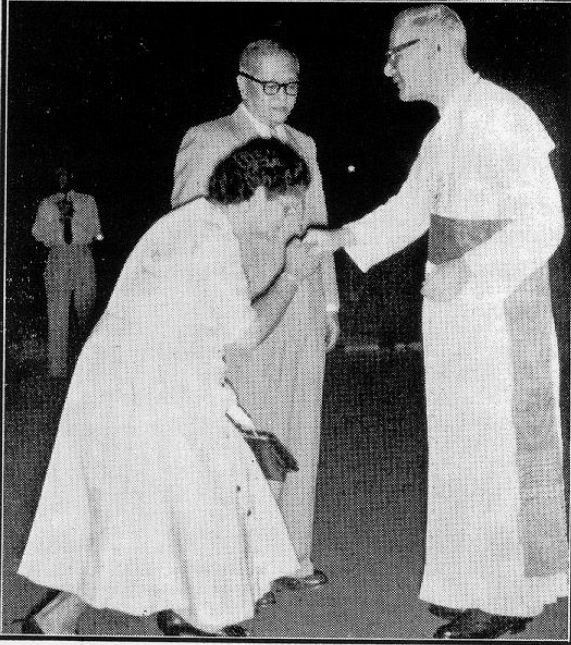
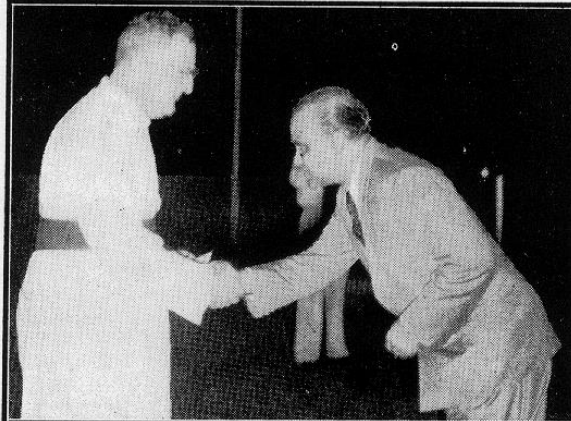
February 1959 - Mother John Bosco of St. Angela's Convent School answers parents' complains of "excessive extras"

## Belait Catholics Honoured

Two prominent members of the Belait Catholic community were honoured last Sunday at a buffet party held in the grounds of St. Michael's Church and Presbytery, Seria. They were the Rev. Father J. Maher, who celebrated 25 years of teaching in the United Kingdom, Sarawak and Brunei, and Mr. G.W.P. Clark, a retired Brunei Shell Petroleum Co., Ltd. employee and now a member of the Public Works Department in Belait, whose work as a layman on behalf of the Catholic Church was rewarded by the presentation to him of the Papal medal, Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice. These Bulletin pictures show (top) Father Maher being congratulated by Mr. Stanley Fernandez, who eulogised the Rev. Father's work at St. Michael's School, Seria, on behalf of the Catholic community, and (lower) Mrs. Clark being congratulated by Bishop John Vos after his presentation of the Papal medal to Mr. Clark, standing next to his wife. The British Resident, Mr. D. C. White, and Mrs. R. E. Hales, wife of the managing director of the Brunei Shell Petroleum Co., attended the function.

July 1959 - (Top right) Fr. John Maher honoured during celebration of his 25 years as a teacher. (Right) Mr. G.W.P. Clark receives Papal medal, Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice (pictured with his wife). Presentations made by Bishop Vos at St. Michael's Presbytery, Seria.

THE BORNEO BULLETIN, July 18, 1959.



July 1959 - (Top right) Fr. A. Crowther celebrates his 25 years of priesthood. June 1959 - (Right) Fr. J. Maher celebrates 25 years of teaching.

Hearty congratulations to Father Crowther, headmaster of St. Mary's Secondary School in Sandakan and former principal of the Sacred Heart Secondary School, Jesselton, (now La Salle School), who celebrates in Jesselton this week-end the 25th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood of the Catholic Church.

A tea party will be held at La Salle School on Tuesday and a presentation will be made to Father Crowther.

From 1947 to 1949, Father Crowther was in charge of the Catholic Mission in Brunei and, at the same time, supervised St. Michael's School, Seria, and other Catholic schools in the state. He was replaced in 1949 by Father McCarthy, who also arrived from North Borneo.

Father Crowther is a great sports enthusiast in North Borneo and the present high standards reached by athletes in the colony are, in great measure, due to his energy and enthusiasm.

Irish-born Father J. Maher, who celebrated 25 years of teaching last Sunday when a party was given in his honour in the grounds of St. Michael's Presbytery in Seria, told the large crowd gathered there of a unique distinction that came his way when he began to teach in Sibul shortly after the war had ended—that of being the only bachelor (non-eligible) in his class.

This, he explained, was a result of the Japanese occupation of Sarawak when there was no schooling for several years and when eligible males chose marriage rather than military service under the Japs.

The Bishop, Monsignor John Vos, who, together with priests and sisters from Sarawak, attended the function through the generosity of Shell — a special plane was provided by the oil company to bring the party to Seria and to take them back to their missions — went one better than Father Maher.

He said that when he was teaching he had the distinction of possessing a widower in his class.

\* \* \*

# BRUNEI GOVERNMENT TO END GRANTS TO MISSION SCHOOLS

## Decision Based On Religious Grounds

BRUNEI TOWN. — The present small financial grants made by the Brunei government to Christian mission schools in the state will be discontinued as from January 1 next year, according to a notification from the British Resident, Mr. D.C. White, received by principals of the schools last week-end.

The decision was made by the Sultan in Council on the grounds that, as Brunei was a Muslim state, it would not be proper for the government to continue its support of Christian educational establishments.

Seven schools will be affected by the decision — two in Brunei Town and five in the Seria-Belait oilfield zone. They are:

- St. Michael's (Catholic) secondary school, Seria.
- St. Angela's (Catholic) girls' school, Seria.
- St. Margaret's (Anglican) school, Seria.
- St. John's (Catholic) school, Kuala Belait.
- St. Philip's and St. James's (Anglican) school, Kuala Belait.
- St. George's (Catholic) school, Brunei Town.
- St. Andrew's (Anglican) school, Brunei Town.

All these schools are, at present, receiving financial grants from the government which cover one third of the monthly cost of teachers' salaries.

### ONLY MISSION SCHOOLS

Chinese schools in the state, which receive a 50 per cent grant from the government, will not be affected by the decision of the Sultan in Council to stop monetary assistance to the mission schools.

One certain result of the government action, missionary sources told The Borneo Bulletin this week, would be an unavoidable increase in school fees next year in order that teachers' salaries could be maintained at their present level.

A suggestion had been made, it was stated, that the government would be willing to take over the mission schools and run them as non-Christian institutions. This would certainly not be accepted by any of the mission authorities, The Bulletin was informed.

All the mission schools in Brunei had a duty to perform to Christian residents in the state and to the children of Christians attending the schools, a missionary worker told The Bulletin. He stressed that, at no time, had the mission schools attempted to convert Muslim scholars attending the schools.

