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A STUDY OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MALAYSIA

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No. Matrik : 042267

Latihan Ilmiah

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Active Christian communities are also stressed upon to spread their faith more effectively. Hence, the Roman Catholic churches which are situated throughout the 4 dioceses and 2 archdioceses in Malaysia are building active Christian communities which help in combatting the socio-economic problems of the nation and practising ecumenism through dialogues with other religions so as to better understand them.

Synopsis

Roman Catholicism had come to Malaysia in 1511 with the advent of the Portugese missionaries. Despite wars with the Muslims or the Dutch and English traders over the years, Roman Catholicism had managed to prevail and establish themmselves in this country. Throughout the years, the number of Catholics in Malaysia have increased tremendously and the training of indigenous priests is made possible locally.

The Roman Catholics' mission is to spread the gospel, the truth about Christian salvation and to convert the local residents to Catholics.

In the early seventies, the Roman Catholics joined the World Council of Churches and delivered new decrees concerning their religion. These decrees stress the importance of ecumenism which presents the faith with an attitude of love and respect for other religions, and enculturating themselves with certain elements from other religions and cultures so as to enable the locals to identify themselves with Catholicism. Active Christian committees are also stressed upon to spread their faith more effectively. Hence, the Roman Catholic churches which are situated throughout the 4 dioceses and 2 archdioceses in Malaysia are building active Christian communities which help in combatting the socio-economic problems of the nation and practising ecumenism through dialogues with other religions so as to better understanding them.

Sinopsis

Roman Catholicism telah datang ke Malaysia pada tahun 1511 dengan kedatangan padri-padri Portugis. Walaupun terdapat banyak peperangan di antara saudagar-saudagar Portugis dengan saudagar-saudagar Muslim, Belanda dan Inggeris pada tahun-tahun yang sudah lalu, Roman Catholicism masih dapat ujud hingga masa kini dan menubuhkan kedudukan di Malaysia. Dalam pada abad-abad yang telah lalu, bilangan penduduk-penduduk Catholic di Malaysia telah bertambah dengan hebatnya, dan latihan padri-padri tempatan telah dapat dijalankan di dalam negara Malaysia sendiri.

Tugas padri-padri Catholic ialah untuk menyebarkan 'gospel' mereka, mengajar tentang kebenaran tentang penyelamatan (salvation) Kristian mereka, dan untuk ~~mengajukan~~ mempengaruhi penduduk-penduduk tempatan supaya menganut agama Catholic. Pada awal tahun tujuh-puluhan, padri-padri Catholic itu telah menjadi ahli kepada 'World Council of Churches' dan telah mencetuskan beberapa undang-undang baru. Undang-undang ini menekankan tentang kepentingan 'ecumenism' yang mempersembahkan agama mereka dengan sikap cinta dan hormat kepada agama-agama lain dan juga enculturisasikan agama mereka dengan ciri-ciri daripada budaya dan agama lain supaya penduduk di sini akan lebih mudah dipengaruhi. Komuniti Kristian yang aktif telah juga ditekankan untuk menyebarkan agama mereka. Oleh itu, gereja-gereja Catholic yang terletak di diosis-diosis di seluruh Malaysia telah giat mendirikan komuniti-komuniti Kristian yang aktif yang akan dapat menolong membasmi masalah-masalah sosio-ekonomik di Malaysia

dan mengamalkan 'ecumenism' dengan mengadakan perundingan dengan
agama-agama lain supaya dapat memahami agama-agama itu dengan
lebih mendalam lagi.

Mr. Paul and Brother Damien Oliver, who have
helped me immensely in my field-work. I would also like to thank

Oleh yang demikian, dengan latarbelakang sejarah yang teguh untuk
menolong mereka, Gereja Roman Catholic di Malaysia harap dapat
menyebarkan agama mereka dengan lebih kejayaan lagi melalui
kegiatan-kegiatan serta komuniti-komuniti aktif mereka.

12th January, 1965.

Yours truly,

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS: THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MALAYSIA.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Fr. Joseph Stephen, Brother Ultan Paul and Brother Damien Oliver, who have helped me immensely in my fieldwork. I would also like to thank Dr. Raymond Lee for supervising my work, Anne and Mary of the Catholic Research Centre, Jirom and Christina, my parents, Ken and Derek for their invaluable assistance, and last but definitely not least, Kim. As spiritual fulfillment as the society becomes more corrupt with the competition that inevitably pervades with the onslaught of industrialization. The religion in the Malay Peninsula and the island of Sumatra, Malaysia purports to have freedom of religion with Islam as its 12th. January, 1905. religion. The other major religions found in Malaysia are that of Buddhism, Hinduism and Christianity. My interest lies in Christianity, which is a topic which is seldom discussed in this course. The world of Christianity is divided into the Roman Catholics and the Protestants, which are further divided into numerous other denominations. Presently in Malaysia, while the Protestants seem to be actively indulging in their missionary activity such as door-to-door preaching, charismatic groups and social gatherings, the Catholics appear to be rather passive and a lot less aggressive in their activities. However, despite the apparent passivity, the Catholics constitute more than 50% of the Christians found in Malaysia, and make up approximately 2% of the country's population. Could it be that their apparent passivity is due to the fact that they are already quite

A STUDY OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MALAYSIA.

INTRODUCTION.

In the face of a fast industrializing developing nation such as Malaysia, the role of religion has taken an upward surge in its importance in the lives of the people in the country. There is an increasing need to rely upon spiritual fulfilment as the society becomes more corrupt with the competition that inevitably pervades with the onslaught of industrialisation.

Malaysia purports to have freedom of religion with Islam as its national and official religion. The other major religions found in Malaysia are that of Bhuddism, Hinduism and Christianity. My interest lies in Christianity as it is a topic which is seldom discussed in this course.

Christianity is divided into the Roman Catholics and the Protestants, which are further divided into numerous other denominations. Presently in Malaysia, while the Protestants seem to be actively indulging in their missionary activity such as door-to-door preaching, charismatic groups and social gatherings, the Catholics appear to be rather passive and a lot less aggressive in their activities. However, despite the apparent passivity, the Catholics constitute more than 50% of the Christians found in Malaysia, and make up approximately 3% of the country's population. Could it be that their apparent passivity is due to the fact that they are already quite

established in this country? Is this establishment due to their strong historical background which dates back to the early sixteenth century? What kind of activity do they organise to enable their continuous numerical growth and to help them prevail to this present day? How closely do they follow what is decreed by the Vatican Council in Rome?

Other problems include the difficulties in conducting research. It is therefore the aim of this study to throw some light into the historical background and the development of this faith in Malaysia, the missionary activity that is practised now, its relation to the decrees passed by the Vatican Council and the structure of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Malaysia.

AREA OF STUDY AND METHODS OF INVESTIGATION.

The area of study in general is ofcourse Malaysia but the focus is largely on the churches in Ipoh and Kuala Lumpur.

The methods of investigation employed in the course of this study include that of interviewing various key informants in the form of priests an brothers in churches, schools as well as in the Catholic Research Centre in Kuala Lumpur. The interviews were unstructured to enable freedom of answers provided by the informants. I had also participated in several Catholic masses to find out what they were about as well as observe the ethnic groups which dominate different masses in different churches.

PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED DURING FIELDWORK.

Problems encountered in the course of fieldwork are inevitable. The main problem which I faced for this study was in getting historical data and the development of the Church in Ipoh. This

is largely due to the fact that a majority of the priests there are newly appointed to their posts as the previous ones have been transferred to other states and therefore, they have little information regarding the history and development of their respective churches.

Other problems include the difficulty in contacting informants needed as the priests are very busy people, appointments made but forgotten by informants, difficulty in understanding theological terms which necessitated an incessant reference to the Christian dictionary. All these problems are very time consuming.

A glossary of the theological terms used in this paper is provided to ease the problem of understanding these terms.

Definition of a Church today:

The Church is "the community of those who have become involved in the cause of Jesus Christ and who witness to it as hope for all men." The members in this comprehensive community are "united with one another in reciprocal service."

(Hans Kung: On Being a Christian.)

Conclusion

Glossary of Theological Terms

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CHAPTER ONE: HISTORY.

The Advent of Portugese Catholic Missionaries.

The advent of Catholic missionaries to Malaya began with the conquest of Malacca by Alfonso D'Albuquerque in the early sixteenth century and these missionaries mark the first Christians to set foot on the soil of Malaya. D'Albuquerque was accompanied by eight chaplains, six of whom remained in Malacca to look after the church D'Albuquerque had built in honour of Our Lady, as well as administer to the Portugese soldiers left behind when D'Albuquerque left for Goa in December, 1511. Four years later, Father Alfonso Martinez arrived in Malacca and became the parish priest of the Church of Annunciation for thirty-four years. In 1521, a chapel was built in dedication to Our Lady of Grace, by Duarte Coelho, a Portugese merchant as a gesture of thanksgiving for his narrow escape from death. When Goa was made the centre of an ecclesiastical see in the same year, Malacca became one of its provinces with Fr. Alfonso as Vicar General. In February, 1557, Pope Paul the Fourth made Malacca a suffragan diocese of Goa. The limits of the Diocese of Malacca comprised of Burma, Siam and the Malayan Archipelago. Fr. Jorge de Souza was consecrated in Lisbon, 1559, to head this new diocese. All the churches were turned into barracks except the church at St. Paul's Hill which was used for religious meetings. Due to the stormy relations that exist between the Muslims and the Portugese missionaries⁽¹⁾, Malacca was attacked five times: "The Portugese had taken Malacca with all the unpleasant aspects that accompanied a war." (K.Williams: 1976).

