

# Singapore

The Church had named a special Bishop residing here to represent the many Chinese who had to leave their mainland country to settle. The Bishop knew the Marists quite well from his home in Belgium and became most useful to us. We were offered the Catholic high school, where we taught for a number of years and where the children of the prime minister came to attend classes. Our Brothers worked here with the Christian Brothers close by and, typical of our Chinese Marists, they were anxious to have their own Catholic school. It was Brother Chanel who was familiar with many "Old Boys," as the alumni were called, and they helped him to provide the now famous Marist Stella High School, which was always filled to capacity.

The original residence of the Marist Brothers in Singapore was on Flower Road beside the residence for retired Chinese Marists. There was also a unique Marist kindergarten here, which is a showpiece in Singapore and a model for any further requests to the government. Our alumni make sure that when they marry they already reserve a place here for their children. It is a credit to the foresight of Brother Alphonse, the dean of the Province, who started this exceptional school run by the Sisters. Later there would be a foundation in Taiwan where Bro. Philip Wo, first Chinese Provincial, would work and later die there in Kaohsiung.

When I completed my visit in Asia, I received a letter from the General Council advising me not to return to St. Genis but to please go directly to the new Generalate in Rome. The project was nearing completion, and the expenses were getting out of hand with the Marist Brother in charge of the construction. I asked the Superiors to give me the support of a committee, which would contain Brother Lorenzo, the Spanish Marist in charge of the construction, and Brother Alessandro, our Procurator to the Holy See who was living at San Leone Magno of our Italian Province in Rome. Thus there were three to run meetings and make final decisions to try to save, or at least control, the funds. I accepted the temporary post until the Superiors arrived on May 24, 1961. I arrived in Rome towards the end of October to supervise the completion and get the place ready for the Superiors arrival next May, but I also asked the Superiors to approve and to send me the four-word telegram for the authority to close Quantan and open Sibiu. This was the end of my first visit to Asia.