The Bulletin was informed that many Muslim children were, at present, attending mission schools in Brunei, some of them the sons and daughters of government officials, who had been advised by the state authorities that there were not enough places for Malay-primary-school graduates in the government English schools and that entry should be sought to the Christian schools.

A Muslim parent, who did not wish to be quoted by name, said that he had children attending a mission school. He was more than satisfied with the education they were receiving, but he felt that the decision of the Sultan in Council would force him to remove his children from their present school in order "that I should not commit a sin against the Muslim faith."

A result of the ruling, Brunei will stand alone in this part of the world in ending support to mission schools. Both North Borneo and Sarawak give financial grants to Christian educational institutions, and the Federation of Malaya, another Muslim state, has continued its financial contributions to these schools since independence was obtained from the United Kingdom.

In some cases, principals of mission schools in the Federation receive a personal grant of \$500 a month in addition to a general contribution to the school.

In Sarawak, the salaries of mission-school teachers are fully paid by the colony government.

St. Michael's, which is the senior institution affected by the decision, is the only secondary school up to Senior Cambridge level in the Seria-Belait area. The school gained a 100 per cent pass record in the last Senior Cambridge examinations, easily beating the government-run Sultan Omar Ali Saifuddin College, Brunei Town, which is the only other school in the state at that level.

*June 1959 - Brunei Government withdrew financial grants and feeding scheme from all Mission Schools in the State.*

THE BORNEO BULLETIN, AUGUST 8, 1959.

# Letters To The Editor (Contd.)

## A MUSLIM CONDEMNS BRUNEI ON SCHOOL POLICY

Dear Editor,

I believe that the recent decision to stop monetary aid to Christian mission schools by the Brunei government was meant to implement the state's Islamic policy.

My knowledge of Islam tells me that there is no single doctrine, either drawn from the Holy Qu'ran or the Tradition (Hadith), which can support such an action. If the subsidies were withdrawn on religious grounds the action of the authorities is untenable.

The Holy Qu'ran does not sanction any act which is prejudicial to any section of the community. On the contrary, the whole tenor of the Qu'ranic teachings forbids any discrimination between Muslims and non-Muslims in the eyes of the law. The Holy Qu'ran expressly lays down that there is no compulsion in religion (2:256) "because all religions are for God" (8:39). It is up to the individual whether to believe or not to believe as the question of faith is a private matter between him and his Creator (18:29).

As far as the state is concerned, it is its duty to see that justice and peace is maintained between its subjects, regardless of birth, race, colour or creed. The liberty of the conscience of the subject must be safeguarded at all costs. The state has to resort to war, if needs be, in order to maintain this freedom: "And fight with them until there is no more persecution and all religions are for God" (chapter 8, verse 39).

An injunction in the Holy Qu'ran to protect places of worship does not only mean an order to the Muslim to keep the mosque in safe condition, but also entails a duty on the Muslim state to protect from destruction the "cloisters and churches and synagogues" in its jurisdiction (22:40).

The practice of the Holy Prophet Muhammad further points to the fact that the religion he preached demands no distinction between a Muslim and non-Muslim

in respect of his legal rights and privileges as a citizen of a Muslim state. On his elevation as ruler of the early Muslim state of Medina he granted a charter of liberty to his Jewish subjects, ensuring for them their equal legal status with the Muslim. Muhammad even secured for them the privilege of holding public office under his Muslim rule. Similar rights and privileges were bestowed on Christians and Zoroastrians.

To the Christians of Najran the Prophet gave the following concession among others: "There shall be no interference with their faith or their observances. No bishop shall be removed from his priesthood. No cross or image shall be destroyed."

The truly Islamic state makes no discrimination between Muslim and non-Muslim subjects and the right of equal treatment before the law in a Muslim state includes the equal opportunity to receive education.

The Prophet himself, in spite of the wide practice of imposing taxation on his subjects, especially exempted the Monk of Saint Catherine monastery near Mt. Sinai from all taxes for all time. Many instances may be found in early Muslim history of subsidies

being given to non-Muslims including Christian priests.

This is reflected in the words of a Nestorian Christian Patriarch, Isho Yabb III. "The Arabs to whom God has given at this time the Government of the world, do not persecute the Christian religion; on the contrary, they favour it, honour our priests and saints of the Lord and confer benefits on churches and monasteries."

The Muslim states of Hyderabad and Bhopal, both in India, used to, if they do not still, grant ample subsidies to Christian, Hindu and Zoroastrian priests in their states.

A Muslim state, far from being forbidden to extend help to non-Muslim subjects, is in fact encouraged to render all aid it can.

In Muhammadan law, a non-Muslim is not debarred from receiving benefits under a "Wakf"

If the State of Brunei claims to discontinue her subsidies to mission schools on the ground of enforcing religious policy, while Malaya and Sarawak continue granting subsidies to their mission schools, then I would contend that Sarawak and Malaya are pursuing the orthodox religious policy of Islam and Brunei has been misled by un-Islamic fanaticism.

Yours etc.,  
A TRUE MUSLIM;  
"TAMA PEJUANGGA"

*August 1959 - An opinion on the Brunei Government's decision to withdraw financial grants and feeding scheme from all Mission Schools in the State.*

# 1960 - 1970

## Bro. Anthony ordained

**M**IRI — Many people attended the ordination at St. Joseph's Church, Miri, on Sunday of the Rev. Brother Anthony Lee. He is the Roman Catholic Church's first Sarawak-born Chinese priest.



BRO. ANTHONY

Bro. Anthony, third of eight children of Mr. and Mrs. John Lee Chee Meng, was born in a house a stone's throw from the church. He had his early education at St. Joseph's — the school had not then been built — and in 1953 entered St. Peter's Seminary, Kuching, where he passed his Senior Cambridge.

He then returned home for a year to help his parents and in 1956 taught at his old school. The following year he entered St. Francis Xavier's Seminary in Singapore and three years later enrolled at the Roman Catholic seminary in Penang. He was ordained by Bishop Galvin.

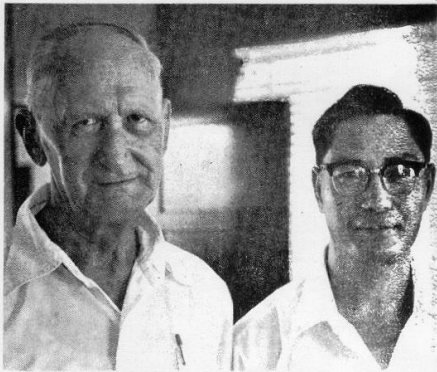
THE BORNEO BULLETIN, January 22, 1960



January 1966 - Bro. Anthony Lee was ordained to the priesthood by the Vicar Apostolic, Rt. Rev. Anthony Galvin, at St. Joseph's Church in Miri. Bro. Anthony was the first boy from the Miri Vicariate to become a Roman Catholic priest. Top right - Pictured with his family after his ordination.