They had therefore given a stormy first impression of Christianity to the inhabitants of Malaya. Unlike the Muslim faith which had come peacefully to the Peninsular, Christianity had come with war and was thus viewed in an unfavourable light.

However, with the successful work administered by the zealous Portuguese Catholic Missionaries, Malacca became a thoroughly Catholic city with nineteen churches and chapels, including a cathedral which were conducted by Jesuits, Dominicans, Franciscans and secular priests, serving some twenty thousand Catholics.

With the continual quest for power and trade, the port of Malacca caught the interest of the Dutch and the English fleets. The advent of these ships then marked the beginning of the decline of the Portuguese influence in South East Asia at the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of Protestantism:

"After the seige by the Dutch, only three thousand Catholics survived and half of these were deported by the Dutch.

(K.Williams: 1976.)

By the end of 1641, only 1603 Portuguese and Eurasians were living around Malacca. In 1645, the Dutch forbade the Catholics to hold public religious meetings. All the churches were turned into barracks except the church at St. Paul's Hill which was used as the Church of the Reformed Religion. In 1646, all those who still adhered to the Catholic faith were banished from Malacca. Rebuilt Catholic churches were either pulled down or converted to other uses. Itinerant priests were forbidden to land, and residents

were prohibited from approaching a priest for baptism or marriage. However, their faith was so strong that: "in spite of all persecutions, the people flocked to the jungle to hear Mass and receive the sacraments." With the arrival of British captain Francis Light (Rev.F.Lee: 1969/44.) In 1712, there were still six times as many Catholics as there were Protestants. By 1700, Fr. Garnier had 30 catechists. The Under British rule from 1824, the Portuguese-Eurasians enjoyed full freedom of religion. In 1828, the Diocese of Malacca was discontinued and reunited to the see of Goa. In 1838, Malacca was placed under the Portuguese vicariate of Ava and Pegu (Burma). In 1840, Peninsular Malaya was transferred temporarily to the Vicar Apostolic of Siam and by 1841, it came under the jurisdiction of the Paris Foreign Missionaries. It was then reconstituted as Diocese of Malacca in 1888 by Pope Leo XIII with Singapore as its seat. By a subsequent decree, the Diocese of Malacca was made a suffragan of the Archbishop of Pondicherry. Monsignor Gasnier was appointed the first bishop of this diocese.

THE ARRIVAL OF THE MEP (La societe des Missions Etrangeres de Paris) IN MALAYA.

With the exit of the Portuguese missionaries in Malaya came the Paris Foreign Missionaries, we can date the beginning of the Catholic church as it exists today. Following a series of intermittent persecutions in Siam, 1779, which led to the expulsion of the Vicar Apostolic, Monsignor Le

Bon and Fathers Conde and Gannault from the country, the latter two priests came to Kedah. They obtained permission from the Sultan of Kedah to build a church (St. Michael's Church) to cater to the needs of the eighty Catholics they found there. With the arrival of British captain Francis Light and his subsequent purchase of the island of Penang in 1786, Fr. Gannault led his Catholic parishioners to this island where he found another few more Catholics. By 1788, Fr. Gannault had 30 catechists. The number of Catholics in Penang had at least doubled.

ERECTIIONS OF CHURCHES AND INSTITUTIONS.

Accompanied by eleven seminarians, Fathers Loliver and Letondel arrived in Penang in 1807 and found the island suitable for setting up a seminary. The plan to establish a seminary was well received by the British who gave the priests all the help and authorisations they required to set up the public institution. Thus the College General for training priests was officially established in 1810 with a student intake of twelve seminarians. Since 1860, the College has trained 1745 students, of which 836 were ordained priests. was started by Fr. Letessier. He later founded the Church of the Visitation in Seremban. In 1830, Fr. In 1834, there were four thousand Catholics in Penang, of whom two thousand were in Georgetown, five hundred in Pulau Tikus and the rest distributed throughout the island. Fr. Bohet built the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Pulau Tikus and started a mission centre in Macang Bubuh in Province Wellesley. Fr. Beurel, attached to the Good Shepherd Cathedral, collected funds for his schools from 1849 to 1853. The schools were later passed over to

Penang. Fr. Savin later founded St. Anne's Church in Bukit the Christian Brothers and the Sisters of St. Maur. The devotion to St. Anne was introduced by Fr. Coullian and educational activities of these Christians who had spread their since then, a pilgrimage heads there annually during St. Anne's schools throughout the peninsular brought rapid mission progress to Malaya.

In 1802, Fr. Tze established the mission in Sagan Seral for the Fr. Borie, who was appointed as the first missionary for the Tamil Catholics and named the village after St. Joseph. In 1877, "Orang Mantra Mission", which was a mission set to convert the he started a church in Tapan. Fr. Mazery erected the church in aborigines of the land into Catholics. He was there from 1847 to Kilian Pau, Taiping, in 1839. In the year 1905, the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes was erected in Silibin, Ipoh.

Fr. Favre and Fr. Allard, his successor, completed St. Francis Xavier Church and later, the Assumption Church was erected in the aborigines, a concrete chapel was built on their reserved land by Reverend Felix Lee. In 1972, the Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help was erected in Ipoh Garden in Ipoh, which is to and Indian communities until the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes was set up by Fr. Meneuvrier for the Indians in 1888.

In 1883, Fr. Allard established the parish of St. Joseph for them in Batu Gajah. That same year, the Church of St. John at Bukit Nanas in Kuala Lumpur was started by Fr. Letessier. He later founded the Church of the Visitation in Seremban. In 1890, Fr.

Barillon who was later ordained Bishop of Penang, founded the St. Michael's Church in Ipoh. During the second World War years, this church, with Fr. Francois and Fr. Francis Chan as parish priests accomodated the Christian brothers who were running the St. Michael's Institution, a Catholic missionary school, as it was taken by the Japanese to become the Shu Seicho building or their headquarters. Fr. Chan later became the Bishop of the Diocese of

Penang. Fr. Sovin later founded St. Anne's Church in Bukit Mertajam. Devotion to St. Anne was introduced by Fr. Couellan and since then, a pilgrimage heads there annually during St. Anne's Feast Day.

In 1882, Fr. Tee established the mission in Bagan Serai for the Tamil Catholics and named the village after St. Joseph. In 1897, he started a church in Tapah. Fr. Mazery erected the church in Klian Pau, Taiping, in 1839. In the year 1905, the Church of Our Lady of Lourdes was erected in Silibin, Ipoh.

In 1954, to commemorate and perpetuate the missionary work among the aborigines, a concrete chapel was built on their reserved land by Reverend Felix Lee. In 1972, the Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help was erected in Ipoh Garden in Ipoh, which is to date the newest Catholic church in Malaysia.

However, the missionaries face a lot of difficulties. Firstly, there is a severe lack of funds to pay the catechists or to erect public religious institutions. Then, the diversity of languages found have hampered a large number of

Notes:

1. The Muslims monopolised the spice trade of the Indian Ocean until the Portuguese came and tried to dominate the trade. War thus broke out between them.

2. Due to a defect in title, Fr. Borie lost the land he had established in Rhumbia. He then led his flock to Ayer Salak where he was given land by the government to erect a chapel and a school for the aborigines.

The Church of Our Lady of Lourdes in Silibin, largely an Indian community, conducts one of their weekly masses in Tamil, while that of St. Michael's in Ipoh Area conducts one of their masses in Mandarin. The Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in

CHAPTER TWO: MISSIONARY AIMS AND OBSTACLES.

Missionary Aim.

The aim of the mission is ultimately to preach the gospel, to instruct and baptise, and to cater to the rising Catholic population by building churches and other public religious institutions. It is their aim to lead the people to the ultimate salvation in Christ by teaching them the Christian way of life.

The important force for evangelisation was the entry of the Brothers of the Christian schools and the Dames de St. Maur in 1952. M. Albrand, the Paris procurator for Malacca in 1851 had sought the help of these religious bodies to set up schools and orphanages to instruct the gospel and to erect churches and chapels to educate the Malaysians in Christianity.

Obstacles.

However, the missionaries' quest met with many a barrier. Firstly, there is a severe lack of priests in this region as well as lack of catechists and financial resources to pay the catechists or to erect public religious institutions. Then, the diversity of languages found here necessitated a large number of personnels and buildings to cater to each ethnic group. Hence, parishes had to be created according to the ethnic division rather than territorial division, as in the case of Ipoh, where the three Catholic churches cater to three different ethnic groups. The Church of Our Lady of Lourdes in Silibin, largely an Indian community, conducts one of their weekly masses in Tamil, while that of St. Michael's in town area conducts one of their masses in Mandarin. The Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in

Ipoh Garden, a middle-class area, conducts all their masses in English. All Christian activities except an occasional vigilance.

