



THE APOSTOLIC VICARIATE IN BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

Welcome

HIS GRACE
ARCHBISHOP WOJCIECH ZALUSKI
TO

CHURCH OF OUR LADY OF IMMACULATE
CONCEPTION, SERIA

12TH DECEMBER 2024

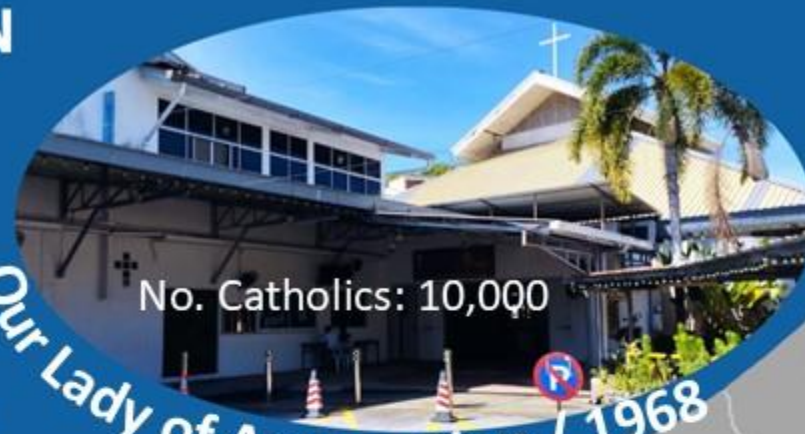


Welcome to SERIA



APOSTOLIC VICARIATE IN BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

Area: 5,270 sq km
Population: 450,500
Catholic: 3%



No. Catholics: 10,000

Our Lady of Assumption / 1968



No. of Catholics: 2000



Immaculate Conception / 1955

No. of Catholics: 2000



BRUNEI BAY MEGA-PROJECT



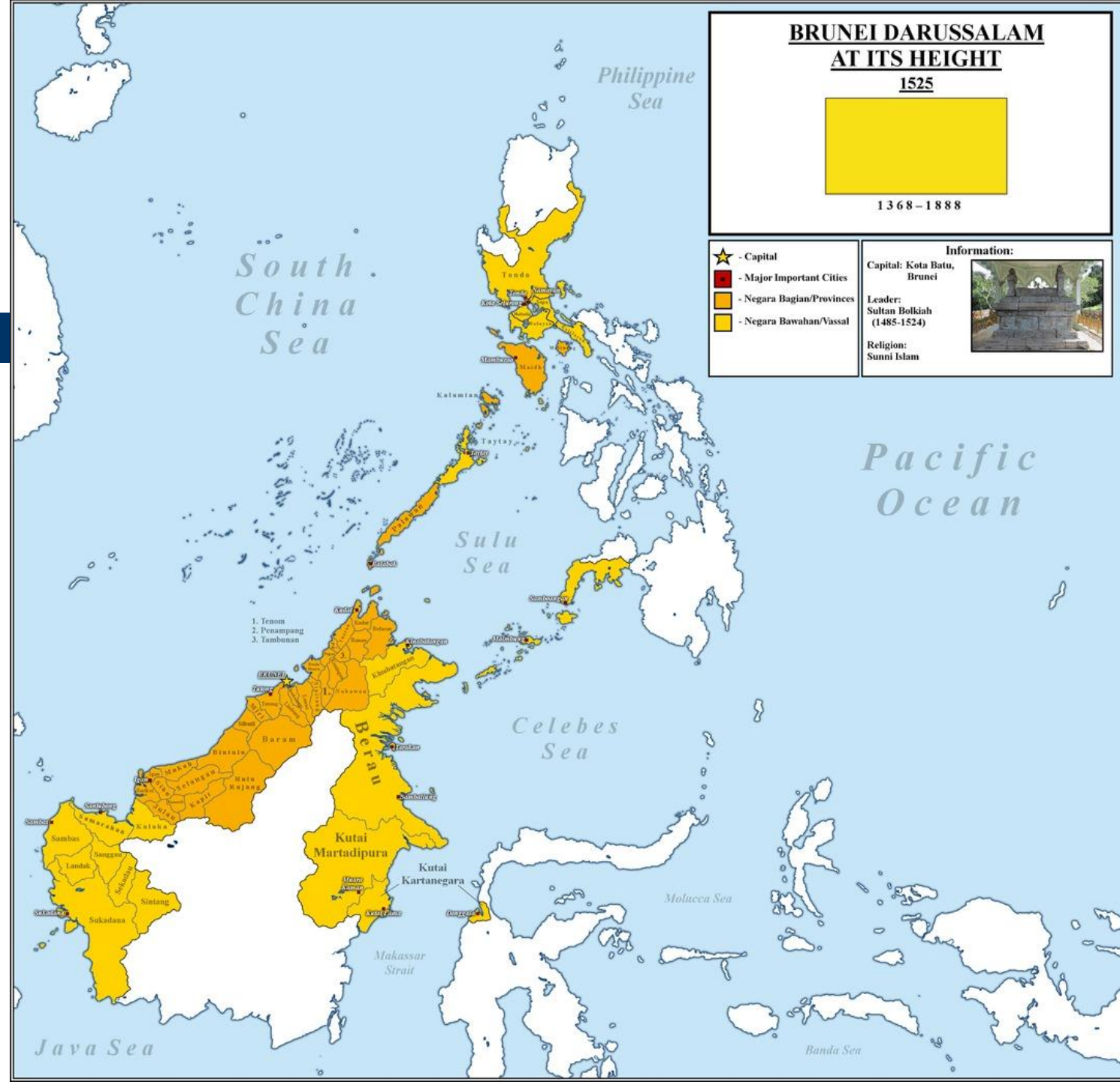
Milestones in the Brunei Church History

- 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 de Talavera.

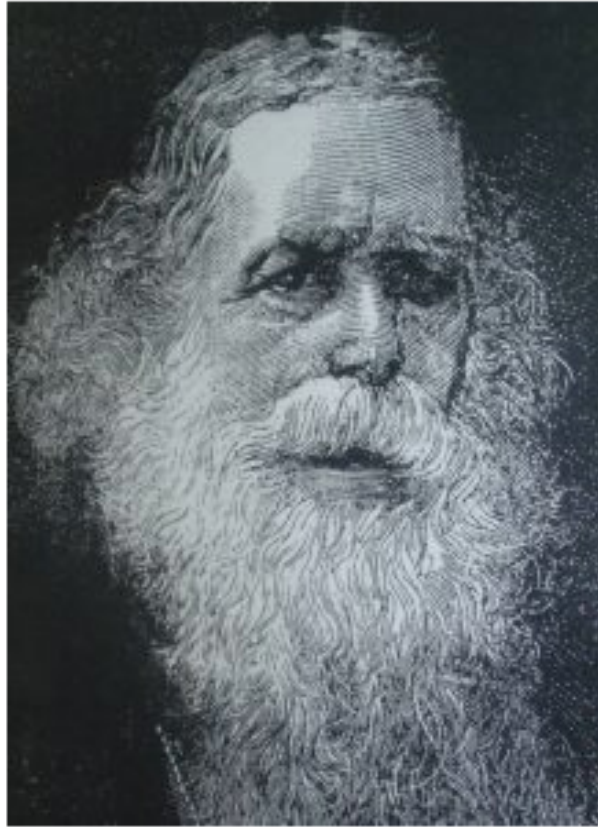




1688 - Theatine Priest, Fr. Antonio Ventimiglia arrived in Borneo and became the **first Vicar Apostolic**.



The Missionary Church



Cuarteron: 1857-1879

Borneo was properly recognised as a mission when the Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith (Propaganda Fide) set up the Prefecture Apostolic of Labuan and Borneo on 4 September 1855. The first Prefect Apostolic was Msgr Don Carlos

Cuarteron, a member of the Third Order of the Trinitarians. Born on 19 March 1816 in Cardiz, Spain, he was a sea captain before being ordained a priest on 9 Apr 1854. His vision of mission was to announce the Gospel in Borneo and in the neighbouring islands, to build groups of redeemed slaves into self-supporting Christian communities and to make mission work and commerce go hand in hand. He tried to do this with the help of the Milan

Foreign Missionaries (PIME). The mission did not bear much fruit as Cuarteron tried to cast his net too wide and too quickly. However, he did manage to redeem around 50 individuals from slavery. In December 1879 he returned to Rome and resigned as Prefect Apostolic. He went home to Cardiz and died there on 12 March 1880.



“GO INTO THE
WHOLE WORLD
AND PROCLAIM
THE GOSPEL
TO EVERY
CREATURE.”
MARK 16:15



- 1855 – Brunei became part of the Apostolic Prefecture of Labuan and North Borneo
- 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
- 1915 (24th Aug.) – First recorded baptism of a Bruneian, baptism done in Labuan, Lucia Liew, by Fr. A. Williams, MHM.

