

Singapore

The next stop was Singapore, which is an island country exceptional for its international business. It is a storing place for goods that come from all of Asia to be reshipped mostly to the West. Many of the people of Singapore were Chinese who left the mainland to be able to quietly practice their religion. There are also a number of Indians and Portuguese. Singapore is a bit strict in its demands on its people, but I would say that it is the cleanest and neatest of all the countries of Asia. We were teaching at the Catholic school there for some time, and the children of the prime minister came to our school. Later, we started our own Maris Stella primary and high school, and in true Chinese style it became a first-rate school very well supported by the many Chinese and Indian alumni who had attended our Marist schools in China and were pleased to have their children continue with us here in Singapore. We have one of the best kindergartens of all Asia, and our alumni of all denominations make good use of it. It enjoys a tremendous reputation, as do our other schools in Singapore. This is pivotal point for travelers and a place to stop for a break on many of the long flights going both East and West. It is convenient and a fantastic island country where visitors can enjoy the products of almost every country of the world.

My first visit here was mostly as a stopping point, but I would later come for the official visit. This was only an introductory visit to get to know our men and our work here. As I said already, my first impression is one of thorough cleanliness. It is a country of discipline and strict observance of principles. I was very much impressed by the teaching facilities here, and I would eventually get more involved for the foundation of our first kindergarten by the senior Chinese Brother of the Province: Brother Alphonse, who at 94 was still going strong. I will talk more about him and his kindergarten later.