Although the seminary in Penang has been established since 1810, the first indigenous priest was not ordained till 1911. The rise in vocation had been slow as the medium in which the priests are trained in is Latin instead of their mothertongue, which could have acquired a larger number of local clergy.

Efforts to convert Malays into Christians met with a lot of difficulty. The failure is attributed to three main reasons:

1. Since evangelisation began with the major towns, it centered most of its missionary efforts on the Chinese and Indians.

The major towns were mainly in the Straits settlements which meant that most of the Malay states were neglected.

2. The Colonial Government's attitude towards the religious rights of the Malays. The Pangkor Treaty in 1874 had "promised to safeguard the privileges of the Sultans in matter pertaining to Malay customs and religions." (K. Williams, 1976.)

Hence, although evangelisation towards the Malays were never formally prohibited, the Colonial Government unofficially discouraged such endeavours.

In its Decree on Missionary Activity, the Vatican II has linked

As Islam is the official religion of Malaysia today, it is now forbidden to preach to the Muslims. Even the involvement of a priest in social work among the Muslims would arouse suspicion.

Hence the Church today has apparently accepted the fact that

Muslims are not to be evangelised and that they are outside the scope of all Christian activities except as personal witnesses.

quest to inculcate a proper attitude and balance. It elucidates

In addition to the problems presented by the non-Christian religions, conflict was also found within the Christian religion itself, between the various Christian denominations.

Hence, approximately half a century ago, the different churches got together to form the World Council of Churches in a quest to find the central figure of God. The Vatican Council, however, had abstained from becoming a member until 1974, when they came out with their own decrees which present a new challenge to the previous rigid missionary aims and solutions. These new decrees are compiled in their book, "Vatican II".

Vatican II.

Vatican II provides a clearer perspective of this rapidly changing world. Today's world of freedom and independence with its global drive for politics and economics, racial and ideological tensions between opposing parties, have cast doubts and neglect on religious instructions, which has resulted a drop in spiritual advancement. Thus, Vatican II seeks to establish a balance between these ideologies by a proper presentation of the Church's teaching.

of both evangelisation and ecumenism or inculturation whereby the Church selects important points from

In its Decree on Missionary Activity, the Vatican II has linked three factors: so as to present their faith in a light which is

1. Christian witness to identify with. They believe that one
2. preaching of the gospel and gathering the people of God
3. the construction of the Christian community able to identify

The focus of the activity is on making the Church a living and active presence within and native to the non-Christians. In its quest to inculcate a proper attitude and balance, it elucidates its own position in a declaration on non-Christian religions, a declaration derived from Ecumenism, a movement which presents faith with an attitude of love:

"The Church therefore has this exhortation for her sons: prudently and lovingly, through dialogue and collaboration with other religions and in witness of Christian faith and life, acknowledge and promote the spiritual and moral goods found among these men, as well as the values in their society and culture."

Thereby everyone gains a larger knowledge (G. Currie: 1969/15)

The Roman Catholic Church explores religious freedom. It believes that religions should be given the freedom to express their own doctrines in what concerns the organisation of society and human activity. In such a way, everyone is led to examine their own faith and accordingly set to undertake the task of renewal and reform. With

the task of evangelisation at hand, the indigenous priests of Malaysia have begun to have inter-religious dialogues. In 1983, there was a prayer meet between the Catholic priests and the Anglican ones in Ipoh. In Kuala Lumpur, a "One day National enculturation whereby the Church selects important points from different cultures and religion and try to incorporate them into its own faith so as to present their faith in a light which is easier to for the locals to identify with. They believe that one aim of the dialogue to foster better understanding, mutual respect and co-operation between the religions, to study and recognition in the West, is that the whites were able to identify

with their own culture in the Catholic faith, such as the acceptance of bread and wine as symbols of the acceptance of Christ. With ecumenism, the people are able to identify more with their own culture within the Catholic faith, and may therefore more readily accept the faith. Panel speakers like Tunku Abdul Rahman, Lim Kit Siang, Dr. Chandra Muzaffar and Tan Sri P. J. Paul

In its zeal to inculcate the Catholic faith to the non-Christians, the Vatican Council, in its Decree on Ecumenism, has indicated the need for dialogue between:

"competent experts from different churches and communities.

At these meetings, which is organised in a religious spirit, each explains the teaching of his communion in more depth and brings out clearly its distinctive features.

Thereby everyone gains a truer knowledge and more just appreciation of the teaching and religious life of both and prejudices. Dialogue is necessary to create a better understanding between them.

(Vatican II, 1974.)

In such a way, everyone is led to examine their own faith and accordingly set to undertake the task of renewal and reform. With the task of ecumenism at hand, the indigenous priests of Malaysia have begun to have inter-religious dialogues. In 1983, there was a prayer meet between the Catholic priests and the Anglican ones over Christmas in Ipoh. In Kuala Lumpur, a "One day National Seminar on Common Religious Values for Nation Building" was held on 7th July, 1984, to promote better understanding between the Buddhists, the Christians, the Hindus and the Sikhs. It is the aim of the dialogue to foster better understanding, mutual respect and co-operation between the religions, to study and

resolve problems which affect the inter-religious relationships and to make representatives regarding religious matters when necessary. This national dialogue was organised by the Malaysian Consultative Council of Bhuddism, Christianity, Hinduism and Sikhism and involved prominent panel speakers like Tunku Abdul Rahman, Lim Kit Siang, Dr. Chandra Muzaffar and Tan Sri Fr. Paul Tan, each representing their respective religions. Meanwhile, at a preparatory meeting to inaugurate dialogue between Indian Lutherans and Roman Catholics, the two said faiths have decided to:

"strive to eliminate deep-rooted prejudices arising out of misunderstandings as well as our historical theological differences."

(Catholic Asian News, April, 1984.)

Hence, in a milieu which teems with inter-religious difficulties and prejudices, dialogue is necessary to create a better understanding between them.

In order to foster the feeling of solidarity among the nation, the usage of the national language in the Eucharistic and sacramental liturgy has been implemented. As of this year, the Cathedral of Assumption in Penang has added a mass conducted in Bahasa Malaysia on Fridays, besides their weekly tri-lingual masses (English, Tamil and Mandarin.).

POSSIBILITY OF SALVATION FOR THE NON-CHRISTIAN.

Salvation for both the Muslims and the Catholics is the ultimate goal of their respective religions. For numerous religions, the concept of salvation has been regarded in a rather narrow view in

which it entails an exclusion of any other religion except their own. However, the new decrees set by the Vatican Council feel that these non-Christian religions have their relations to the Christians in various ways and are therefore included in the God's salvific plan. These non-Christian religions are viewed as God's other ways of bringing these people to lead a truthful life which will eventuate their ultimate salvation.

However, despite the possibility of salvation for all, missionary activity is still necessary as Christ is still viewed as the universal and eschatological power of mankind. Missionary activity is therefore needed to announce Christ to the non-Christians. In order to execute such a mission, one of the most important elements that the Church must form is an active Christian community which is aware of the national issues which arises in a developing society such as modernisation and social and economic justice.

- During this period, a total of 123 priests and 3 bishops assembled at The bishops of Asia, at the Asian Bishop's Meeting in Manila, made a request to the indigenous priests for the involvement of their church in their countries' issues. Missionary activity is therefore needed to:
1. spread a vision of life that is free from capitalism or communism
 2. encourage co-operation among the nations in fighting injustice
 3. work for regional economic development
 4. develop understanding and co-operation among the Christian

The 3 bishops present conjoined the 3 plans drawn by the 3 churches so as to avoid factionalism and duplication of resources

5. work with non-Christians in the disinterested service of man
6. sponsor a theological reflection on the issue of development.⁽¹⁾

Hence, missionary activity is not merely to evangelise but to take an active interest in social justice and development of the nation.

In line with this development in the church, between 2nd to 31st, August, 1976, the entire clergy of all the dioceses in Peninsular Malaysia left their posts and assembled in Penang for a month of renewal, review and planning. The objectives for this renewal Programme were to experience a Christian community, to update and renew theological and pastoral thoughts and activity, and to place the Christian community building in the realistic context of the local church and in the present Malaysian scene. During this period, a total of 123 priests and 3 bishops assembled at the College-General in Penang where lectures on the current issues of the country such as the problems of racial and cultural intergration, social and human dimension of development, poverty eradication and racial economic balance, aspirations and the struggles of the bumiputeras and the non-bumiputeras, Islam as the national religion and its relation to Christianity, implication of the Third Malaysia Plan for pastoral practice and apostolic orientation, and the involvement and the non-involvement of the Church in social issues, were given.