1858 - Our Lady of Every Grace



Our Lady, Mary Mediatrix of All Grace

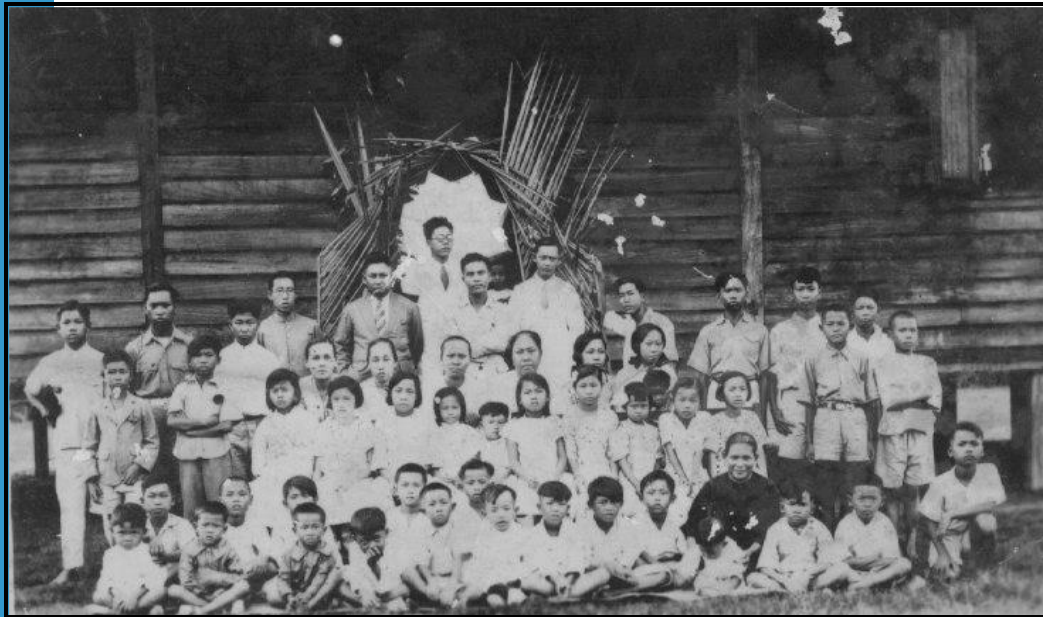
- 1919 (5th March) – **First recorded baptism in Brunei** by Fr. A. Williams of Francis Newn.
- 1927 – Brunei became part of the Apostolic Prefecture of North Borneo.
- 1932 – **First Resident priest in Brunei** (Fr A. Stotter)



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

1929 - 1940

A Roman Catholic Mission was set up in Kuala Belait. The site of the Church/School was located in 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.



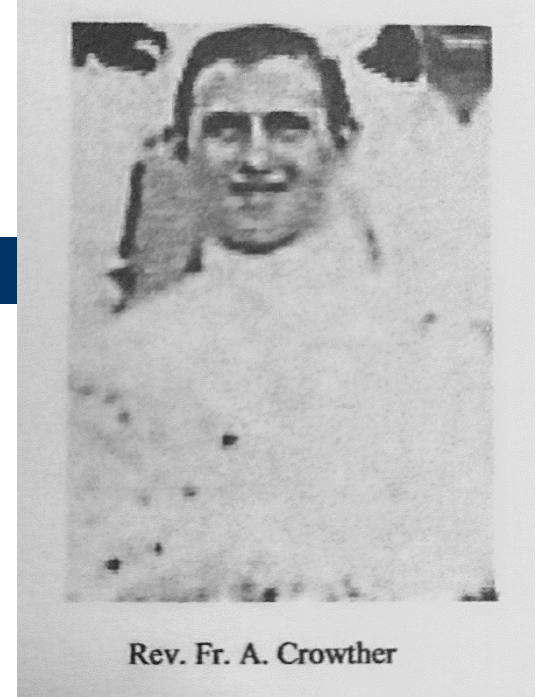
December 1935 - Staff and students in front of the wooden R.C. School/Church in K.B.



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



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



Rev. Fr. A. Crowther

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**



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



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



- 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**.



*1939/1940 - The Rectory built by Fr.
Crowther*



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

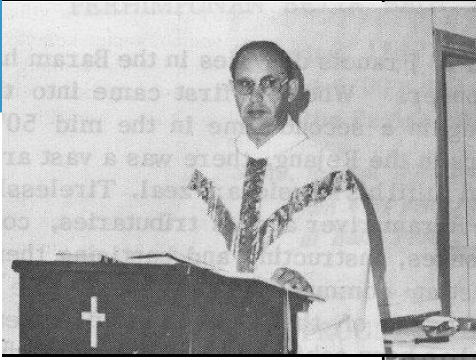


Fr. Piet de Wit with R.C School children in Brunei Town (probably 1941).

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.

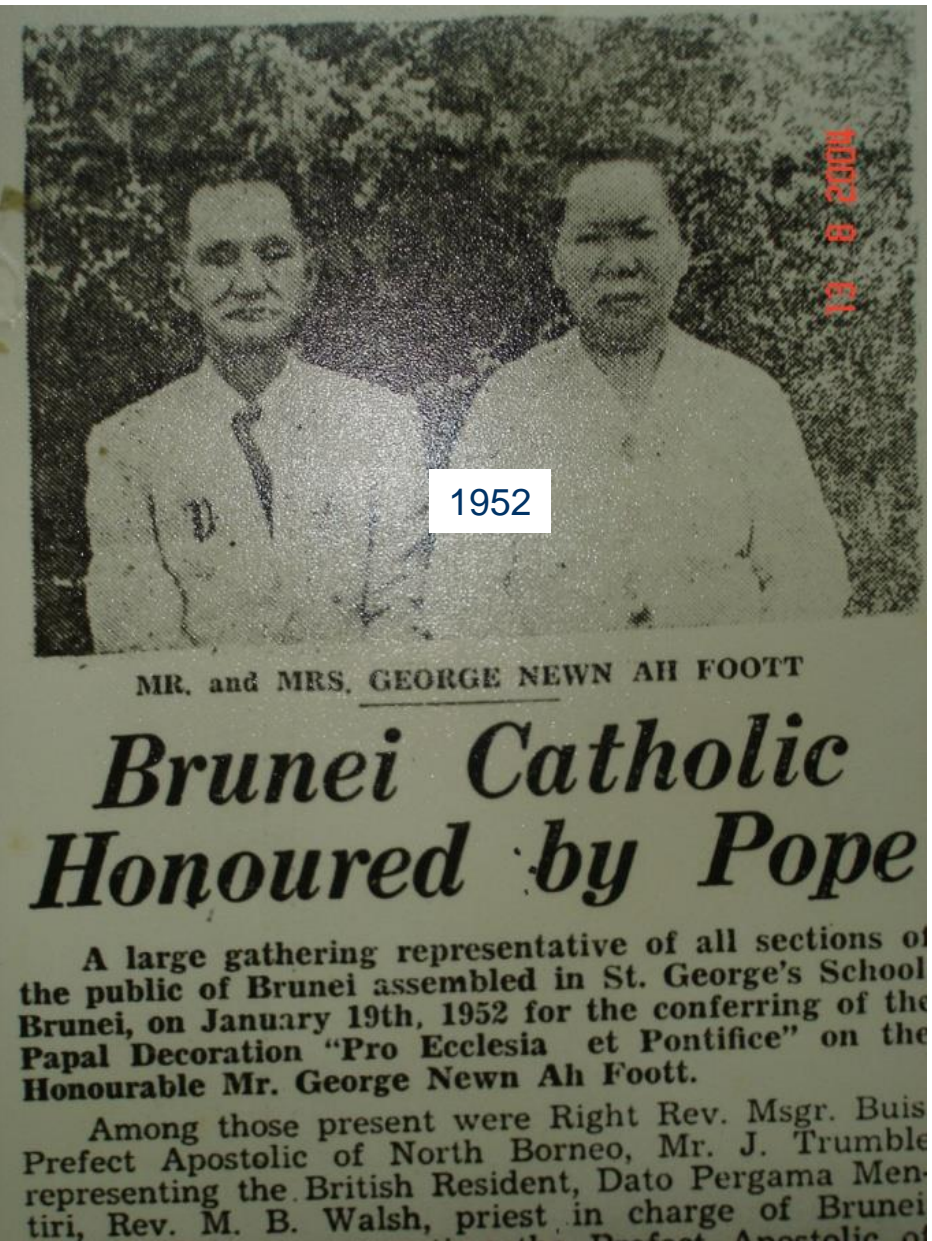


The Kuala Belait R.C Church, officially opened Christmas 1953 during the time of Fr. Herman Plattner (top left), was later named St. John's.

- 1952 – Brunei became part of the Apostolic Vicariate of Kuching.
- 1953 – Fr. Herman Plattner officially open the church in Kuala Belait.
- 1957 – Seria became the head station.



1951 – Fr. Ben Walsh with the FHC candidates

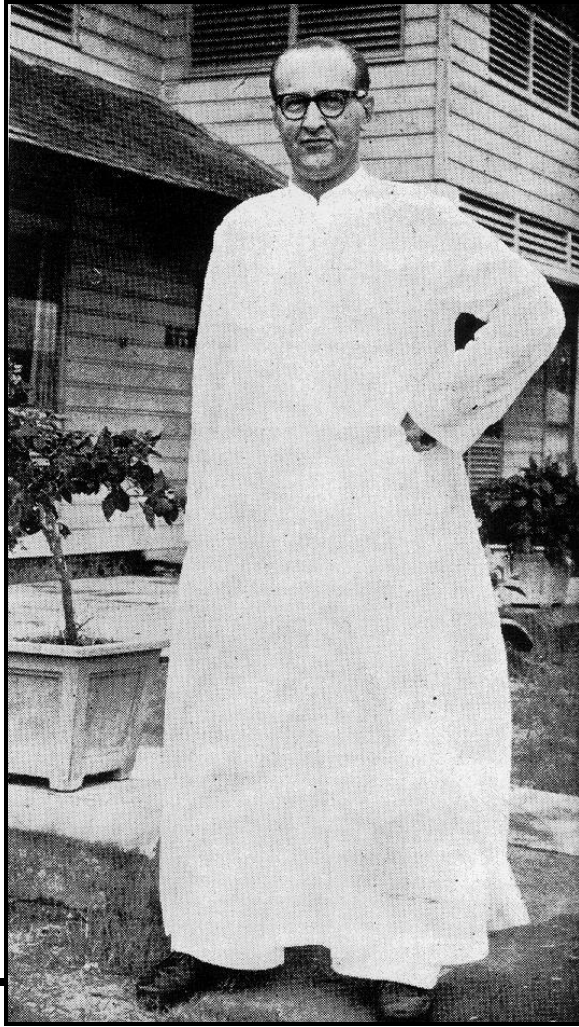


1952

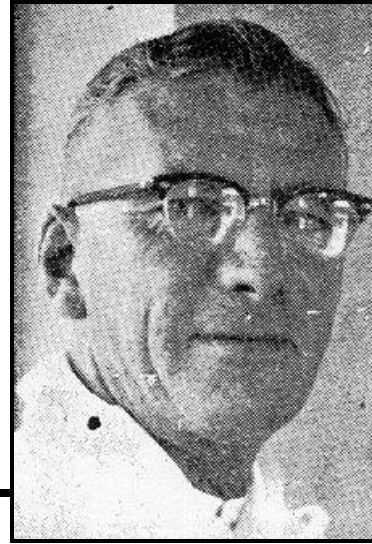
Early 1950's – First Holy Communion party in Seria.