THE BORNEO BULLETIN, November 2, 1968

## Priest ends 38 Borneo years

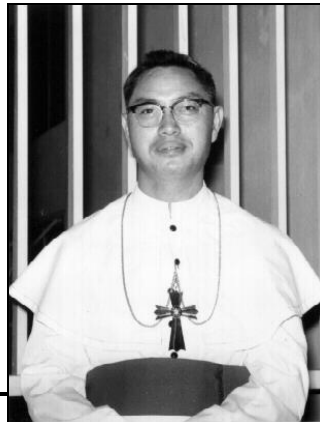


Fr. John Vandelaar, with Fr. Peter Chung, who has succeeded him as rector of the Kuala Belait Catholic parish.

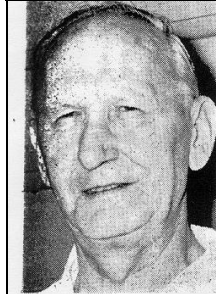
Fr. Chung was born and educated in China, which he left just before the Communist takeover. He was ordained in Kuching in 1954, after which he

became assistant priest, Miri.

He served in Sarikei, Sibuan and Miri again for four years before he was sent to Rome for further studies in 1963. He returned in 1966 with a doctorate in Church law and since then has been rector of the Mill Hill seminary in Miri.—Bulletin picture.



November 1968 - Fr. John Van de Laar departed from Brunei after serving for 38 years in Borneo. Fr. Peter Chung, now Archbishop of Kuching, took over as rector of St. John's.



Veteran Mill Hill missionary Father John Vandelaar (above) returned to Kuala Belait last week to resume his rectorship of the Catholic parish. He has been a missionary in Borneo since 1930.

Fr. Vandelaar went on six months' leave to the Netherlands in April last year. His return was delayed because it was found he needed an eye operation.

With his return, Father H. Brentjens, who has been acting rector and principal of St. John's School, left this week to take a course in Kuala Lumpur. He will take up another assignment in this area on his return.

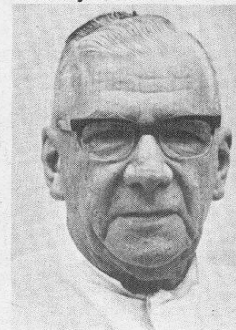
Father Vincent Cahill has arrived from Miri to become principal of St. John's School.— Bulletin picture.

Feb 1968 - Fr. Van de Laar returned to Kuala Belait after 6 months' leave to the Netherlands, during which he underwent an eye operation.



February 1968 - Fr. Vincent Cahill arrived from Miri to become principal of St. John's School. Pictured above is Fr. Cahill (centre left) with Fr. Van de Laar (centre right) and St. John's School teachers.

## 40 years on



One of the longest serving priests in East Malaysia and Brunei, Fr. Leo John Barry, 65, parish priest at Seria, celebrated the 40th anniversary of his ordination on Sunday.

Bishop Reiterer, Vicar Apostolic of Kuching, and 20 fellow priests, 10 of them from Sarawak, attended a sung Latin mass at the Church of Our Lady, Seria.

Fr. Barry particularly asked for a Latin mass, now rarely used by the Roman Catholic Church which has introduced a new form of vernacular mass. He said: "I think it will be the last time Latin mass will be used

in Seria, but it is the one I am used to."

Fr. Barry was ordained at Mill Hill, London, in 1931, after attending the Jesuit College, Stamford Hill, and was sent out to Sarawak where he spent 18 months teaching at St. Joseph's School, Kuching.

He spent another year at Binatang and was then posted to Kanowit where he stayed until 1952, except for the Japanese occupation when he was interned at Batu Lintang camp.

Many of the priests at Sunday's celebration first met Fr. Barry at Kanowit because new priests arriving in Sarawak were sent to Kanowit to learn Iban and the local way of life.

In 1952 Fr. Barry was posted to Kuala Belait and has stayed in the Belait district since then.

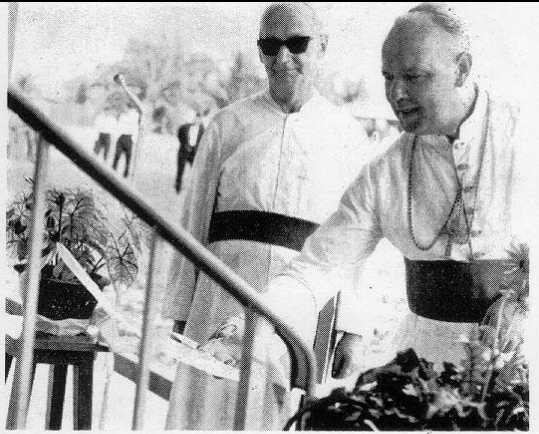
He was due to fly off for two months' leave in Britain on Thursday. "I'm hoping to catch the one good day of the British summer," he said, but he will return to Seria in October.

"I may retire at the end of the year" he said. "I've been here 20 years and I feel it's about time some young blood was brought in."

"There is a shortage of priests and I can always find something to do if I don't retire, but I feel it would be a job elsewhere than Seria."

July 1970 - Before his departure from Brunei, Fr. Leo Barry celebrated the 40th Anniversary of his priestly ordination. The occasion was held at the Church of our Lady, Seria. Fr. Barry was one of the longest serving missionaries in Borneo.

# 1960 - 1970



The \$80,000 St. John's Secondary School at Kuala Belait, was opened last weekend by Bishop Anthony Galvin, Vicar-Apostolic of Miri, seen above cutting the ribbon. With him is Father Van der Laar.

The Bishop blessed the building and told the gathering that it was the duty of parents and citizens to protect and guard the interest of their children.

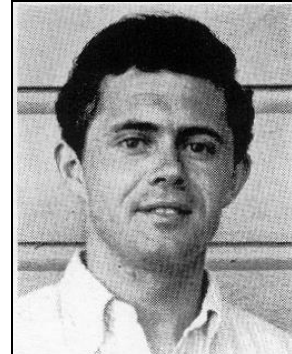
They should be proud that St. John's had a new building in which their children could attend secondary classes.

Bishop Galvin thanked the contractor, Mr. Michael Lau, for his splendid work in completing the building on schedule, and the donors whose contributions made it possible.

The list of donors will be published next week.



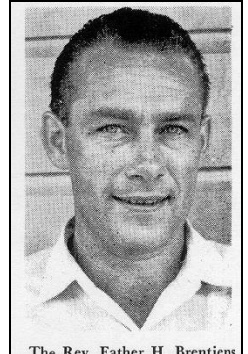
May 1966 - St. John's School (West Wing) opened by Bishop Anthony Galvin (above, above right and right). (Below) New St. John's School West Wing.



Father Michael Gill, 26, has arrived from the London headquarters of the Mill Hill mission to join the staff of St. John's School, Kuala Belait. He comes from County Longford, Ireland.

Fr. Gill has a Bachelor of Arts degree in philosophy from University College of Dublin. He was ordained as a priest last year. — Bulletin picture.

Jan, Feb 1967 - Fr. Michael Gill and Fr. H. Brentjens appointed to serve in Kuala Belait and Seria missions.



The Rev. Father H. Brentjens has arrived in Kuala Belait from Miri to become principal of St. John's School. In Miri he was secretary to the Bishop, the Very Rev. A. D. Galvin, and vice-principal of St. Joseph's secondary school for a year.

Before that he spent four years in Bintulu and three years at Long Akah in Ulu Baram.