The 3 Bishops present conjoined the 3 plans drawn by the 3 dioceses into a plan for the nation which is as follows:

Inter-Diocesan Peninsular Malaysia: Core and Related Needs:

Unity among bishops, priests, religions and laity in all fields		Formation as an on-going process of all groups to produce committed and motivated lay leaders.
	Christ-centered communities (at all levels) with concern for:	
Dialogue with Christians and non-Christians when and where possible.		Intergral Human Development of the Poor.

The 3 diocesan plans outlined the core need for the building of the basic needs of the nation. It is not merely to 'join with the basic communities and the need for inner unity. The concern for the poor was highlighted realisation that the Catholic Church in Peninsular Malaysia is dominated by middle-class citizens while the underprivileged classes. The consciousness of the need for more dialogue with non-Christians rose with the awareness that the Catholics make up for less than 2% of the country's population. With the combination of activity as necessary for the effectuation of an active community

these 3 plans, the outcome is as follows: The core-need is the building of Christ-centered communities with the related needs for unity among the clergy, communication with other religions, integral human development of the poor and the production of more lay leaders. Hence, with such a structure, the Church hopes to be able to help solve the problems faced by the nation and assert greater influence of its faith upon the people to help them realise the reality of this faith and its values in national issues and in life. As Archbishop Peter Chung said:

"We live in a region which is multi-cultural and multi-religious...if the church is to make its impact felt, it will have to...show itself to be a living, dynamic reality as a community."

(K.Williams, 1976/215.)

This is achieved by forming that united Christian community of the national diocesan plan stated above, which lives in direct contact with the people whom they serve and preach to. Christianity is ultimately a way of life. The main aim of the mission today is no longer to effectuate a numerical increase in converts, but to devote more attention to the task of witnessing the presence of Christ through a service that meets the total and tangible needs of the nation. It is not merely to "join with the members of other faiths... in interpersonal relationships" but to involve them in "generally working for human development of the needy and the underprivileged classes."⁽²⁾

It can therefore be seen that the Church deems missionary activity as necessary for the effectuation of an active community

which can then help in the evangelisation of the people and in meeting the needs of the nation.

Malacca became the ecclesiastical province which consists of the Archdiocese of Malacca-Singapore and the suffragan sees of Kuala Lumpur and Penang, and for the

Notes: time, local bishops were appointed to these suffragans

1. The endeavour of the Church to become involved with the indigenous issues is known as conscientisation, i.e., a historical awareness and commitment. It is a way of learning collectively to perceive social, political and economic contradiction and injustices, and teaching the masses to take action against the oppressive element of reality.

2. This quotation is by Archbishop Emeritus Vendargon of the Malay Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur when he outlined a comprehensive vision of the mission of the Church in West Malaysia. The quotation is taken from K. Williams' dissertation, 1976. the

Archdiocese of Kuching, the Diocese of Miri and the Diocese of Kota Kinabalu.

The Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur which comprises of the states of Selangor, Pahang, Negri Sembilan and Terengganu, is given the title archdiocese as it is provided for by the Archbishop Emeritus Anthony Soter Fernandez. The last archbishop was elected on 17th. February, 1978, and was not ordained until 30th. July, 1983, following the retirement of Archbishop Tan Sri Dominic Vendargon, who is now the Archbishop Emeritus. Archbishop Vendargon had served the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur for a decade, from 1973 to 1983. The Vicar-General who assists the bishop in his duties while he is away, is Monsignor (Mgr) Daniel Lim.

CHAPTER THREE: STRUCTURE AND FUNCTIONS.

In 1955, the Archdiocese of Malacca became the ecclesiastical province which consists of the Archdiocese of Malacca-Singapore and the suffragan sees of Kuala Lumpur and Penang, and for the first time, local bishops were appointed to these suffragan sees. However, with the political development of the nation in 1965, Singapore became an independent state and a new diocese of Melaka-Johor had to be created. Kuala Lumpur then became an archdiocese with the dioceses of Penang and Melaka-Johor as its suffragans. All the bishops found in West Malaysia are natives.

The structure of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Peninsular Malaysia in their present day is divided into three main regions. They are the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur, the Diocese of Penang and the Diocese of Melaka-Johor. In East Malaysia, there are the Archdiocese of Kuching, the Diocese of Miri and the Diocese of Kota Kinabalu.

The Archdiocese in Kuala Lumpur which comprises of the states of Selangor, Pahang, Negri Sembilan and Trengganu, is given the title archdiocese as it is presided over by the Archbishop Reverend Anthony Soter Fernandez. The said archbishop was elected on 17th. February, 1978, and was not ordained until 30th. July, 1983, following the retirement of Archbishop Tan Sri Dominic Vendargon, who is now the Archbishop Emeritus. Archbishop Vendargon had served the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur for a decade, from 1973 to 1983. The Vicar-General who assists the bishop in his duties while he is away, is Monsignor (Mgr.) Daniel Lim.

concerned with the individual's and society's responsibilities. With a population of 67 379 Catholics, this diocese is the third heaviest Catholic populated in Malaysia. In this Archdiocese, a Family and Social Movement strives towards this goal by total of 33 churches and 46 chapels are found and its publishing guidelines for the review of socio-economic and distribution follows as such:

<u>Archdiocese of KL</u>	<u>Churches</u>	<u>Chapels</u>
Pahang	5	7
Negri Sembilan	5	12
Selangor	13	19
Federal Territory	10	8

From the statistics given above, the Federal Territory, which is the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur, encompasses such major the most developed and houses the head office of this religious services and commissions and they are the National Institution, area, contains the highest number of religious institutions, in the Catechetical Commission, the Liturgical Commission, the relation to the size, to the rest of Selangor, which has 13 Social Communications Commission, the Catholic Charity Board, the churches and the lesser developed states of Pahang and Negri Catholic Welfare Services of Malaysia. As the names of these Sembilan which possesses 5 churches each. These religious institutions suggest, they cater to the pastoral, catechetical, institutions are governed by a total of 45 priests (as of 1982.). liturgical, social and welfare needs of the nation.

Besides churches, the Catholic Services and Commissions aim to the Diocese of Penang encompasses the northern region of serve the nation in overcoming their problems, especially those Malaysia and consists of the states of Penang, Perlis, Kedah, regarding poverty, family and social aspects. The Catholic Welfare Kelantan and Terengganu. This diocese is headed by the Reverend Services of Malaysia attempts to help at combatting the pervading Anthony Selvanayagam who was elected Bishop of Penang on 30th. issue of poverty by organising fund-raising committees while the July, 1983, and installed 5 months later. He is assisted by Christian Family and Social Movement aims to developed a sense of Vicar-general, Mgr. Raphael Kang.

social responsibility through the "review of life" that the members undertake. Through this "review of life", they come to With a Catholic population of 66 431, the Diocese of Penang poses realise their irreplaceable responsibilities in their place of the second largest diocese in Peninsular Malaysia. This work, in their homes as well as in the social and political Diocese possesses 33 churches and 31 chapels which are institutions to which they belong. These commissions are

concerned with the individual's and society's responsibilities and seek to renew them in the light of the gospel. The Christian Family and Social Movement strives towards this goal by publishing guidelines for the review of socio-economic and political institutions. They also organise forums and training courses in leadership in society, attempt to have Christian social action in factories as well as in other non-organised forms of exploited labour. These courses are opened to all adults so as to enable it to have a wide spectrum of membership.

The Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur enumerates six such major services and commissions and they are The Pastoral Institution, the Catechetical Commission, the Liturgical Commission, the Social Communications Commission, the Catholic Charity Board, the Catholic Welfare Services of Malaysia. As the names of these institutions suggest, they cater to the pastoral, catechetical, liturgical, social and welfare needs of the nation.

The Diocese of Penang encompasses the northern region of Malaysia and consists of the states of Penang, Perlis, Kedah, Kelantan and Perak. This diocese is headed by the Reverend Anthony Selvanayagam who was elected Bishop of Penang on 30th. July, 1983, and installed 5 months later. He is assisted by Vicar-general, Mgr. Raphael Kang. The Vicar-General to the Bishop is Mgr. Reginald Miranda. The Services and Commissions With a Catholic population of 66 631, the Diocese of Penang poses as the second largest diocese in Peninsular Malaysia. This diocese possesses 33 churches and 21 chapels which are

distributed throughout the aforementioned states as follows:

<u>Diocese of Penang</u>	<u>Churches</u>	<u>Chapels</u>
Perak	15	10
Penang	8	-
Province Wellesley	4	5
Kedah	4	5
Kelantan	1	1
Perlis	1	-

The island of Penang has only 8 churches while Perak, being the largest state and most developed state in this ecclesiastical country.

region contains the highest number of these parishes.

The Catholic services and commissions which cater to the needs of its people in this diocese are that of The Legion Of Mary, Movement for a Better World, Marriage Encounter and Choice, St. Vincent de Paul Conferences and the Perpetual Help Communications Centre.

Those of the Catholic Centre, Catholic Rural Community Training Centre, Catholic Welfare Services Centre and the Retreat Centre.