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

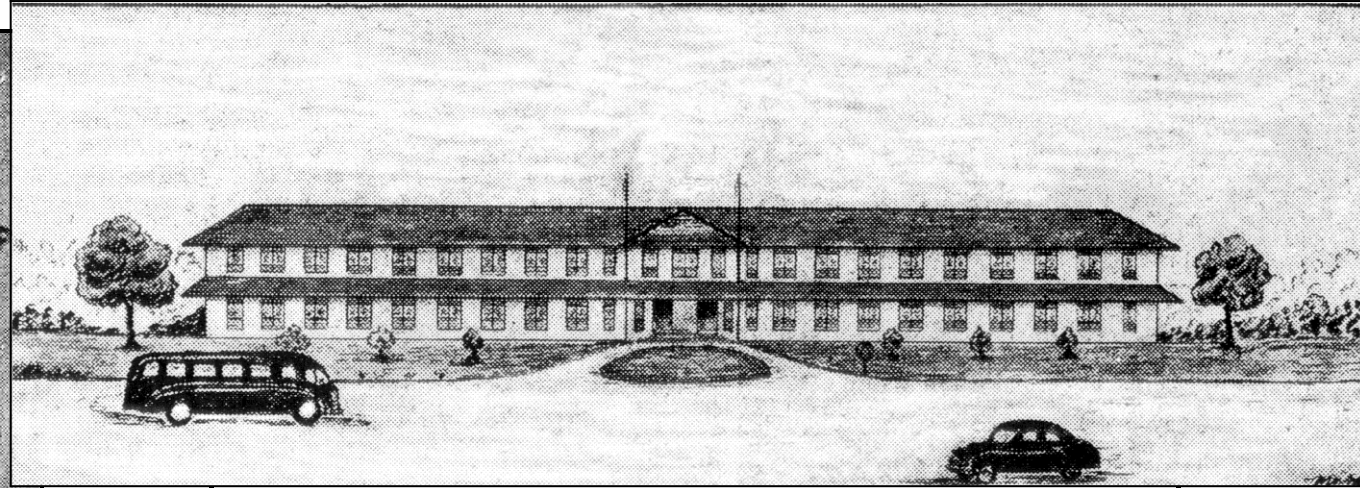


1950 - Fr. Gerard Rottinghuis appointed Principal of Kuala Belait and Seria English Schools.



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.

TENDERS SOUGHT FOR NEW SERIA SCHOOL

Tenders have been called for the erection of what will be Brunei State's largest English school — St. Michael's, on a four-acre site near Seria bazaar.

The school is to be built by the Roman Catholic Mission, and will replace Seria English School, the 1,000-pupil undertaking run at present in temporary buildings loaned by The British Malayan Petroleum Company Limited near Seria oil-field headquarters.

The new school will be a two-storied building with a frontage of about 230 feet. There will be two "wings", and in all there are to be 16 classrooms.

The Mission authorities plan to build a separate school for girls in due course, to be staffed by Catholic Sisters from Kuching. But for some time after the opening of the new St. Michael's School, it will be run on co-educational lines, as in the case of the present Seria English School.

Grants towards the cost of building the new school have been promised by the Brunei Government and The B.M.P. Company. In addition, the Catholic congregation in the Seria/Belait area has raised a large sum by a voluntary "levy" on their pay — one month's salary, spread over

St. Joseph's School, Miri, under Fathers Dekker and Boon, is expected to be opened by the Vicar Apostolic of Borneo, Monseigneur Vos, within the next few weeks. The new school will cater for about 500 pupils.

twenty months.

St. Michael's School will be situated in the south-east corner of Jalan Satu Selatan and Lorong Satu, near Seria bazaar. The Mission authorities plan to build a vicarage, a church, and a convent, when sufficient funds become available.

The foundation of the school will be laid in concrete, and the upper structure will be timber. In the design consi-

(Continued on Page 4)

THE BORNEO BULLETIN

FUND DRIVE FOR NEW SCHOOL AT SERIA

MISSING CHINESE RETURNS

(Bulletin Correspondent)

MIRI. — When a local Chinese bambooware maker failed to return after having set off on a bicycle to gather bamboo on the hillside at Pujut, his

landlord about the reported party was area but trace of Two found and it station. other p stables, don and missing ducted no clue That his disappearance, the missing man arrived back in Miri aboard the M/L Heng Hua from Sebuti, 40 miles away. When escorted to the police station, the man was unable

SERIA. — The Catholic Mission here has launched a general public appeal for funds towards the cost of building the new 1,000-pupil Seria English School planned for a site near Seria bazaar.

"An enormous amount of money, of the order of quarter of a million dollars, will be necessary to build a school large enough to accommodate our thousand students in the manner and in the comfort necessary to modern standards of education," says the appeal.

"The Catholic community have already contributed \$40,000, but as two-thirds of the students at present attending school are non-

Catholics, it is obvious that the non-Catholic section of the community should be asked as well.

"The problem may be stated quite simply: If you want a school for your children, you must help us to build one."

The appeal goes on to say that \$50,000 is needed to enable work to be started on the new school, for which a site has been secured, plans drawn and passed, and building contractors' tenders obtained.

\$60,000 BMP GRANT

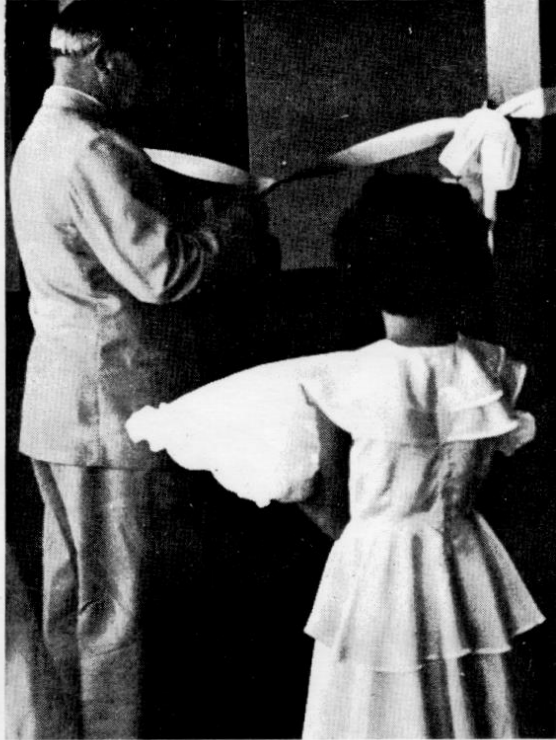
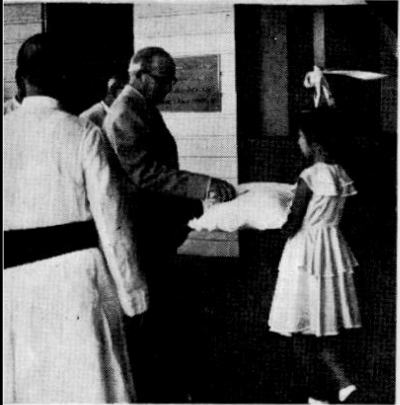
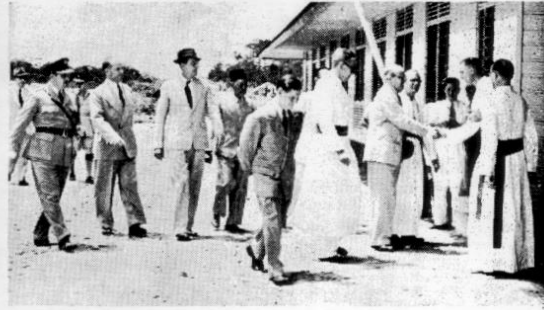
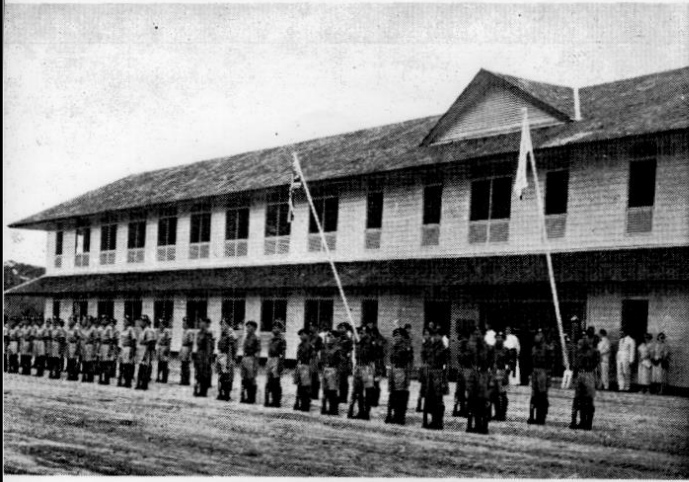
A suggestion is made that contributors should consider making donations over a period, authorising small monthly deductions from the pay of the head of the family.

The Bulletin understands that a grant of \$60,000 has been made towards the school project by The British Malayan Petroleum

The monthly fee charged for Primary students is \$3.50, increasing by 50 cents with each promotion to a higher class until, in the final year in the Secondary, the fee is \$7.50. This compares favourably with the fees paid in other private schools, and is made possible by a monthly subsidy of \$1.50 per child paid by the B.M.P. Co. for all children of Company employees, and by Government grants.