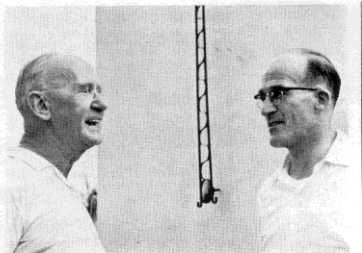
While in Miri, he represented the Fourth Division in the Sarawak Cup soccer competition. He has played as centre forward for 22 years but says he is more interested in coaching now.

With Fr. Brentjens' arrival in Kuala Belait, Fr. Michael Gill, who recently came from London to teach at St. John's, has transferred to the staff of St. Michael's School in Seria. — Bulletin picture.



Students in class at St. John's School.

# 1960 - 1970



The Superior-General of the Mill Hill missionaries, Father G. Mahon (right), chats with Father John Vandelaar outside St. John's School, Kuala Belait. — Bulletin picture.

## Sarawak's racial harmony impresses mission head

KUALA BELAIT. — The tradition of peaceful living among Sarawak's different communities has been the greatest impression gained by the Superior-General of the Mill Hill missionaries, Father G. Mahon, who is now touring East Malaysia and Brunei.

Father Mahon worked for eight years as a missionary in East Africa and has visited the Congo and West Africa, North and South America, India, Pakistan and Kashmir before coming to Borneo. "I have never found friendlier or more co-operative people than those I met in Sarawak," he said when he flew here from Miri last weekend. "In many other countries there is only strife and hatred between the different races."

"Where else in the world could you find an area like one I saw in Sarawak where there is a population of 20,000 and a big bazaar, which has a District Officer but no policeman?"

One of Father Mahon's duties as Superior-General of St. Joseph's Missionary Society of Mill Hill, London — is to give it its correct title — is that he must visit every mission station during his 10-year

*December 1966 - Superior General of Mill Hill missionaries, Fr. G. Mahon visited Borneo. Pictured above with Fr. Van de Laar outside St. John's School.*



The Vicar-Apostolic of Miri Bishop A. D. Galvin, administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to about 200 Catholics — boys, girls and adults — in the Church of Our Lady, Seria, last Sunday evening. It was the biggest confirmation service in the church for some years.

Bulletin picture shows Bishop Galvin confirming a little girl, assisted by Fr. Michael Gill (left) and Fr. T. Keogan. Mrs. Theresa Carrier (left) was sponsor for all the women and girls.

*May 1967 - Bishop Galvin ministering Sacrament of Confirmation in Seria, assisted by Fr. M. Gill (L) and Fr. T. Keogan (R). Mrs. Theresa Carrier (L) was sponsor for all the women and girls.*

## THE BORNEO BULLETIN, March 11, 1967.



Rev. Mother Eamonn (centre), Mother-General of the Franciscan Missionaries of St. Joseph, met parents of girls at St. Angela's Convent School, Seria, at an exhibition there last Saturday. With her in this Bulletin picture is the principal, Mother Consilia (left).

Mother Eamonn is making her third tour of Brunei and East Malaysia since she became Mother-General of the order 16 years ago. She visited Sarawak before coming to Seria and left this week for Sabah.

"What impresses me most is the progress and development I see going on throughout the area," she said.

Development of the Franciscan nuns' schools has been rapid, too. When she last visited Seria in 1966, St. Angela's School had not yet opened. Now it has an enrolment of 730 girls and is being extended.

"In the last 16 years the number of children in our schools in Brunei, Sarawak and Sabah has doubled," Mother Eamonn said.

The Franciscan nuns have 10 mission houses in the three States. Their main work is in education but they also run hospitals at Penampang, Sabah, and Kanowit, Sarawak.

Before coming to Borneo, Mother Eamonn visited mission houses in the Philippines, where Mother Cecilia Mary, who was on the staff of St. Angela's in Seria until three years ago, is training girls to become members of a new Filipino order of nuns.

Mother Eamonn's headquarters is in Stafford, England. The Franciscan Missionaries of St. Joseph have 58 mission houses in Britain, Ireland, the Netherlands, the United States, Africa, Brunei, East Malaysia and the Philippines. She visits every house every six years.

*March 1967 - Rev. Mother Eamonn (above centre), Mother-General of the Franciscan Missionaries of St. Joseph's, visited St. Angela's Convent School. School choir (left) performing at concert presented for the Mother-General.*



# 1960 - 1970



Roslancee binte Abdullah, the youngest pupil at St. John's School, Kuala Belait, guided by a teacher, Miss Martha Yee, presents a typewriter to Father Peter Chung as a farewell gift from the students.

Adjutor Bishop of Sabah on Nov. 15, Fr. Paul Tong, who is parish priest at Bandar Seri Begawan, will take over as rector of St. John's and principal of the school. He will be replaced by Fr. Francis de Vries who is priest at Long Lama in the Braram district of Sarawak. — Bulletin picture.



The Catholic Bishop of Sabah, Monsignor James Buis (left), and Bishop Yong of Penang (right) escort the former Father Peter Chung from the Sacred Heart Church, Kota Kinabalu, after his episcopal consecration last Sunday as Co-adjutor-Bishop with right of succession.

Bishop Buis is soon to retire to Holland. Sabah's Minister of Communications and Works, Dato Pang Tet Tshung, represented the Chief Minister at the ceremony, which was attended by church dignitaries from West Malaysia, Singapore, Bangkok, Taipei and Brunei.

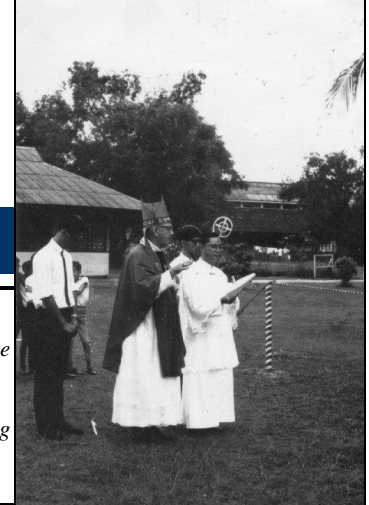
October 1970 - (left) Fr. Chung's farewell at St. John's.

November 1970 - (above) Fr. Chung's episcopal consecration as Co-adjutor-Bishop, conducted in Kota Kinabalu, by Bishop James Buis of Sabah and Bishop Yong of Penang. Fr. Paul Tong succeeded Fr. Chung as Rector of St. John's.



1970 - (Top) Bishop Anthony Galvin blesses the site for the new St. John's church.

- (Right) Bishop Galvin assisted by Fr. Peter Chung during blessing of site for new church.



The first Parish Council of St. John's, pictured with Bishop A. Galvin and Fr. Peter Chung, celebrating Bishop Galvin's 25th Anniversary



Fr. Paul Tong with first Holy Communicants.



January 1970 - The first person to be ordained to the priesthood in Brunei was Bro. Peter Tann. The ordination was ministered by Bishop Anthony Galvin at the Church of Our Lady in Seria.

THE BORNEO BULLETIN, January 10, 1970.