The Diocese of Melaka-Johor poses as the smallest of the three dioceses found in Peninsular Malaysia. Led by Bishop Rev. James Chan who was elected 22nd. December, 1972 and ordained on 8th June the following year, it boasts of a Catholic population of 32 287 people in just these two states. This diocese holds a total of 14 churches in Johor and 4 in Melaka. The Vicar-General to the Bishop is Mgr. Reginald Miranda. The Services and Commissions

found there are the Lay Apostolate Commission, the Liturgical Commission, the Diocesan Catechetical Commission, the Marriage Encounter Commission, The Charismatic Renewal Commission, St

1975. The Vicar-General for this diocese is Mgr. John Lee. With a Vincent de Paul Conferences, Lenten Campaign Committee, Majowe Catholic population of 100 000 people, (1976 estimate), this Center (Melaka-Johor Welfare.) and Finances Commission. Rev. Peter Chung Hoan Ting became the archbishop of the Archdiocese of Kuching on 1st. May, 1976 and is assisted by Vicar-General, Rev. Dominic Su. With a Catholic population of 105 000, this East Malaysian Archdiocese is the highest Catholic populated in the whole of Malaysia. This is primarily due to the successful mission work performed by the missionaries there who managed to convert most of the native tribal residents in that part of the country.

The College General in Penang is the only one found in Pulau. The Archdiocese of Kuching is then divided into several divisions with a total of 21 parish communities. The 1st. division holds 8 of such communities, the 2nd. division holds only one, the 3rd. division has 6 while the 6th. and 7th. divisions maintain 3 parish communities each. The Service Commissions there include those of the Catholic Centre, Catholic Rural Leadership Training Centre, Catholic Welfare Services Council and the Retreat Centre. The priests in charge should the Catholic applicant succeed, his training will take him through six to seven years at the College.

On 20th. November, 1977, Rev. Fr. Anthony Lee Kok Hin was ordained bishop of the Diocese of Miri. The Vicar-General with him is Mgr. Paul Tong. Together, they see to the administration of their 12 parish communities which cater to the needs of their 22 373 Catholic population (a 1976 estimate.).

The Diocese of Kota Kinabalu in Sabah has Rev. Datuk Simon Fung as its bishop, who has been ordained as such on 4th. November, 1977. Should he decide to stop and venture into the line of education, he shall have to take the vow of education as well. In the apostolic year before his ordination to priesthood, he will be the sub-deacon whereby he will have to read the breviary or prayers of the church. After

1975. The Vicar-General for this diocese is Mgr. John Lee. With a sub-deaconate, he will progress to become the deacon where he will start performing the duties of preaching, baptizing, delivering funeral eulogies and performing the holy communion. This Catholic population of 100 000 people, (1976 estimate), this diocese stands as the second highest Catholic populated ecclesiastical region in Malaysia. It holds a number of 27 parish communities. Thereby he will take the final pledge of the celibacy vow and become a full-fledged priest with the title of "Father".

TRAINING FOR PRIESTHOOD IN MALAYSIA.

Aspiring Catholics who wish to take up priesthood as their vocation are able to achieve their ambition in the two major seminaries found in Malaysia. They are the College General in Penang and St. Peter's College in Kuching. Introduction from the apostolic delegate in Bangkok, to the Catholic Council in Rome for the final selection.

The College General in Penang is the seminary found in Pulau Tikus, which was founded by the Fathers of the Paris Foreign Mission in Juthia in the year 1665, and transferred to Penang in 1807. Since 1800, a total of 1243 students have passed through the College and of these, 400 were ordained priests. At present 7 of the former students are bishops in Burma as well as two more in Thailand. In Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei seven of the eight Catholics who wish to take up the vocation have first to apply at these seminaries where their applications will be considered by the priests in charge. Should the Catholic applicant succeed, his training will take him through six to seven years at the College, whereby he will have to read Philosophy and Theology before he goes into practical training. Through these years, he progress from brotherhood, where he has to take up three religious vows, that of obedience, chastity and poverty. Should he decide to stop here and venture into the line of education, he shall have to take the vow of education as well. In the apostolic year before his ordinance to priesthood, he will be the sub-deacon whereby he will have to read the breviary or prayers of the church. After

sub-deaconate, he will progress to become the deacon where he will start performing the duties of preaching, baptising, delivering funeral eulogies and performing the holy communion. Thereby he will take the final pledge of the celibacy vow and become a full-fledged priest with the title of "Father".

As to the election of bishops, the names of three priests will be elected among all the priest and sent, accompanied by an introduction from the apostolic delegate in Bangkok, to the Vatican Council in Rome for the final selection.

The College General has been quite productive over the years. Since 1860, a total of 1745 students have passed through the College and of these, 836 were ordained priests. At present 7 of the former students are bishops in Burma as well as two more in Thailand. In Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei seven of the eight bishops who make up the Bishops's Conference are former students of the College.

ACTIVITIES WITHIN A CHURCH (Focus on the Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Ipoh).

The Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Ipoh is a relatively new church built in the Diocese of Penang. Founded in 1972, this church is owned by the Redemptorist Fathers whose training is carried out in Singapore rather than the College General in Penang. The main body of the church is located in Ipoh Garden where Masses in English are held, while Masses in Tamil and Mandarin are held in the chapel in Kampung Simee which is

included in the parish. Monthly rations of essential food commodities such as rice, sugar, milk and oil. The families are

In line with the Decree of Missionary Activity in the Vatican II which stresses on the importance of an active Christian community to serve as God's witnesses to the people, the Church organises numerous other activities besides those found within the liturgical services in the Church. The parishioners meet in the Church to plan out activities, both social and spiritual, for the Catholic Youth as well as adults. Since approximately 50% to 60% of the approximate 5000 Catholic population of this parish attend Mass every Sunday, it is obviously difficult for the priests to administer to their massive requirements. Hence, committees and sub-committees are formed so as to provide sessions whereby the lay Catholics are able to air their doubts or views regarding a certain doctrine and to seek a better understanding of their faith.

One such committee is the Parish Aid Committee (PAC) which was formed on 31st. July, 1983, and is supported by the parish of this Church. The PAC's primary concern is to give immediate help to those in need, especially the poor, in the parish. Presently, the committee has a membership of 14, headed by a parish priest as Spiritual Director and a catholic layman as Chairman of the Board. These members meet monthly to review the activities or progress made during the course of the month.

Among the services that this committee renders is the "Parish Aid Committee's 'adoptees'", whereby the PAC adopts needy families

and supply them with monthly rations of essential food commodities such as rice, sugar, milk and oil. The families are adopted on the criteria that they are:

- a. Elderly persons with no means of income or support from their family.
 - b. Families who experience loss of income due to the death of the bread winners of the families.
 - c. Families which are deserted by the head of the family.
 - d. Large families, especially those where finances cannot be met by the family members themselves for their daily needs.
 - e. Exceptional cases - sickly persons who are unable to work.
- (PAC Annual Report, 1983/84.)

When a family applies for help, the PAC members will visit the applicant's house and obtain their particulars. The case is then reported in the next monthly meeting, but should the case be urgent, immediate help may be authorised by the visiting members.

The PAC has presently 18 'adoptees' of various religions and race. The aim is to provide the poor with an opportunity to earn a trade as well as provide a service to the parishioners of

The PAC also organises a sub-committee to meet the educational needs of the poor. Three years ago, the Perpetual Help Kindergarten which is located at the Old Folks' Home in Kampung Simoe was founded. The kindergarten gives the basic educational foundation to the poor children before they are sent to the national-type schools. The kindergarten charges a token fee of \$10/= for ten months to help meet with the cost of maintenance

which is running at a deficit. South.

The enrolment at the kindergarten stands at 73 pupils, staffed by 4 full-time teachers. The committee sends the teachers to seminars such as those organised by the Jabatan Pelajaran Perak and the MCA, in order to learn more about the running of the kindergarten and the teaching of the children in line with the government policy. Board of Directors of St. Mary's School in

Apart from this kindergarten, the sub-committee for education also helps in meeting with bus-fares required by the needy children for transportation to and from schools, tuition fees especially for those in examination classes, purchase of books and uniforms, examination fees and other miscellaneous fees.

Sewing classes held twice a week are organised by the PAC as well, at a nominal fee of \$8/= per month. If an interested student cannot afford the fee, she will be allowed a free place in the class. At present, about 20% of them are not charged. The aim of this class is to provide the poor with an opportunity to learn a trade as well as provide a service to the parishioners of the said parish.