SALAM, July 2, 1955

HIGH COMMISSIONER OPENS ST. MICHAEL'S SCHOOL



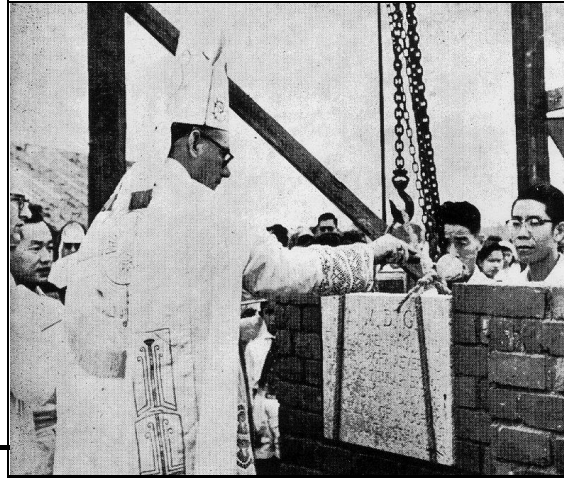
The picture at the top left of the page shows the new building for St. Michael's R.C. Missions School, Seria, with a Brunei State Police Guard of Honour drawn up in front of it awaiting the arrival of the High Commissioner, Sir Anthony Abell, who performed the opening ceremony.

Down the left of the page, one above the other, the pictures show: Sir Anthony accepting a pair of scissors from a pupil, with which to cut the opening tape; the High Commissioner inspecting the Guard of Honour; Monseigneur Vos, Vicar Apostolic of Kuching, laying the foundation stone for the Church of Our Lady, Seria, which is being built on a site next to the school.

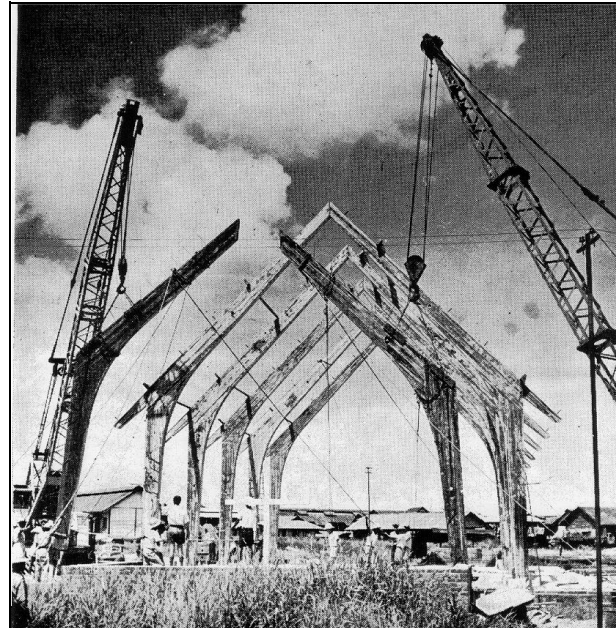
Left of this caption, the High Commissioner cuts the tape and declares St. Michael's open. Above, top right of page, Sir Anthony is introduced to teaching staff by Father Leo Barry, Rector of Kuala Belait/Seria. Left to right: Dr. Austin Johnson, B. M. P. Company Chief M.O.; Mr. T. F. Stone, O.C.P.D., Kuala Belait; Mr. J. G. C. Kirby-Turner, C.P.O. Brunei; Mr. P. A. Coates, Assistant Resident, Belait; Mr. J. O. Gilbert, British Resident of Brunei; Duli Pengiran Bendahara; Mr. Cyril Fenner, designer of the school; Father Barry; Sir Anthony Abell; Msgr. Vos; a photographer; Father Maher; Father Rottinghuis, Principal of St. Michael's.

1955. Official opening of St Michael's School, Seria by British High Commissioner, Sir Anthony Abell

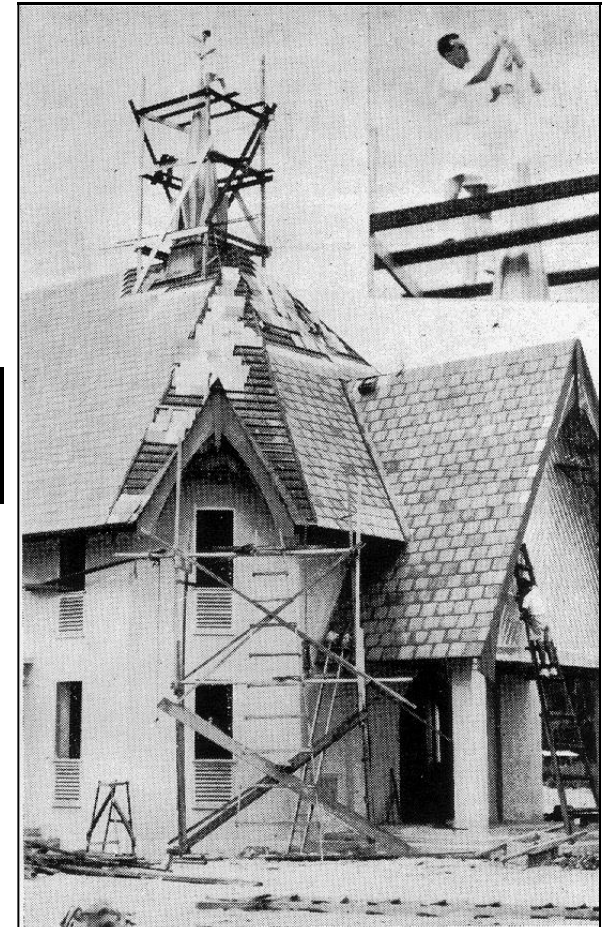
June 19th, 1955 –
Monsignor Vos, Vicar
Apostolic of Kuching laid
foundation for the Church
of Our Lady, Seria



June 1955 - Monseigneur Vos, Vicar Apostolic of Kuching laid foundation stone for the Church of Our Lady, Seria.

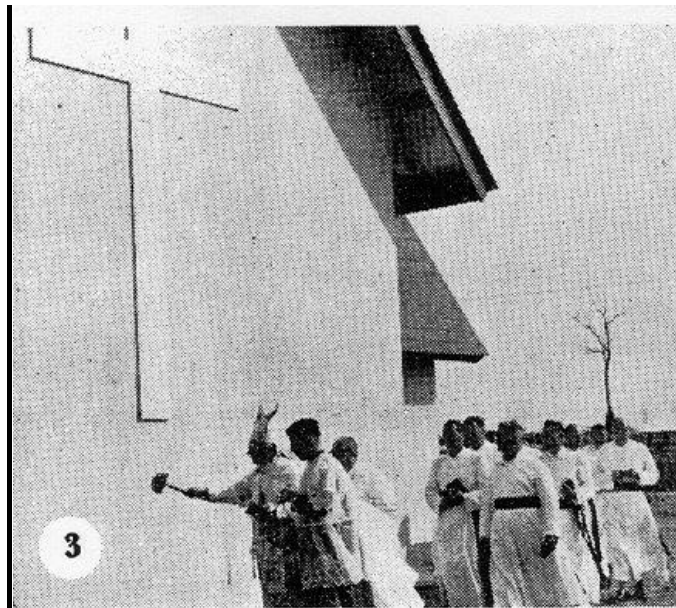
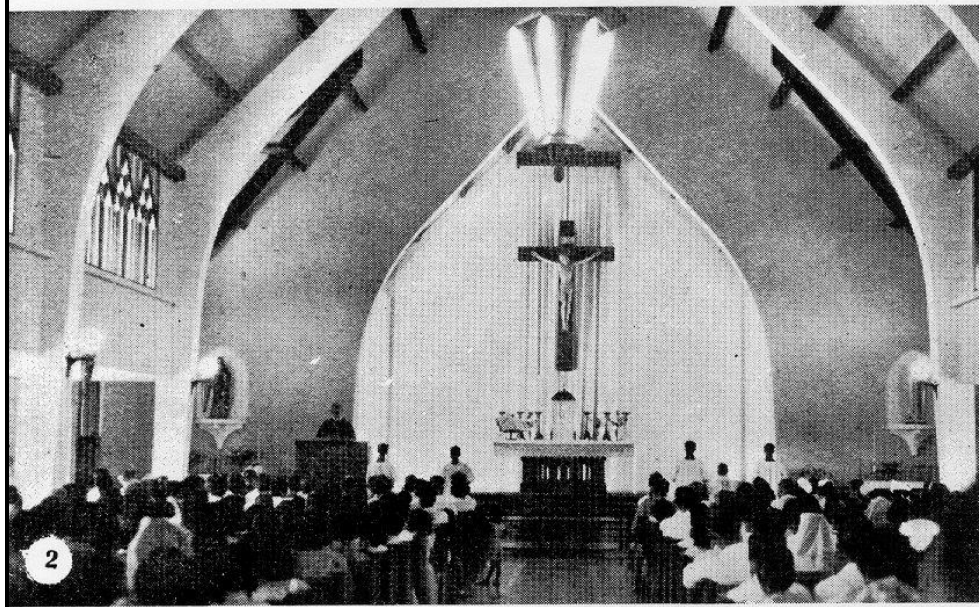


November 1955 - Church of Our Lady, Seria under construction.



Finishing touches are now being put to the new St. Michael's Church in Seria, which will be formally opened next Sunday, July 29. Seen here giving a hand with the painting of the Cross, is Mr. J. Rogers, B.M.P.'s Paint Adviser. The architect was Mr. C. Fenner of B.M.P.'s Engineering Department.

July 1956 - Church of Our Lady, Seria nearing completion.



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.

1956 – The Convent in Seria was set up by the Sisters of St. Joseph.





**The opening of the
new church, St.
George's Church by
Bishop John Vos on
Easter Sunday April
22nd 1957**

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.