Belait district's first ordination of a priest, Father Peter Tann, 36, will be performed tomorrow (Sunday) at the Church of Our Lady, Seria, by the Vicar-Apostolic of Miri, Bishop A.D. Galvin.

Father Tann, above, eldest son of Mr. Charles Tann, storeman at the Brunei Press, was educated at St. Joseph's School in Kuching and spent four years studying medicine at the University of Hong Kong before deciding to become a priest.

He studied at seminaries in Singapore and Penang and was ordained a deacon a year ago. He will serve in the Miri Vicariate. — Bulletin picture.

The Vicar-Apostolic of Miri, Bishop A.D. Galvin, puts holy oil on the hands of Father Peter Tann during his ordination as a priest at the Church of Our Lady, Seria, on Sunday.

The church was crowded for the service, the first of its kind in Belait district, at which hymns were sung to well known pop tunes, accompanied by a guitar group.

Father Tann is the eldest of the eight children of Mr. Charles Tann, storeman at the Brunei Press. He will take a short holiday before being assigned to work in the Miri Vicariate.

During the service Bishop Galvin said Father Tann was the fourth Chinese priest to serve in the Vicariate, but more were needed. He looked forward to the day when the first local bishop would be consecrated. — Bulletin picture.

# Milestones in the Brunei church history - continue



**Bishop Galvin officiating at the opening ceremony of the new Church of Our Lady of the Assumption in August 1969**

# Bishop Galvin officiating the opening ceremony of COLA in August, 1969



# Church of Our Lady of the Assumption, Bandar Seri Begawan



Then (1969?)

# 1971 - 1980

THE BORNEO BULLETIN, September 4, 1971.



1971 - The new St. John's Church under construction.

THE BORNEO BULLETIN, April 1, 1972.



Watched by a big crowd, the Vicar Apostolic of Miri, the Rt. Rev. Anthony Dennis Galvin, blesses the new St. John's Roman Catholic Church, Kuala Belait, on Sunday morning.

The Bishop's mitre is decorated with a traditional design from the Baram. The bishop is an anthropologist and an expert on the Baram tribes.

The church, which cost \$110,000, is six-sided with seating for up to 350 people arranged around three sides of the central altar.

It has a small tower, which many take to be a belfry but which is for ventilation, bearing the Chinese characters for "church."

The decision to build the new church was taken by the

Rt. Rev. Peter Chung, now Bishop of Sabah, when he was rector of Kuala Belait, but it was left to the present rector, Fr. Paul Tong, to see the project completed.

Fr. Tong said a new church was necessary because the old church, a simple iron-roofed building, was too small. The old church will be used as a parish hall.

In his sermon at the first mass in the new church, Bishop Galvin said that it was a building that would compare favourably with many fine public buildings in Brunei.

He said that though it was a Catholic church it was open to people of all faiths, or even those of no faith, seeking quiet and consolation.

Bulletin picture by Bernard Long.



12th March, 1972 - The new St. John's Church was blessed and officially opened by Bishop Anthony Galvin.

# 1971 - 1985



1972 - (Above) The newly completed St. John's Church. (Right) Fr. Paul Tong pictured outside newly completed church.



22nd Oct, 1978 - St. John's School East Wing officially opened by Bishop Anthony Lee.



June 1973 - Bishop Van C. Melkebeke (Apostolic Visitor) with Fr. Tong and Fr. Peter Chiang after conferring sacrament of confirmation at St. John's.



1980 - Bishop Anthony Lee with Fr. Tong conferring sacrament of confirmation at St. John's.



circa 1979 - First Holy Communion in front of the school.



Fr. Tong with First Holy Communicants.  
Recognise anyone?



05th June, 1983 - Fr. Tong celebrated 25 years of priesthood.

# Milestones in the Brunei church history - continue

- 1976 – Brunei became part of the Diocese of Miri-Brunei
- 1985 – Fr. Ivan Fang ordained by Bishop Cornelio de Wit at St. Joseph College, Mill Hill, London
- 1989 – Fr. Cornelius Sim was ordained by Bishop Anthony Lee in Seria
- 1991 – Departure\* of Fr. Chiang and Fr. McClorey

# Milestones in the Brunei church history - continue



**Jan 1970 – first person to be ordained to the priesthood in Brunei. Brother Peter Tann.**

# Milestones in the Brunei church history - continue



**1972 – the newly completed St. John's Church**

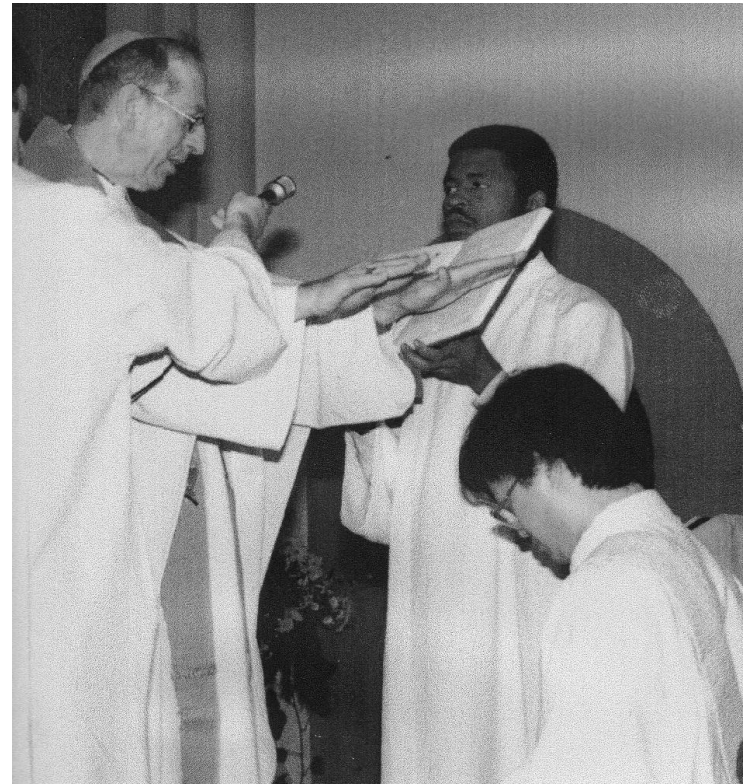
# Milestones in the Brunei church history - continue



**12th March 1972 – new St John Church was blessed and officially opened by Bishop Anthony Galvin**

# Milestones in the Brunei church history - continue

**30th November 1985 –  
Rev. Ivan Fang  
ordained to the  
priesthood**



## Milestones in the Brunei church history - continue

- 1991 - Two foreign Catholic nuns, Sr. Celestine Ho, principal of St. Angela's Girls School in Seria and Sr Eamonn Chan, a teacher at the same school, return to Malaysia on Feb 18 and Feb 24 respectively.

# 1986 - 1991

March, 1987 - Fr. Paul Tong departed from Brunei after serving as the rector of St. John's for almost seventeen years. In the absence of a resident priest, the church appointed two lay persons, Bros. Richard Fun and Lawrence Carrier, to serve in some of the work of the ministerial priesthood. In addition Bro. David Teo was entrusted by Fr. John McClorey, the parish priest of Seria, with the pastoral aspect of the church.