Besides all these activities, the PAC also donates \$100/= monthly. In line with the Christmas festivities, the PAC distributes food hampers to the needy families and pay visits to their homes. For this special occasion, the parish committee extends the gift of hampers to families which are located outside the parish territory, as far as Kuala Kangsar and Sg. Siput in the North,

and Batu Gajah and Tapah in the South. The area leader organizes various social and spiritual activities such as area masses, social gatherings, picnics, coffee mornings and such in order to build an active Catholic community and meet the needs of the families at an area level as the Poor respectively. It is impossible for the parish to meet with the needs of all her people during weekly masses. With these areas, the families can As a member of the Board of Directors of the Home For The Aged in Kampung Simee, the PAC helps to verify those who wish to enter their area leaders, the Home as well as collect donations and give the publicity needed for the Home to acquire more funds. This year, through the funds collected via the PAC, installation of an additional water storage tank and an electric heater, plus the changing of old water pipes at the Home was made possible. In order to impart Christian Formation to Catholic students, the Church holds catechism classes every Sunday morning for an hour. The Church feels that since catechism classes are now rarely held in Government schools, there is a severe lack in Christian Formation within the Catholic students. It is therefore In order to supplement the income for the committee's activities, the committee members organise Jumble Sales whenever possible. These jumble sales are organised for the purpose of encouraging teamwork among its members and unite them in their common goal of helping the poor. These sales are usually held in Estates where the people are generally of a lower income group. Besides all these activities, the PAC also donates \$100/= monthly to the running of the Handicapped Home for handicapped orphans at the Holy Infant Jesus Convent in Ipoh. The parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Help is further sub-divided into 41 areas whereby each area is appointed an area leader who

children as well as how to practice Natural Family Planning. The area takes charge of the ten to fifteen Catholic families in that area. The area leader organises various social and spiritual activities such as area masses, social gatherings, picnics, coffee mornings and such in order to build an active Catholic community and meet the needs of the families at an area level as well.

The Benevolent Society comprises of approximately 100 retired people during weekly masses. With these areas, the families can seek better fulfilment, spiritually or otherwise via the help of their area leaders. The society members visit the hospitals weekly to distribute the communion to the sick Catholics who are unable to attend Mass. On the first Friday of each month, they also visit the sick who are at home to give them the Eucharist.

In order to impart Christian Formation to the Catholic students, the Church holds catechism classes every Sunday morning for an hour. The Church feels that since Catechism classes are now rarely held in Government schools⁽¹⁾, there is a severe lack in Christian Formation within the Catholic students. It is therefore the parish's duty to provide the Catholic students with such classes to instill the said formation in them as well as to help them develop their faith.

There are 30 Eucharist ministers whose function is to distribute the Eucharist to the sick who are at home. In Mass, the Eucharist is also given by the Eucharist ministers. Communion is also given by these ministers to the sick when they visit every Sunday. Like the previous society, 'Evenings for the Engaged' is another session organised by the Church for couples who intend to tie the Gordian Knot. These two-hourly sessions help to give a Christian dimension to marriage.

The Church Ministers for the parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Ipoh comprise of 49 wardens, 14 communicators, 25 readers, 1 choir group and 19 servers. The roles of these ministers are God as well. The Church believes that once a marriage is consecrated, there should be no divorce. These seminars also teach the couple how to impart their Christian beliefs to their children.

It gives the Church's concept of marriage, which is, marriage is not merely between the two people involved, but that it includes the church. They are responsible for the welcoming of people, the collection of donations, distribution of pamphlets, reading and

children as well as how to practice Natural Family Planning. The Natural Family Planning sessions are given by the sisters and each couple goes through six of these sessions which last from 3 to 6 months before their marriage.

During special feasts such as Christmas, the Corpus Christi, etc. The Benevolent Society comprises of approximately 100 retired Catholics whose function is to care for the sick. They pose as a source of help during crises such as deaths or funeral arrangements. The society members visit the hospitals once weekly to distribute the communion to the sick Catholics who are unable to attend Mass. On the first Friday of each month, they also visit the sick who are at home to give them the Eucharist, especially to those who are invalids or handicapped. Information regarding who is sick and need communion is obtained from the Church which is kept informed by the various area leaders.

There are 30 Eucharist ministers whose function is to distribute communion in Mass. In addition to those given by the Benevolent Society monthly, communion is also given by these ministers to the sick whom they visit every Sunday. Like the previous society, information is also obtained via the Church and the area leaders.

The Church Ministers for the parish of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Ipoh comprise of 48 wardens, 14 commentators, 25 readers, 1 choir group and 19 servers. The roles of these ministers are chiefly concerned within the liturgical celebration of the Church. They are responsible for the welcoming of people, the collection of donations, distribution of pamphlets, reading and

commenting upon the reflections in the Bible and rendering hymns during Mass. They help to create communication between the Church and its parish. They include visits to the Home for the Aged, running the library which is located within the parish premises, as well as other activities.

During special feasts such as Christmas, the Corpus Christi or Church Feast Days, the Liturgical Group is called upon to conduct special liturgies. The Liturgical Group is tri-lingual. It comprises of all the church ministers including the parishioners who conduct the Tamil, the Chinese and the English Masses and requires them to co-ordinate and work with each other to deliver these special liturgies which are conducted in all three languages. They are to get the parishioners to be on the church grounds together with the Catholics as well as to get them to participate in the activities.

Since faith is supposed to be a continuous growth and does not stop with youth, the Church also organises a session called "Evenings for Parents". During these sessions, parents are given help on how to reflect on certain aspects in bringing up their children. These parents, who also belong to the area groups, are taught the importance of 'memories'. This session helps them with methods with which to impart good memories to their offsprings as good memories of their childhood days and of their parents are essential in the formation of a growing child. Parents are taught their roles as life-givers. Christian values are imparted to them and in turn are taught to their children. Parents are also reminded of their responsibility of teaching their children how to pray. They also hold Bible sessions and seminar classes for the Catholics to deepen and strengthen their understanding of their faith. For the non-Christians, enquiry classes which run on a

The Catholic youth group consists of 55 members and they have catechism classes amongst themselves for Christian formation. Their activities include visits to the Home for the Aged, running the library which is located within the parish premises, as well as involvement in the choir. This group also conducts social gatherings among the Catholic youth as well as spiritual gatherings where they reflect upon the Christian doctrines. In order to raise funds for their activities, they conduct projects such as car wash, gate painting, or perhaps coffee mornings whereby after the 8:30 morning Mass on Sundays, coffee and food are sold to the parishioners and the mass-goers. The objectives for these mornings are to get the parishioners to be on the church grounds together with the Catholics as well as to get support from them for their project.

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal Movement which has 30 members is held weekly on Wednesday nights. During this hour-long session, prayers are offered on the reflection of God's words and sometimes, when an itinerant Charismatic priest is within the parish, a healing session will be conducted. The priest is supposedly endowed with the gift of charisma from God and is able to heal the sick who seek him. During these sessions, speaking in tongues is a usual occurrence and the priest is usually able to prophesise.

The Church also holds Bible sessions and seminar classes for the Catholics to deepen and strengthen their understanding of their faith. For the non-Christians, enquiry classes which run on a

year's programme is conducted once a week by a couple of priests and nuns. These enquiry classes are for the non-Catholics who wish to know more about the Catholic faith.

The large number of activities organised by the Church for the well-being of her people require funds. As this parish is a middle-class parish, it is financially stable. Funds are obtained from benefactors, rental of their community hall to various outside organisations as well as from the collections during Mass. There are 2 collections during each Mass. The first goes to the parish while the second goes to cemetery funds, parish maintenance, seminarians and the Parish Aid Committee. To raise additional funds, jumble sales and coffee mornings, as mentioned earlier, are sometimes held.

Thus in line with the Vatican II's **Decree on Missionary Activity**, the Christian community of this parish is indeed very active in helping the Government to combat social problems such as poverty. As Christian witnesses, they help to set an example of love, generosity and warmth for the society to follow. Following the Government's quest to eradicate dadah addiction, the Church is currently appealing to the public for donations to support the Therapeutic Community Rehabilitation Centre and to keep this centre functioning as it receives no financial support from the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The well-known Protestant protest against the Roman Catholic's supposed act of 'idolatry', or the over-exaggerated importance of

the statues of saints in the Church has been clarified as of late. Excessive statues are deemed as posing a hindrance to the true liturgical life of the Church, which is the central figure of Christ. Hence, a few of the churches which had been built before the 1960's, i.e. before the liturgies have been renewed, have placed most of the statues of the saints in another chapel so that Catholics who wish to devote some of their time to their favourite saints may do so there. The Church of the Immaculate Conception in Penang has removed the light in their main altar, which is supposed to symbolise the life of Christ, to the Chapel of the Blessed Sacraments. The Catholics believe that the saints are people who have attained perfection in Christ, and since the body of man is on a pilgrim journey toward the absolution of truth, these saints pose as a model for men to follow. Hence, popular devotion are still held like those of St. Anne's Feast Days in Bukit Mertajam, and the Novena, which is devotion to the Holy Mary.

The Novena is held at the Church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Ipoh every Saturday morning and evening. Each session lasts for half an hour. During these sessions, prayers are offered to God, thanking Him for the presence of Mary, hymns are sung, a short homily or sermon is delivered followed by a petition, thanksgiving, benediction and confession.