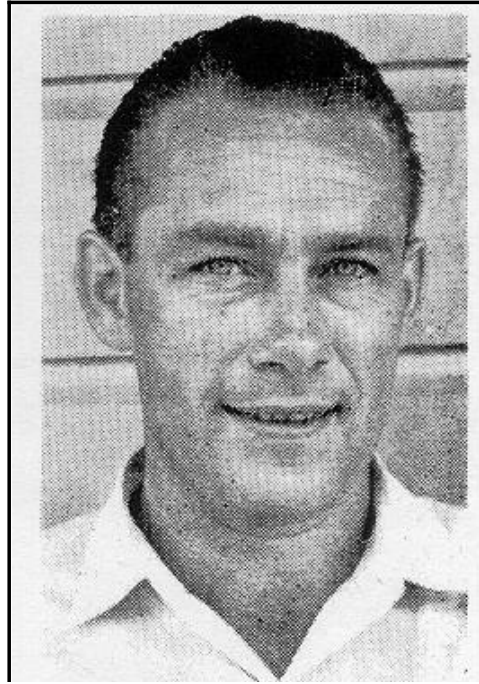
Fr. Van de Laar with St. John's School children

- 1959 – Brunei became part of the Apostolic Vicariate of Miri (19th December)
- After the Vicariate of Miri was established and, in the following year, Father Anthony Denis Galvin (who was a Mill Hill Father himself) was consecrated the first bishop of the Miri Vicariate. He was ordained by Pope John XXIII in Rome on 5 May 1960.



Opening of St John's School, Kuala Belait by Bishop Antony Galvin on May 1966





1967

Fr. Michael Gill MHM and Fr H. Brentjens MHM appointed to teach on St John's School, Kuala Belait and St. Michael's School, Seria



Students in class at St. John's School.

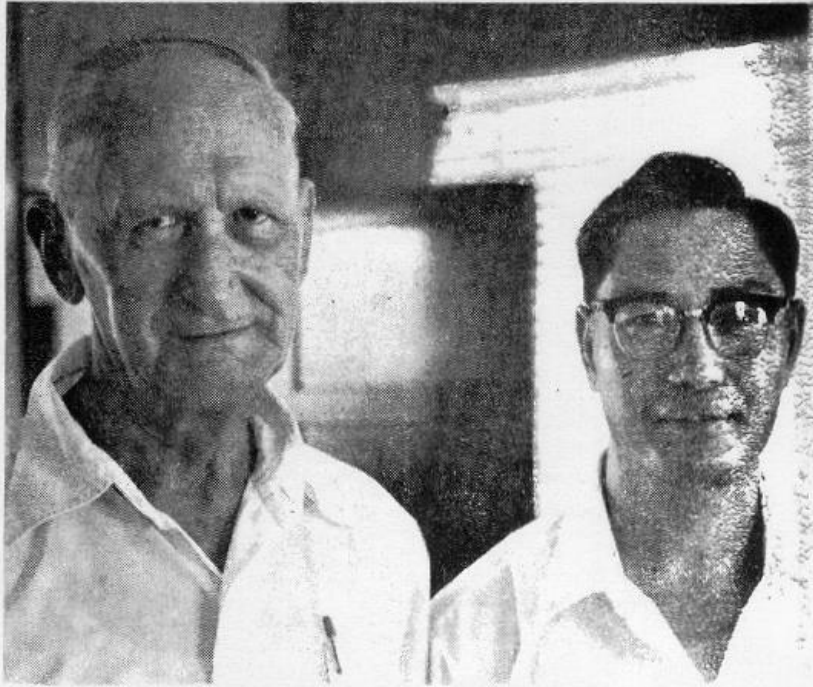
11/3/1967 Rev. Mother Eamonn,
Mother-General of the Franciscan
Missionaries of St Joseph, visited St.
Angela's Convent School in Seria

THE BORNEO BULLETIN, March 11, 1967.



THE BORNEO BULLETIN, November 2, 1968.

Priest ends 38 Borneo years

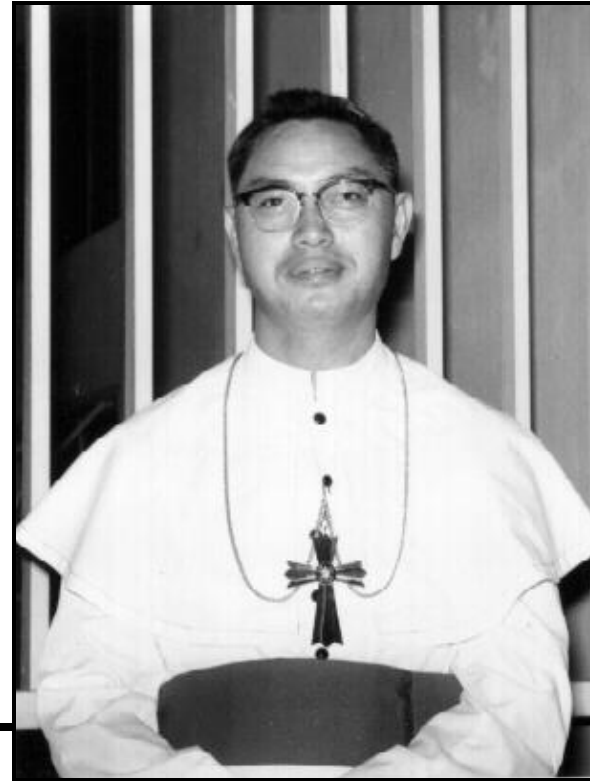


Fr. John Vandelaar, with Fr. Peter Chung, who has succeeded him as rector of the Kuala Belait Catholic parish.

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

became assistant priest, Miri.

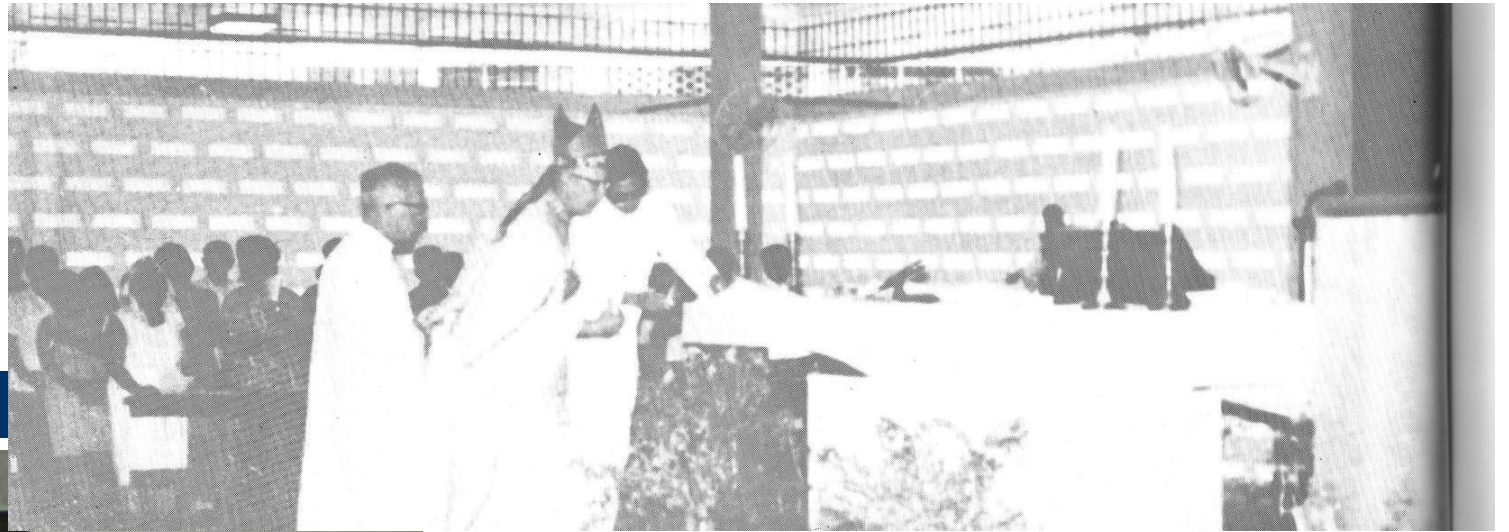
He served in Sarikei, Sibuan and Miri again for four years before he was sent to Rome for further studies in 1963. He returned in 1966 with a doctorate in Church law and since then has been rector of the Mill Hill seminary in Miri.—Bulletin picture.



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.