1988 - Bro. Cornelius Sim was assigned to administer St. John's Parish on completion of his priestly training in the United States. He was ordained a Deacon at St. John's by Bishop Anthony Lee on 31st May, 1989. On 26th November, 1989, Bro. Sim was ordained a priest Bishop Lee at the Church of Our Lady, Seria.



31st May, 1989 - Bro. Cornelius Sim was ordained a Deacon by Bishop Lee (above right) at St. John's. Pictured with Fr. Chiang and Fr. McClorey (above left).



26th Nov, 1989 - Bishop Lee ordained Bro. Cornelius a Priest (above left) at Church of Our Lady, Seria. Bishop Lee together with Fr. Chiang, Fr. McClorey and other visiting priests, praying over Bro. Cornelius during his ordination (above right).



Nov 1989 - Bro. Cornelius ordained by Bishop Lee (left).

Fr. Cornelius after his priestly ordination (right).



(Above) Fr. Cornelius blessing the faithful who attended his ordination. (Right) Pictured with family members after his ordination.



By the end of February 1991, the remaining priests, Fr. Peter Chiang and Fr. John McClorey, departed from Brunei. Fr. Cornelius was left to minister to the three parishes of Seria, K.B and Bandar, until Fr. Ivan Fang returned to serve in Bandar in December 1992.



1990 - The faithful bid farewell to Fr. Chiang at Brunei airport.



## Milestones in the Brunei church history - continue

- 1992 – Fr Ivan Fang MHM appointed as parish priest to Church of Our Lady of Assumption

# 1988 - 1998

Several projects to upgrade the church and rectory were undertaken in the last 10 years during the rectorship of Fr. Sim.

1988 - The Eucharistic Chapel was completed. It was officially opened in December, 1988 by Fr. McClorey.

1992 - Extension work to the rectory started in July, 1992. It was completed in 1993 and officially opened by His Grace Archbishop Alberto Tricarico, Apostolic Delegate, during his visit to St. John's on 05th June, 1993. The extension included a new air-conditioned Parish Hall.

1994 - Old store was renovated into rector's office.

1996 - Extension to the rear of the rectory into St. John's Library was completed in 1996.



June 1993 - Rectory extension officially opened by Archbishop Alberto Tricarico.



July 1992 - (Top left) Prayer by Fr. Cornelius before beginning of rectory renovation. (Top right) Dismantling of old section of rectory.

(Above left and right) Construction of new extension underway.



1994 - His Grace Archbishop Luigi Bressan celebrate mass during his visit to St. John's



1994 - Archbishop Luigi Bressan with St. John's parishioners during his visit.



1994 - Archbishop Luigi Bressan visited the computer suite at St. John's School.

# Milestones in the Brunei church history - continue

- 1997 – Establishment of the Apostolic Prefecture of Brunei Darussalam
- 1998 – Msgr. Cornelius Sim was installed as Apostolic Prefect of Brunei Darussalam
- 1999 – Fr. Paul Shie was ordained by Bishop Anthony Lee in Bandar Seri Begawan
- 2003 – Fr. Robert Leong was ordained by Bishop Anthony Lee in Kuala Belait

# Establishment of the Prefecture

On 22nd of February 1998, by the grace of God, the Catholic Church in Brunei achieved its autonomous status and declared an Apostolic Prefecture.

Rev. Monsignor Cornelius Sim was installed as the first Prefect Apostolic.

1997 -1998

## HOT OFF THE PRESS!!

With effect from 06th December, 1997, the Holy See appointed a new Apostolic Prefecture in Brunei Darussalam, with Rt. Rev. Monsignor Cornelius Sim as the first Apostolic Prefect.

December 28, 1997

# Brunei Darussalam — a new Apostolic Prefecture

By Joseph J Masilamany

**KUCHING:** The Holy See has appointed a new Apostolic Prefecture in Brunei Darussalam with Rt Rev Monsignor Cornelius Sim (pic), as the first Apostolic Prefect.

The Archbishop of Kuching, Datuk Peter Chung was informed of the appointment which takes effect on 6th December 1997 by the Apostolic Nunciature in Bangkok.

Datuk Peter Chung who is also the President of the Bishop's Conference of Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei expressed his heartiest congratulations to the Catholics of Brunei on the constitution of the new Prefecture.

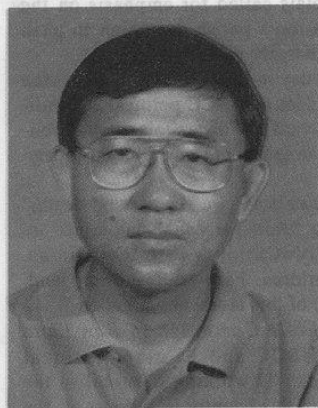
In a letter to Monsignor Cornelius Sim, Datuk Peter Chung welcomed the new Prefecture into the ecclesiastical Province of East

Malaysia. He also welcomed the first Apostolic Prefect into the Bishop's Conference of Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei.

Datuk Peter Chung said the establishment of a new Prefecture is a recognition of the maturity of the Catholic community in Brunei Darussalam by the Holy See.

He said the appointment marks the beginning of a new era for the Catholic community to assume greater responsibility in carrying the mission of Christ in their land.

Addressing the newly appointed Apostolic Prefect, Datuk Peter Chung said, "Your appointment is without doubt an added responsibility on your shoulders. It also means that the Holy See has great confidence in you and recognises your personal ability and apostolic zeal in leading and serving the new Prefecture in action. With all your people and all those who love you,



I pray that you will have the Holy Spirit to strengthen, guide and protect you in your new responsibility and assure you of my readiness to assist you in your task to set your new Prefecture in action."

The Church of Brunei Darussalam commenced through

the missionary zeal of the Labuan-based Mill Hill Missions Society in the early part of this century. The Church registered its first baptism in 1917 in Brunei Town (now called Bandar Seri Begawan). Its first mission outpost was established in 1927 at Kuala Belait and Fr A Stotter was installed as the first resident priest in 1932.

Today there are three parishes serving three thousand local Catholics and twenty-seven thousand transient workers, most of them being Filipinos and other expatriate workers. In addition there is one Catholic Mission Centre and 4 schools. Two priests are currently serving the Church of Brunei Darussalam assisted by 4 full-time catechists. One woman religious is in formation and two young men are training for the priesthood in Singapore and the United States. In 1985 Fr Ivan

Fang MHM was ordained the first local priest.

Monsignor Cornelius Sim was born in 1951 and ordained priest in 1989. He obtained his Masters in Theology from the Franciscan University of Steubenville in Ohio.

● According to Canon Law 371 § 1: an Apostolic Prefecture is a certain portion of the people of God, which for special reasons is not yet constituted a diocese, and which is entrusted to the personal care of a Vicar apostolic or a Prefect apostolic, who governs in the name of the Supreme Pontiff. The title of Prefect apostolic or Vicar apostolic is conferred upon priests who by assignment and under the direct authority of the Holy See, whether they have episcopal consecration or not, govern a missionary district where the hierarchy has not been established.