In conjunction with the Christian Holy Year which stretched between Easter 1983 to Easter 1984, while the churches of St. Peter and St. Paul in Rome opened their doors to all walks of

life for plenary indulgence, the churches of St. Joseph in Batu Gajah, Sacred Heart in Kampar, and St. John the Baptist in Sungai Siput were chosen as the churches in Perak for this indulgence. Plenary indulgence is the remission of punishment which is still due for the sins of man after sacramental absolution. Since it is the Christian Holy Year which occurs only once in a century, this indulgence is open for all religion and race. Only a few chosen churches in the world offer this plenary indulgence throughout the Holy Year. In other churches, this indulgence is offered only during their respective feast days. A Catholic priest, by having for its object, service to the Church in the redeeming and

Thus, it can be seen that the various activities and services performed by the priests of the various dioceses and their active Christian community aim to promote a Christian sense of values upon the society as well as help the Government diminish the social and economic problems within the country. Through these services and activities and as Christian witnesses, they hope to spread the reality of their faith in this developing nation.

Notes:

1. Apart from the prohibition by the Education Ministry to hold Catechism classes within the regular hours of the school's curriculum, approximately 70% to 80% of the teachers trained in the local training colleges are Bumiputeras who are thus not given Christian religious training. Hence, there is an acute shortage of qualified Catholic teachers who can conduct Catechism classes.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE CATHOLIC SCHOOL.

Catholic schools, or missionary schools, founded by the Fathers of the Paris Foreign Mission in the nineteenth century, have been playing an important role in the education and development of Malaysian youth ever since. In the second Asian Regional Conference, 1965, the tentative definition given to the nature of the Catholic school in Asia was:

"A Catholic school is a distinct, educational institution acknowledged by the Church as a Catholic School and having for its object, service to the Church in the redeeming and sanctifying mission among men and nations." (G.R. Currie, 1969/159)

In the narrow sense, the Catholic school is a religious institution in which Catholic children receive education in the light of the Church's principles. However, in the face of the changing times and the birth of Vatican II, it has given way to a broader significance. Today, the Catholic school goes beyond the definition of a religious institution in which students are brought up to frequent the religious sacraments. It now serves to bring about the development of youth with intellectual values so as to instill in them, the correct judgement and promote the right sense of values in order to direct them towards the fullness of the truth in salvation. Therefore, instead of merely indoctrinating the youth with religious information, the Catholic school serves to promote moral development so that fundamental truths are placed before the youth. who are trained in the local training colleges receive little or none religious training.

The Catholic gives the opportunity for Catechetical instruction and contributes substantially in the spreading of the gospel as well as furthering the dialogue between the church and the people. Information about the Catholic faith had been given through lessons in the Holy Scripture, the life of Christ, to students in the past, which from Colonial times had been regarded as a subject in the school curriculum and studied as such for examination purposes.

Catholic schools in Malaysia are on the most part subsidised by the government. However, the fact that it is a Catholic school does not mean that it only facilitates the Catholic youth. Since it is situated in a non-Christian milieu, it is inevitable that many of the students and teachers are made up of non-Catholics. The non-Christian parents send their children to such religious schools in the hope that their children will be able to obtain a basic religious formation with spiritual and moral bases, to enable them to lead a life in concordance with their respective faiths. The Catholic school in a multi-religio country such as Malaysia respects the Vatican Council's decree on religious freedom, and therefore respects the instruction of other religious doctrines in their schools. In many of the Catholic schools in this Islamic milieu, the general religious education lesson, known as 'ethics' is made to coincide with the time for catechism classes.

Then arose the question of who was qualified enough to deliver such religious education. It is oft difficult to employ the religious teacher as the teachers who are trained in the local training colleges receive little or none religious training.

Hence, in most schools, such as the Convents of the Holy Infant Jesus and the institutions run by the La Salle Brothers, the Catholic missionary brother or sister will take over the catechism classes while the non-Christian teachers will be trained for 'ethics'. The training of the non-Catholic teachers for this purpose is necessary as it enables general religious information to be passed on to the non-Catholic students.

There are several problems concerning the Catholic schools' curriculum. The authorities in various states in Malaysia subsidised Catholic schools in Malaysia are on the most part subsidised by the Government, and although they do not come directly under the supervision of the Church, they are still recognised by the Church as Catholic institutions. By special arrangements with the state authorities, the direction or supervision of these schools are left to the religious bodies. However, owing to the fact that these schools are located in a non-Christian milieu, the wish of staffing these schools with religious bodies or even a sufficient number of Catholic lay teachers remains unfulfilled. Consequently, a fair amount of both teachers and pupils are made up of non-Catholics.

According to the official Year Book of Malaysia, the Catholic School in Malaysia is deemed as:

"a striking tribute to the selfless service of these men and women (religious bodies) that they should have gained the ready confidence and affection of both parents and non-Catholic students while Muslims are taken aside for their 'ugama' classes. Presently, although no other lessons are supposed to be conducted during 'ugama' hours, the Catholic mission schools is indication of the complete independence

of religious and secular instruction."

(G.R. Currie, 1969/85.)

Until a few years before Malaysia gained independence, only a handful of Muslim students were present in these schools, and catechism was taught without discrimination to all pupils, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. With the Federation of Malaysia arose several problems concerning the Catholic school's curriculum. The authorities in various states in Malaysia raised an opposition regarding the instruction of the Holy Scripture. They feel that since the Government is subsidising these schools and since the religion of Islam is the official state religion, the Scripture is an instruction in a specific religion and should therefore not be taught during regular school hours by anyone receiving a salary from the Government. As a result of this intervention, a new regulation has been included in the present Education Ordinance regarding the instruction of religions in school. Consequently, three types of religious classes have come under the national system of education in the Catholic school. They are catechism, ethics and Islamic studies.

As an expedient, these schools, known now as National-Type schools although still runned by the missionaries, decided to place catechism classes before the regular hours of the school's curriculum. At the same time, ethics lessons are given to the non-Catholic students while Muslims are taken aside for their 'ugama' classes. Presently, although no other lessons are supposed to be conducted during 'ugama' hours, the Catholic

missionaries take aside their own followers and educate them in the teaching of catechism while the rest of the students are given ethics. Such a move employed by the school is tolerated by the Government. Religious information about Islam is taken with the nature of an obligation on the Catholic school authorities in an Islamic milieu. However, with the advent of the Vatican II, new importance has been given to the other religions, especially to Islam, which is given an important place in the plan of Salvation. The Vatican II feels that a positive attitude towards the non-Christian religions is necessary among the youth of today as it poses as a step in the right direction towards further dialogue between the Christians and the non-Christians. This will prove indispensable if the Catholic youth is to live up to his faith which demands the magnanimity of charity and the sharing of love. Having inculcated in him a proper attitude toward the non-Christian religions and their beliefs, especially that of Islam, the Catholic youth will be in a better position to regard them with openness and frankness. The Catholic student in the Catholic school with its inevitable mingling of races, cultures and religions will be given the opportunity of seeing their faith in a setting beyond the close confines of a pure Catholic society. The Catholic school then ultimately offers the Catholic youth the opportunity to live his faith not in opposition to those of the other religions, but in an attitude of respect, understanding and cordiality towards them.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE RISE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLICS (Statistics) IN MALAYSIA.

Since the introduction of the Roman Catholic faith with the advent of the Portugese to Malaysia in 1511, the numerical increase of the Roman Catholics have taken a steady climb. Four and a half centuries later, in 1959, the number of Catholics in Malaysia have risen to a staggering 211 523 population. A year later, it increased by 229 338 Catholics and by 1963, the Catholic population in Malaysia totals 261 598 people. Two decades later, the population has risen yet again to 393 670 Catholics and by 1982, the Catholics in Malaysia constitute more than 2.98% of the country's total population. Out of this population, more than 57.76% of them hail from East Malaysia.

According to the statistics given by the World Christian Encyclopaedia, the total number of Christian foreign personnels received in Malaysia by 1982 is 928, out of which 792 came from the West while the remainder 136 hails from other Third World countries. Out of these 928, the Roman Catholics received a total of 370 foreign personnels, making 39.9% of the overall total received. The Roman Catholics fall second to the Protestants who have received 473 (50.97%) foreignnn personnels and is followed by the Anglicans who have received 42 (4.53%) of them. The foreign personnels are sent here to help with the administrative and the missionary work done by the indigenious Priests.

Out of the 1930 Christian worship centres, (a 1970 estimate), Catholic worship centres take up about 50.5% of it, which is approximately 974 numerically, in in churches, chapels, outstations and other parish communities. Meanwhile, Catholic service centres constitute about 61% of the 41 main Christian service agencies found in Malaysia. Latterly, a marked decline can be seen in their statistics.

If we were to look closely at the statistics regarding the rise of the Catholic population in the various dioceses, we will find that although the Catholics have increased numerically over the years with the overall rising population, certain dioceses have either an increase or decrease in their percentage of Catholic population in proportion to the overall population in each diocese while others have managed to maintain an almost stable percentage rise. Population in 1980 shows to be 1.72% of the total

population. Although there has been a numerical increase of 13 The Diocese of Penang is one example which shows near stability of Catholics over a period of a decade, the ratio of the in percentage increase proportionate to the overall population has percentage of Catholic population to the total population has increase.

increased by 0.04% to 1.76%. By 1982, the Catholic population in

<u>Diocese of Penang</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1982</u>
Approximate total population	4 800 000	5 000 000
Estimated Catholic population	65 000	66 631
Parishes	31	31
Chapels and outstations	150	150
Priests		57

between 1980-1982 however, the number of Catholics converted to 1 of every 150 people borne (0.07% of the total population). from the statistics given above, we can see that in 1980, the Catholic population makes up about 1.35% of the total population

While in 1982, the Catholic population is 1.33% of the overall, marking very small percentage decline of 0.02%. Out of an increase of 200 000 in population in two years, 1631 (0.82%) of them were baptised Catholics.