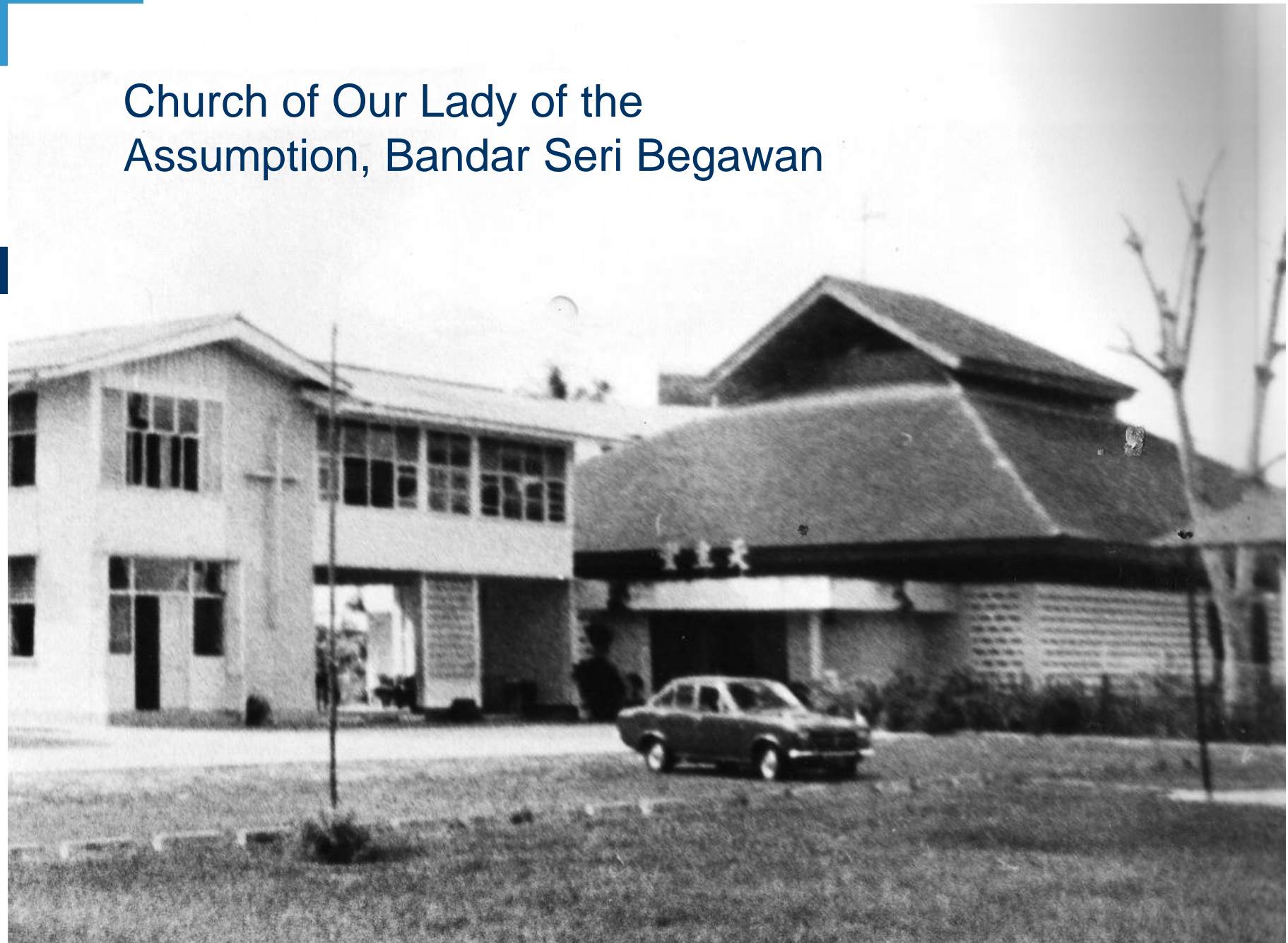


February 1968 - Fr. Vincent Cahill arrived from Miri to become principal of St. John's School. Pictured above is Fr. Cahill (centre left) with Fr. Van de Laar (centre right) and St. John's School teachers.



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

Church of Our Lady of the
Assumption, Bandar Seri Begawan





1970 – Fr. Paul Tong with First Holy Communicants



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.

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.



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.

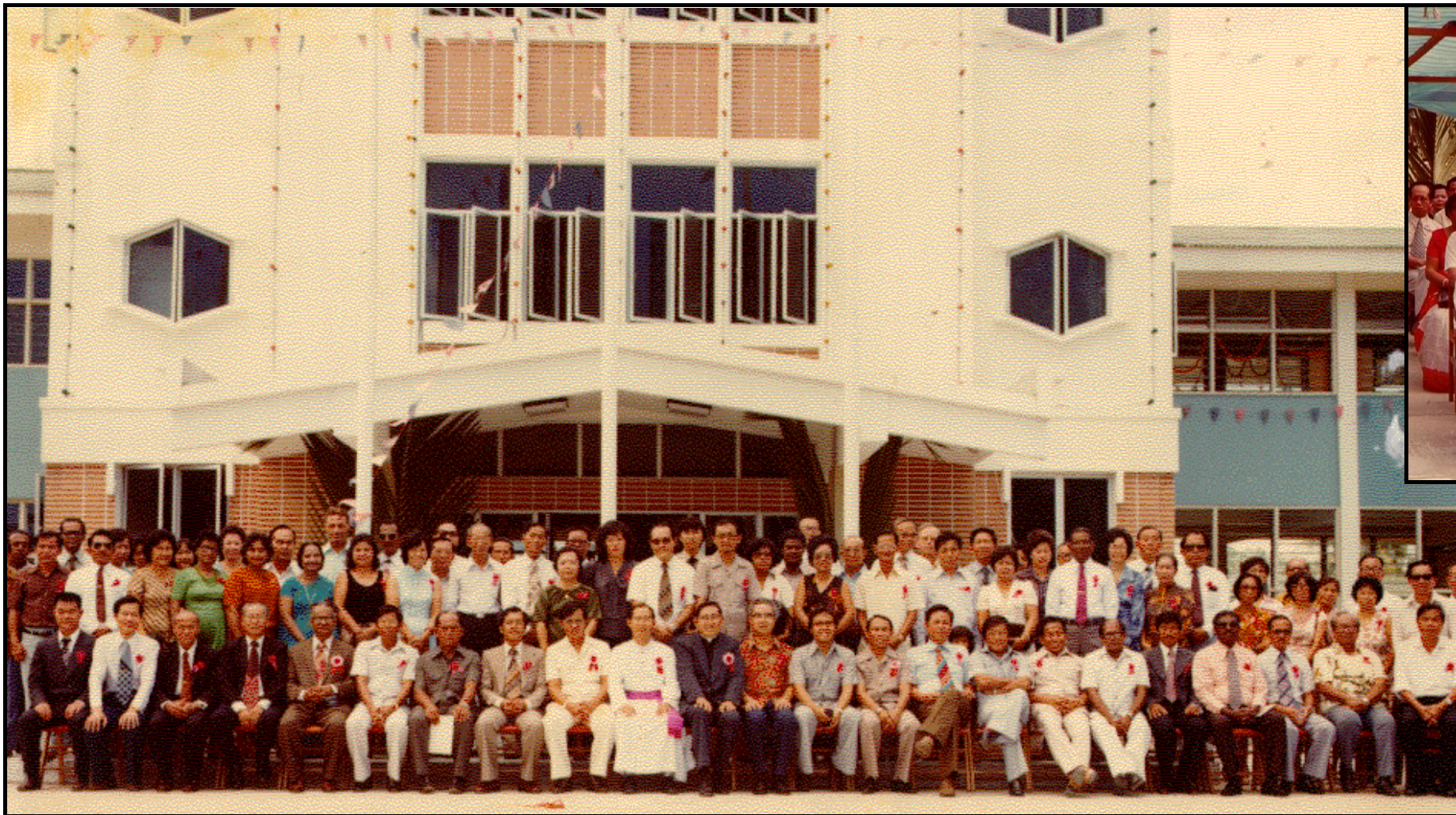
During the service Bishop Galvin said Father Tann was the fourth Chinese priest to serve in the Vicariate, but more were needed. He looked forward to the day when the first local bishop would be consecrated. — Bulletin picture.



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



12 March 1972 – The new St John's Church was blessed and officially opened by Bishop Anthony Galvin



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



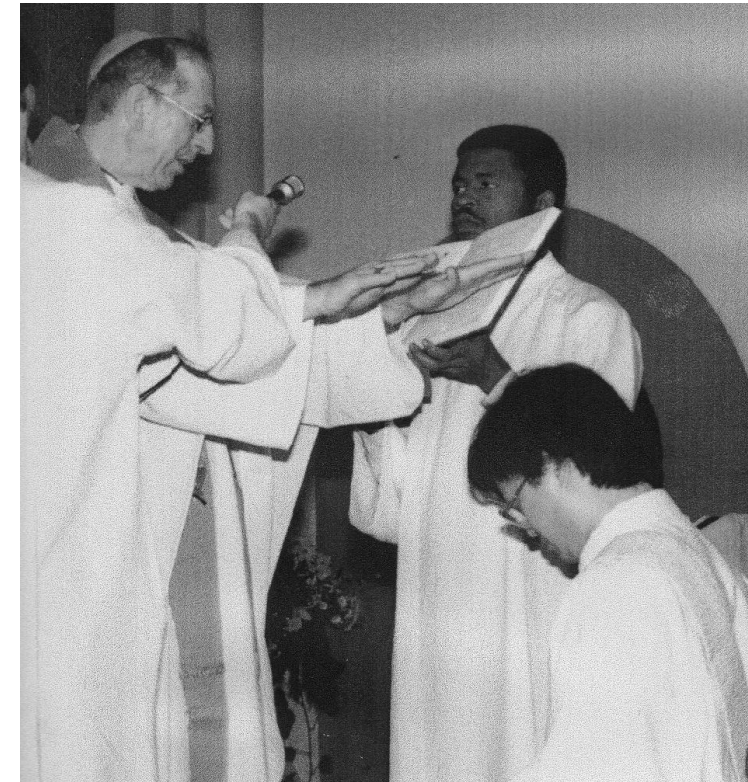
June 1973 - Bishop Van C. Melkebeke (Apostolic Visitor) with Fr. Tong and Fr. Peter Chiang after conferring sacrament of confirmation at St. John's.

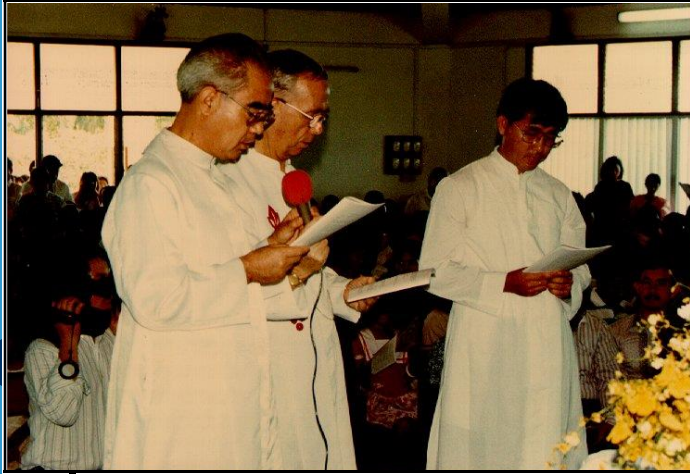


1980 - Bishop Anthony Lee with Fr. Tong conferring sacrament of confirmation at St. John's.