# Ordination of Fr. Paul Shie - 1999



# Ordination of Fr. Robert August 10, 2003



# Apostolic Vicariate Established in Brunei

VATICAN CITY, OCT. 20, 2004 ([Zenit.org](http://Zenit.org)).- John Paul II established the Apostolic Vicariate of Brunei and appointed as its first bishop, Cornelius Sim, a U.S.-educated cleric who's been apostolic prefect in the Southeast Asian sultanate.

The Pope established the Apostolic Prefecture of Brunei in 1997. The vicariate encompasses the sultanate's territory that has some 347,000 inhabitants, the Vatican press office said in its announcement.

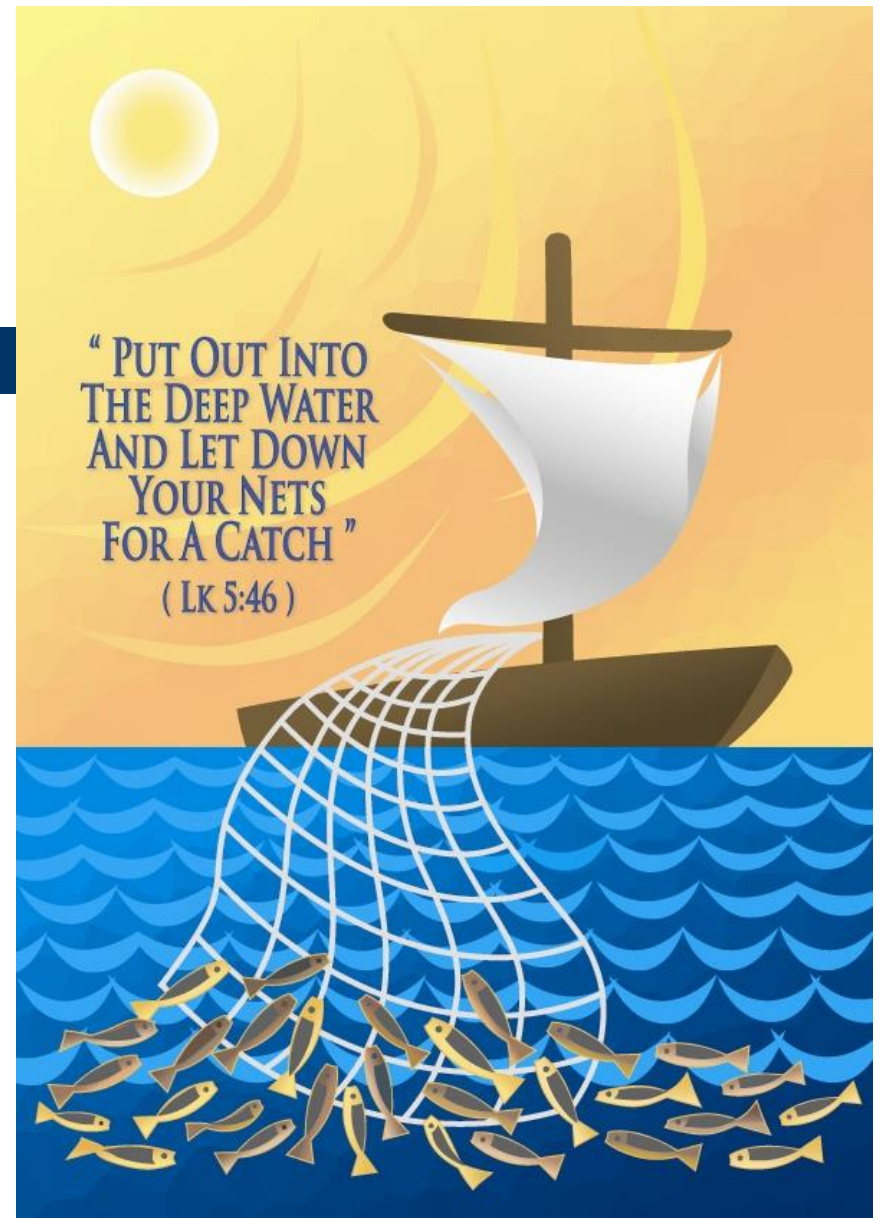
# Appointment of Bishop Elect Cornelius Sim – October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2004

JOHANNES PAULUS EPISCOPUS SERVUS SERVORUM DEI

dilecto Filio **Cornelio Sim**, hactenus Praefecto Apostolico Beuneiensi, constituto Vicario Apostolico novi Vicariatus Apostolici Beuneiensis simulque electo Episcopo titulo Putiensi in Numidia, salutem et Apostolicam Benedictionem. Cum primus assignandus sit Praesul Vicariatus Apostolici Beuneiensi, hoc ipso die per Apostolicam Constitutionem ~ Ad aptius consulendum ~ ex Praefectura Apostolica eiusdem nominis in Beuneio Darussalam condito, tu, dilecte Fili, quem clavis dotibus ornatum ceterumque sacraeum peccatum ibidem pastorate munus novimus hucusque laudabiliter obisse, Nobis videaris idoneus ad illam regendam. De sententia igitur Congregationis pro Gentium Evangelizatione, summa Nostra potestate te renuntiamus Vicarium Apostolicum Beuneiensem simulque nominamus Episcopum titulo **Putiensem in Numidia**, cunctis tributis iuribus impositisque obligationibus cum episcopali dignitate ac tali officio conexis. Permittimus ut ordinationem a quolibet catholico Episcopo extra urbem Romam accipias, liturgicis servatis legibus. Antea autem catholicae fidei professionem facies atque ius iurandum dabis fidelitatis erga Nos et Nostros Successores ad normam iuris. Mandamus insuper ut hae Litterae in notitiam veniant electi populi tui, quos hortamur ut te persequantur prosequi tecumque coniuncti maneam. Fac demum, dilecte Fili, ut Beuneienses fideles ita pergas pascere ut illi magis in dies crescant ~ in gratia et in cognitione Domini nostri et Salvatoris Jesu Christi ~ 2 Pe 3, 18. Cuius pax sit semper tecum et cum catholica communitate istius novi Vicariatus Apostolici Nobis carissimi. Datum Romae, apud S. Petrum, die vicesimo mensis Octobris, anno Domini bis millesimo quarto, Pontificatus Nostri septimo et vicesimo.

Joannes Paulus PP II

Laurentius Cicali, Protob. Apost.