Approx. total population 400 000 470 000 750 000 780 000

However in the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur, a marked decline can be seen in their statistics.

Archdiocese of KL	1970	1980	1982
Approximate total population	2 800 796	3 638 254	4 282 195
Estimated Catholic population	49 906	63 189	67 379
Parishes			34
Outstations			53
Priests			45

The Catholic population in 1970 shows to be 1.78% of the total population. Although there has been a numerical increase of 13 283 of Catholics over a period of a decade, the ratio of the percentage of Catholic population to the total population has dropped by 0.04% to 1.78%. By 1982, the Catholic population in the Archdiocese of KL is 67 379 out of the 4 282 195 overall population and constitute only 1.57% of the population, marking a decline of 0.17% in a period of two years. Between the years 1970-1980, the number of Catholics converted was one out of every 63 people borne or 0.02% of the overall population increase. Between 1980-1982 however, the number of Catholics converted to 1 out of every 154 people borne (0.07% of the total population).

On the other hand, the Archdiocese of Kuching seem to be experiencing a steady increase in the percentage population of Catholics to the overall population.

<u>Archdiocese of Kuching</u>	<u>1960</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1982</u>
Approx. total population	600 000	790 000	950 000	980 000
Est. Catholic population	25 980	60 120	95 900	105 000
Parishes	11	16	20	20
Outstations	118	243	558	580

In 1960, the percentage of Catholics as 1.33% to the overall population while in 1970, the Catholic percentage is 7.61%. So, between those years, we see a Catholic population increase of 3.28% (34 140 Catholics) which marks an increase of 0.33% (3 414 Catholics) per year. Over this decade we can see a Catholic out of every 6 people borne to the population or 17.97% of the total population increase were Catholics.

In the next decade (1970-1980), the Catholic population has increased by 35 780 people (22.36%) out of the overall population increase of 160 000 people or 1 out of every 4 people borne was a Catholic. The percentage of the Catholic population over these 10 years has risen from 7.61% in 1970 to 10.1% in 1980, marking a 2.79% increase.

Between the years 1980-1982, the Catholic population in this Archdiocese has again increased by 0.61% from 10.1% to 10.71%. This makes the Catholic population increase numerically by 9 100 people out of the 30 000 population increase, which is 30.33% or

a Catholic out of every 3 people borne. Catholics and therefore,

the Catholic population percentage which depends more on natural

On the whole we can see the steady Catholic population rise at

the rate of an average of 3.414 per year from 1960-1970 to an

average of 3.578 per year between 1970 to 1980 to an average of 4

550 per year from 1980-1982.

be attributed to the fact that most of the Catholics in this part

The difference between the increase and decrease of Catholic

population in West Malaysia and East Malaysia can be attributed

to several reasons. In West Malaysia, each diocese has several

states under their jurisdiction and has therefore to distribute

their manpower to each state. They have to cater to the needs of

so many states whereas in East Malaysia, the dioceses there have

only to concentrate on their own states and therefore are able

to tend more of the Catholic needs. In the case of Sarawak, there

are two dioceses there, the Archdiocese of Kuching and the

Diocese of Miri to cater to the needs of the Catholics in that

state. In West Malaysia, there are 134 priests to attend to 11

states which is approximately 12 per state whereas in East

Malaysia, there are 78 priests to attend to 2 states, which is

approximately 39 per state. Although the Catholic population

percentage may decline in certain dioceses and increase in

Another reason for the decline of the Catholic population

percentage in the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur is related to the

New Economic Policy (NEP) of Malaysia. The NEP's decision to

eradicate poverty has brought an influx of Muslims to the

Federation of Kuala Lumpur. Therefore, the overall population in

this Archdiocese is not only due to natural but to migration.

The number of migrants are largely non-Catholics and therefore, the Catholic population percentage which depends more on natural reproduction takes on a steady decline in relation to the overall diocesan population percentage.

Strong evangelisation has already been carried out in their early

The decrease in Catholic percentage in West Malaysia could also be attributed to the fact that most of the Catholics in this part of the country is more modern in their outlook and therefore practise family planning. However in East Malaysia, the Catholics are less modern and still tend to follow the Natural Family Planning that their faith imposes, which therefore increases the chances of natural reproduction.

On the whole, there is an approximate total of 212 priests to cater to the needs of the approximate 363 670 Catholic population of Malaysia, 48 in the Archdiocese of Kuala Lumpur, 57 in the Diocese of Penang, 29 in the Diocese of Melaka-Johor, 34 in the Diocese of Kota Kinabalu, 34 in the Archdiocese of Kuching and 18 in the Diocese of Miri.

Thus it can be seen that although the Catholic population percentage may decline in certain dioceses and increase in others, the overall Catholic population has continued to rise steadily over the years.

The realisation of the need for ecumenism has led the Catholics in Malaysia to conduct various dialogues with various other religions in search of better understanding among these religions, and how to incorporate various beliefs of the other

CONCLUSION: into their faith in order to make it more real to the people here.

It can therefore be seen in this study that the Catholic church has long since established themselves in this country. Their strong evangelisation has already been carried out in their early days in this country, and since they have already established themselves as a strong Christian force, they no longer have the urgent need to conduct such services as the door-to-door preaching as the new denominations of the Protestant sect do. Their activity now includes helping the Government combat the social and economic problems of the country as well as giving spiritual fulfilment to those who seek it. In so doing, they act as personal witnesses to God in their generosity, love and warmth, and show in this way, the reality of their faith in a non-Christian milieu such as Malaysia. Their task now is no longer evangelisation alone but evangelisation and ecumenism. In line with what is decreed by the Vatican II in Rome, the Roman Catholic Church in Malaysia has built active Christian communities around them to act as Christian witnesses, spread the gospel and to gather the people of God together. Evangelisation is no longer the sole task of the priests but of all active Catholics. In this way, the Christian communities are able to encompass a larger area and cater to the people's requirements.

The realisation of the need for ecumenism has led the Catholics of Malaysia to conduct various dialogues with various other religions in search of better understanding among these religions, and how to incorporate various beliefs of the other

religions into their faith in order to make it more real to the people here.

The Catholic schools have done their part in helping the Church spread the gospel by conducting catechism classes, and as much as possible, impart Christian values to their students especially before the Federation of Malaysia.

On the whole, the Catholic Church in Malaysia today, in conjunction with what is preached by the Vatican Council has taken a less rigid standing in their faith. When before their regard for salvation is solely for Christians, they have now enlarged their vision in encompassing other religions and regard them as having various relations to their Catholic faith and is ultimately included in God's salvific plan. Their task now is no longer evangelisation alone but evangelisation and ecumenism or the enculturation of certain other diverse cultures and beliefs into their faith to build communal and national understanding.

Hence, all these activities as well as their strong historical establishment have helped the Catholic faith maintain their popularity in Malaysia to this present day.

GLOSSARY OF THEOLOGICAL TERMS.

Archdiocese:	diocese presided over by an archbishop.
Archbishop :	a metropolitan having jurisdiction over an ecclesiastical province.
Breviary :	book containing Roman Catholic Divine Office for each day.
Bishop :	a clergyman of the highest rank in the Christian churches with administrative and other duties.
Brother :	a member of a congregation of religious men not in holy orders.
Catechesis:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. responsibilities to bear witness to the gospel and to communicate it.2. state of evangelisation.3. process of systemised instruction in the Christian faith.
Catechists:	local teachers of catechumens.
Catechumen:	one receiving rudimentary instructions in church doctrines, disciplines and morals prior to baptism, baptismal candidate.
Charismatic:	gifted, instructed.
Communion :	eucharist/Lord's supper.
Catechism :	instruction by question and answers-prayer book form for instruction before confirmation.
Diocese :	area over which bishops have ecclesiastical authority.
Ecclesia :	a church.

- Easter** : celebrates the triumph over sin, of good over evil, of resurrection over death.
- Ecumenical** : worldwide, general, universal, Catholic, relating to the whole of a body of churches.
- Ecumenics** : Study of the nature, mission, problem and strategy of the Christian church from the perspective of its ecumenical character as a worldwide Christian fellowship.
- Eschatology** : the doctrine of the last things; Christian doctrine of the second coming of Christ and ultimate destiny of mankind and the world.
- Evangelism** : activities involved in spreading the gospel.
- Liturgy** : series of rites, observances and procedures prescribed for public worship.
- Monsignor** : Latin word for My Lord.
- Priest** : a member of the second order of clergy, ranking below bishop and above deacon.
- See** : jurisdiction of a bishop over his rank, office, diocesan centre.
- Seminary** : training college for priests.
- Suffragan** : assisting diocesan bishop in particular part of diocese.

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