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 30th November 1985
- 1989 – Fr. Cornelius Sim was ordained by Bishop Anthony Lee in Seria
- 1991 – Departure* of Fr. Chiang and Fr. McClorey





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).

26/11/1989 - Fr. Cornelius Sim was ordained by Bishop Anthony Lee in Seria

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.



- 1991 – Last remaining 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.



- 1997 – Establishment of the Apostolic Prefecture of Brunei Darussalam on 21st November
- 1998 – Msgr. Cornelius Sim was installed as Apostolic Prefect of Brunei Darussalam on 23rd February



Ordination of Fr. Paul Shie – 16/8/1999



Ordination of Fr. Robert

10/8/2003



Apostolic Vicariate Established in Brunei

VATICAN CITY, OCT. 20, 2004 (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.



Ordination of Bishop Cornelius Sim January 21, 2005



Saddest Moment for our Catholic 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





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

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. Avincula, 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

POPE FRANCIS

CARDINALS

ANGELUS

CONSISTORY

Pope announces a consistory for the creation of 13 new cardinals

25th October
2020

RIP

His Eminence Cornelius Cardinal Sim

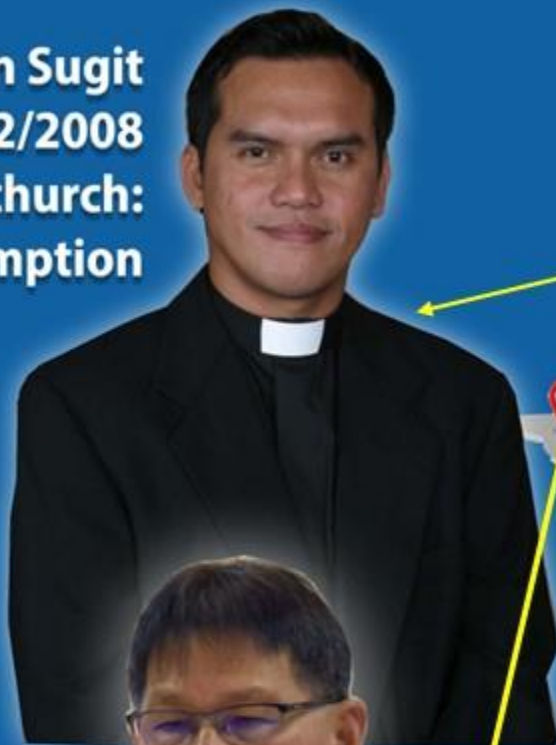
16.9.1951 - 29.5.2021



CLERGY IN THE APOSTOLIC VICARIATE IN BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

**2 Seminarians and
1 FSIC sister under
formation**

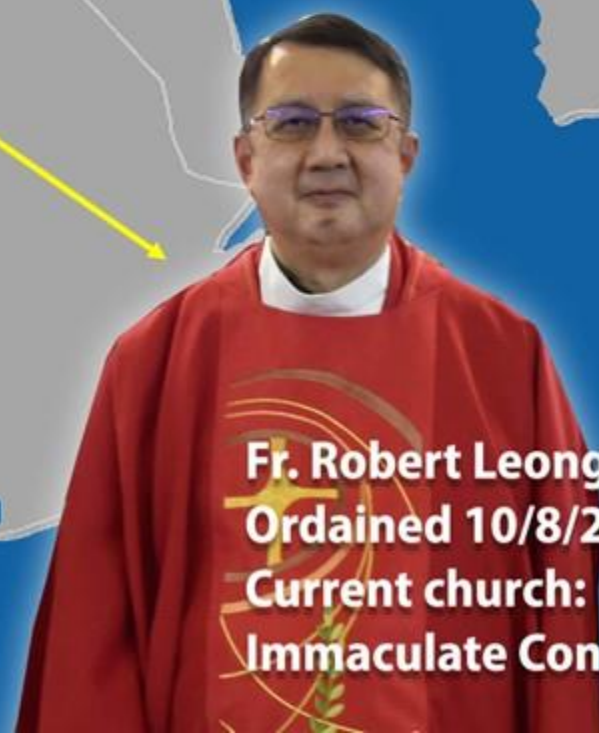
Fr. Arin Sugit
Ordained 8/12/2008
Current church:
Our Lady of Assumption



Fr. Paul Shie
Ordained 16/8/1999
Current church:
St. John's Church



Fr. Robert Leong
Ordained 10/8/2003
Current church:
Immaculate Conception



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN THE APOSTOLIC VICARIATE IN BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

2024



St. George's School
Built 1937
No. of students= 877

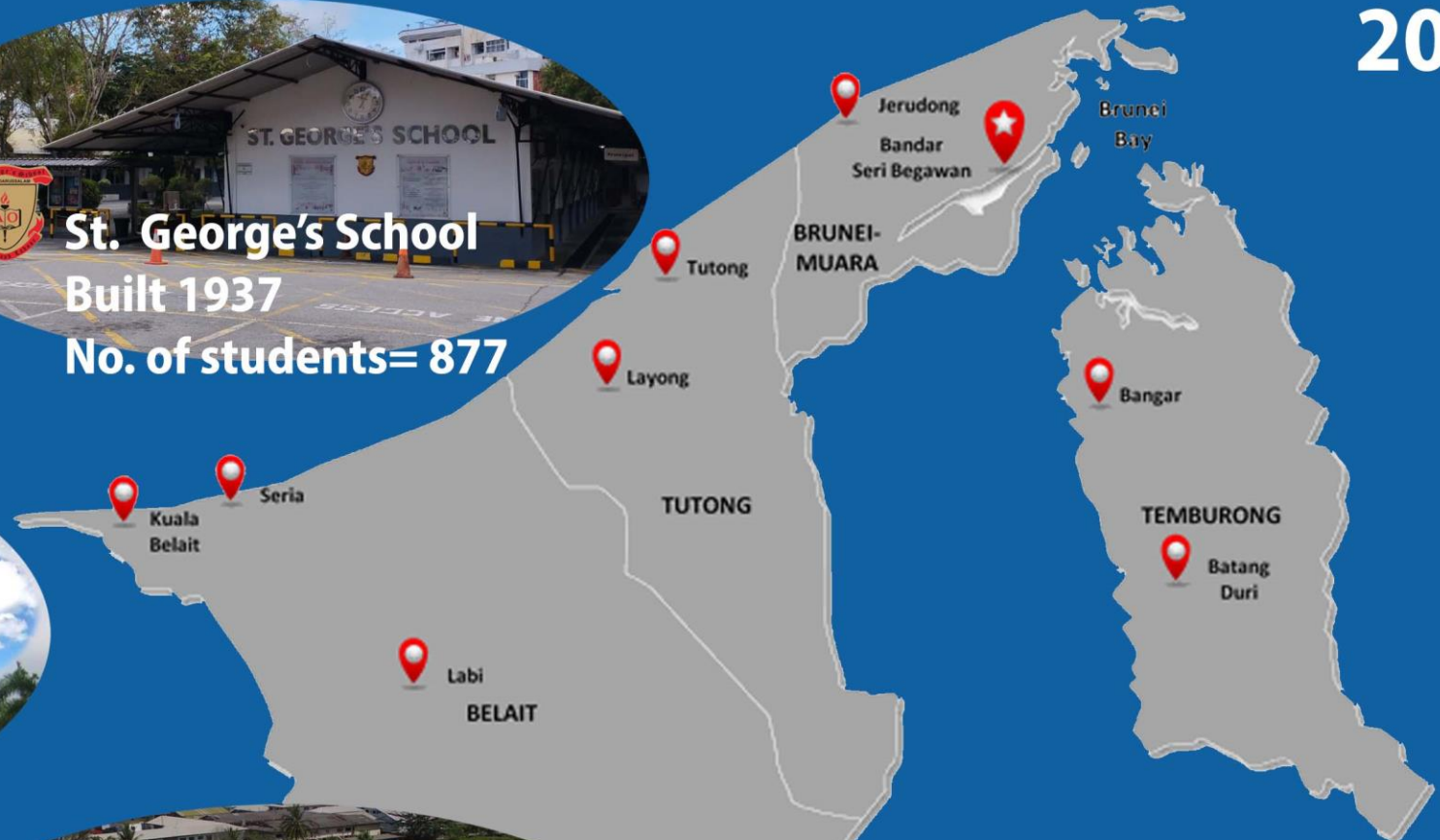


سکولہ سین ت جون س
St. John's School
Kuala Belait

St. John's School
Built 1930
No. of students= 751



St. Angela's School
Built 1959
No. of students= 358



**Total students:
1986**

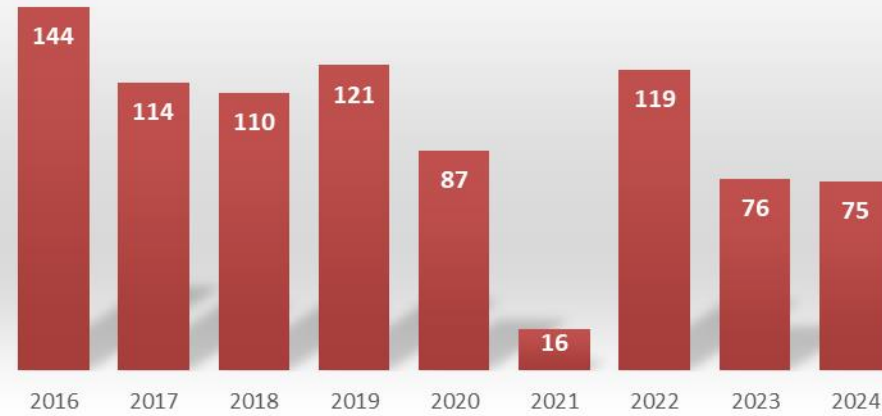
Vicariate Sacramental Statistics for 2024