# Ordination of Bishop Cornelius Sim January 21, 2005





# Saddest Moment of the School

- 2006 – St. Michael School closes at the end of December 2006
- 2007 – St. Angela's School became co-ed beginning January 2007

# Ordination of Rev. Arin Augustine Sugit on December 8, 2008



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# THE APOSTOLIC VICARIATE IN BRUNEI DARUSSALAM TODAY

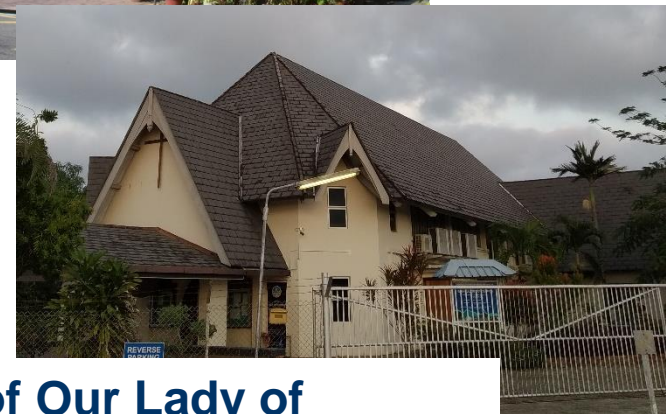
**Church of Our Lady of the Assumption**



**St. John's Church**



**Church of Our Lady of Immaculate Conception, Seria**



# The 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Brunei Prefecture (2004).



# The 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Apostolic Vicariate (21.1.2015)



# COOL 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – Dec. 8<sup>th</sup>, 2015



1<sup>st</sup> Holy Communion

Confirmation





FAMILY AND MINISTRY  
(MISSION) 2020



*Go out into the whole world and  
proclaim the gospel to every  
creature (Mk 16:15)*

**Happy 15th  
Anniversary!**



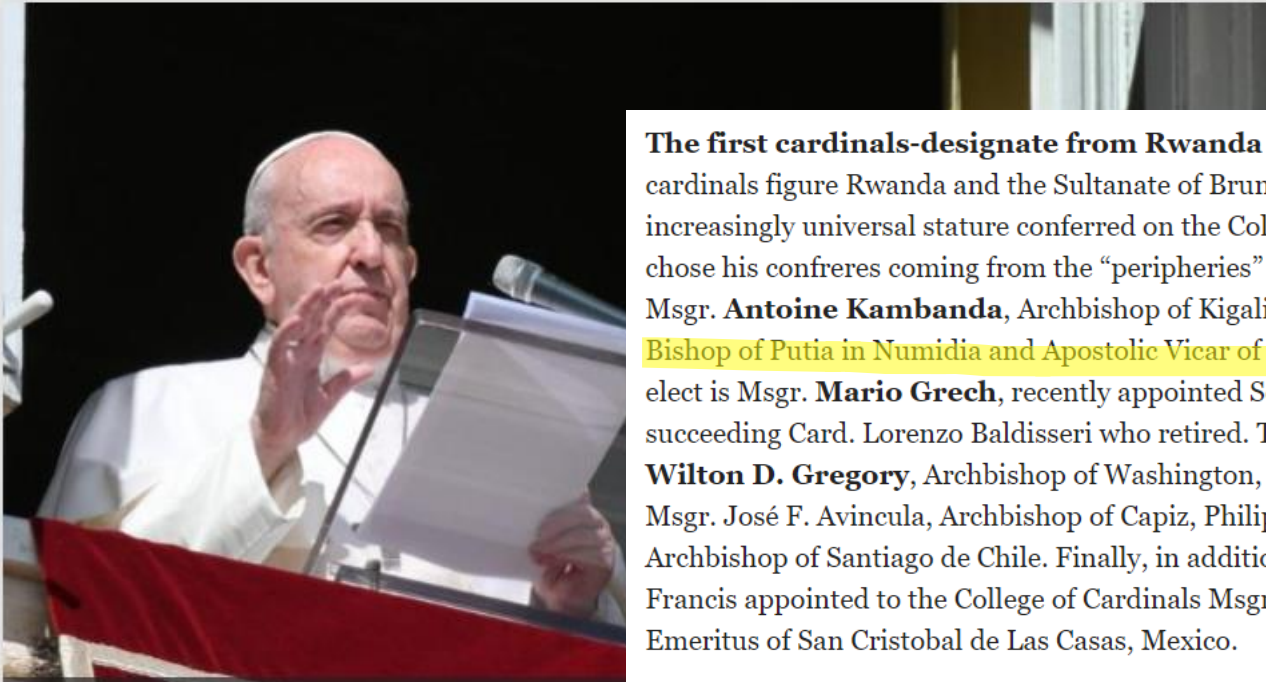
Anniversary  
APOSTOLIC VICARIATE  
IN BRUNEI DARUSSALAM  
21.1.2020

**Church of Our Lady of  
Immaculate Conception  
wishes Bishop Cornelius  
Sim a very Blessed 15th  
Episcopal Anniversary**



**21st January 2020**





**The first cardinals-designate from Rwanda and Brunei.** Among the new non-Italian cardinals figure Rwanda and the Sultanate of Brunei's as first-ever cardinals, attesting to the increasingly universal stature conferred on the College of Cardinals by Pope Francis, who chose his confreres coming from the "peripheries" of the world. Cardinals-elect in fact are Msgr. **Antoine Kambanda**, Archbishop of Kigali, and Msgr. **Cornelius Sim, Titular Bishop of Putia in Numidia and Apostolic Vicar of Brunei**. The first on the list of cardinals-elect is Msgr. **Mario Grech**, recently appointed Secretary General of the Synod of Bishops, succeeding Card. Lorenzo Baldisseri who retired. The new cardinal electors include Msgr. **Wilton D. Gregory**, Archbishop of Washington, named as first African-American cardinal; Msgr. José F. Avincola, Archbishop of Capiz, Philippines, and Msgr. **Celestino Aòs Braco**, Archbishop of Santiago de Chile. Finally, in addition to the three Italian non-electors, Pope Francis appointed to the College of Cardinals Msgr. **Felipe Arizmendi Esquivel**, Bishop Emeritus of San Cristobal de Las Casas, Mexico.

Pope Francis announces the names of 13 new Cardinals after recitation of Angelus on Sunday (Vatican Media)


 POPE
 
 POPE FRANCIS
 
 CARDINALS
 
 ANGELUS
 
 CONSISTORY

## Pope announces a consistory for the creation of 13 new cardinals

# Appointment of Vicar General - 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2021





# His Eminence Cornelius Cardinal Sim

16.9.1951 - 29.5.2021

Apostolic Vicariate in  
Brunei Darussalam





# Appointment of Diocesan Administrator - 31/5/2021

6<sup>th</sup> June 2021

To: Parishioners of St. John's Church, Kuala Belait  
Parishioners of Church of Our Lady of Assumption, Bandar Seri Begawan  
Parishioners of Church of Our Lady of Immaculate Conception, Seria

Peace be with you.

The clergies in the Apostolic Vicariate in Brunei Darussalam met on Monday, 31<sup>st</sup> May 2021 to discuss several matters following the death of His Eminence, Cornelius Cardinal Sim, on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> May 2021.

According to Canon 416, an episcopal see is vacant upon the death of a diocesan bishop. The position of vicar general also become vacant upon his death (Canon 417). When the episcopal see become vacant, the college of consultors must elect a diocesan administrator, namely the one who is to govern the diocese temporarily, within eight days from receiving notice of the vacancy of an episcopal see (Canon 421).

At this clergy meeting they have appointed me to be the temporary Diocesan Administrator until Rome appoints a new bishop for the Vicariate. This letter is to inform my brothers and sisters in Christ in this Vicariate of this appointment and my acceptance of it.

Please pray for me as I begin this new chapter in my life and with your help, I will carry out my duty faithfully and diligently.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Rev. Fr. Robert Leong  
Parish Priest  
Church of Our Lady of Immaculate Conception,  
Seria.