2024			SJC	COOL	COLA		Total
Baptism	Up to 1 year old		3	3	20		26
	1 to 7 years old		1	6	22		29
	Over 7 years		13	20	13		46
							101
First Holy Communion			13	22	53		88
Confirmation			11	16	49		76
Marriage	Between baptized		3	0	3		6
	Between baptized and non-baptized		2	2	3		7
							13
Death			8	12	9		29
Catechists			26	47	30		103

Baptism



First Holy Communion



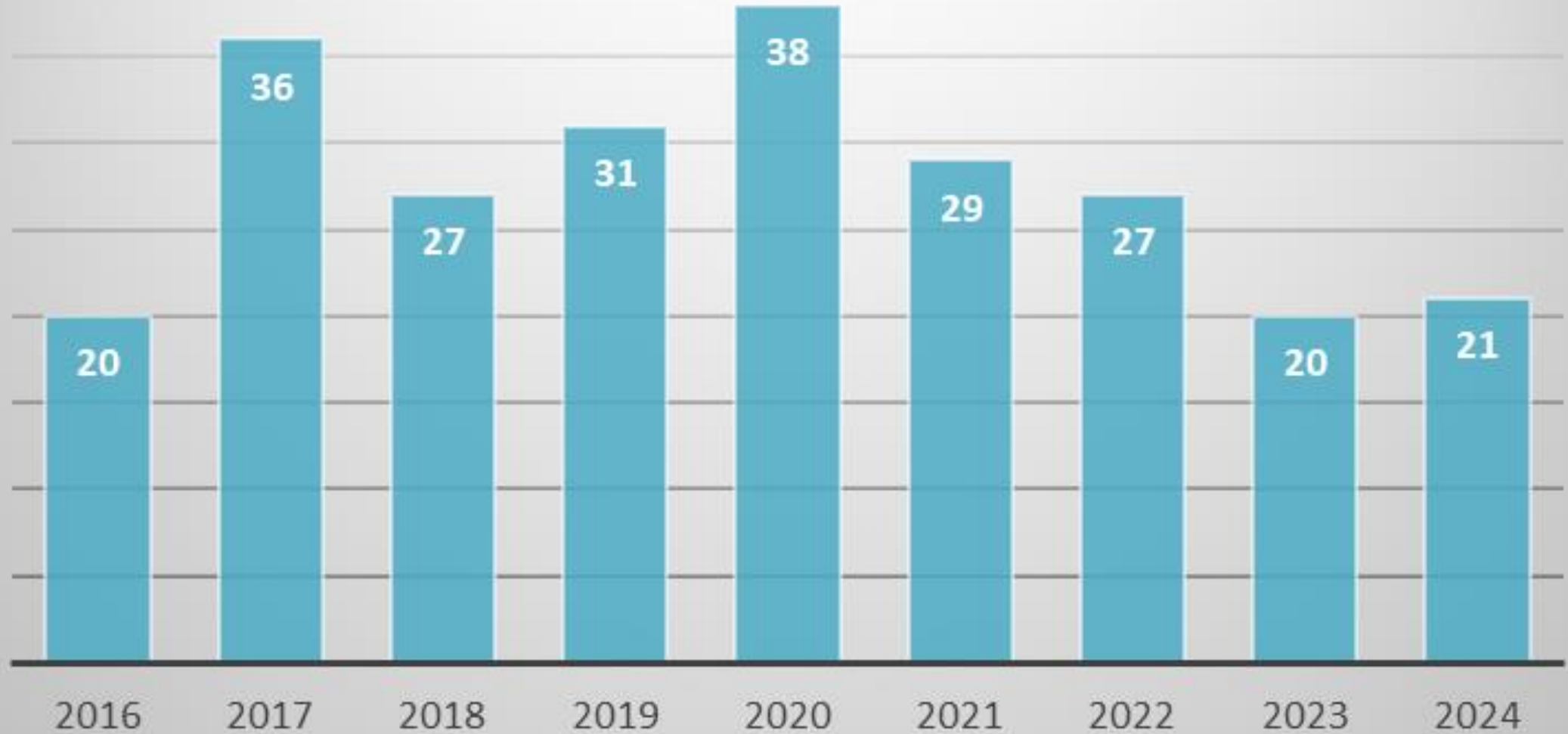
Confirmation



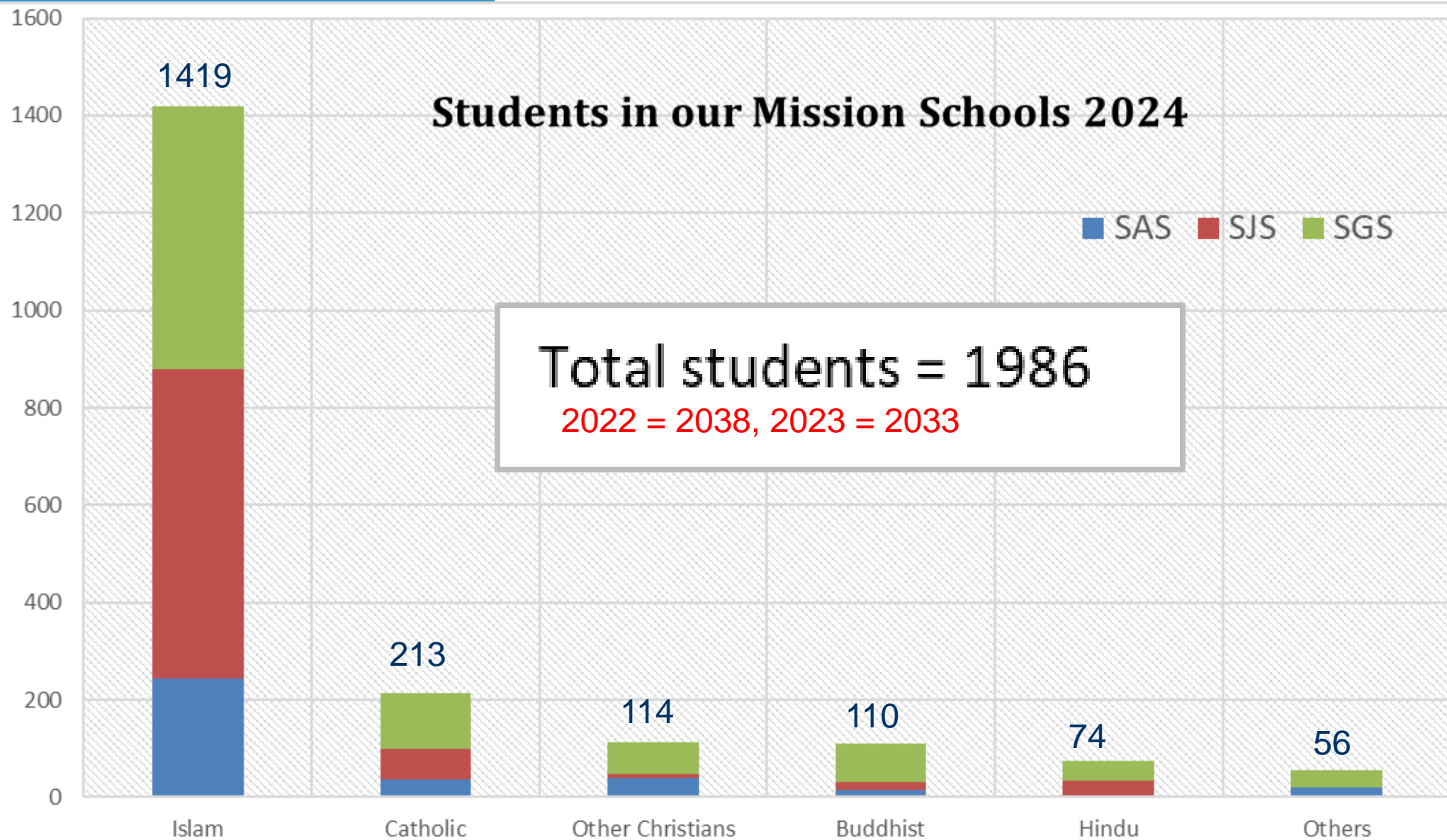
Marriages



Death



Students in our Mission Schools 2024



Total students = 1986

2022 = 2038, 2023 = 2033

SAS SJS SGS

Mary Queen of Heaven and Earth

20TH OCTOBER



**Mary Queen of Heaven and
Earth, pray for us!**

**O Holy Virgin Mary, remember
us who seek your care, implore
your help, ask for your
intercession. Unceasingly in
your mercy I trust as I plead for
you watch over me, a sinner.
To you I approach, my Mother
Most Holy, as I pour out my sins
in repentance, look upon me as
your child and lead me in time
to the heavenly kingdom. O
Mother of my Lord Jesus,
despise not my prayer but hear
me and grant my petitions.
Amen.**

**Patroness of
APOSTOLIC VICARIATE
IN BRUNEI DARUSSALAM**

**Maria Kumang Serega enggau
Dunia, Sembang ka Kami!**

**Maria Dara Tuchi, ingat olih
nuan samoa orang ti mintaibun
nuan, ti minta tulong nuan, ti
minta sembiang nuan, enda
kala lebu, keba aku andalka
pementas nuan, lalu minta nuan
malik asoh aku, orang ti jai. Aku
ka ngagai nuan Indai aku, ti
Tuchi Ari Semoa, lalu madahka
penyalah diri di moa nuan
enggau ati nesal lalu minta
nuan ngambu aku ka anak,
ngambi nuan mai aku ila niki ka
menoa serega. O Indai Tuhan
Jesus, anang enda ninga ka
sembiang aku, lalu beri utai ti
dipinta aku. Amin.**

**Patroness of
APOSTOLIC VICARIATE
IN BRUNEI DARUSSALAM**