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*Часопис за Регионалне студије Азије*  
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Азијске свеске

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**Asian Issues**



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# Азијске свеске

## Asian Issues

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## Editor's Word

The eleventh issue of the journal Asian Issues, which is in front of you, is the product of the shared aspiration and eagerness of researchers in the Institute for Asian Studies. The aim is to bring Asia—which is becoming increasingly important and decisive globally—closer to our academic and general public. Asian Issues is also open to the international public as a connection between our work and similar research in Asia and globally.

The editorial board's program orientation is based on studying Asia, which could lead to a better understanding of many of its models of political and economic organisation, different cultures, ethnic, religious and other identities of its peoples, as well as numerous mechanisms that connect Asian states and societies through various frameworks of co-operation – in trade, environmental protection, culture, political and others, including security. The economic rise of some of the biggest Asian states, their ever more intense cooperation, by the strength of their separate and combined size, but also by their cultural and political influence - change regional, inter-regional and global institutions, processes, relations and manners, and by doing that, they influence our lives.

Our view on Asia is view "within" as we try to study, understand, accept and present Asia to the interested parties by measuring its achievements, reality and potential by Asian merits, with having a starting point in Asian culture, tradition, interests and need of the region's communities, as we believe that is the proper way to understand this, by many parameters, the most dynamic world region.

Dragana Mitrović

Antonius Diksa Kuntara\*

## The Development of Catholic Mission Stations in Central Java, 1809-1942

### Abstract

*Historical studies indicate that the Catholic presence in the Nusantara archipelago first emerged in the 16th century, particularly in Maluku. However, Catholicism was disrupted when the Dutch seized Banda in 1622, after it had been established in Batavia as the centre of the Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie (VOC) administration in 1619. Nearly two hundred years later, in 1799, the VOC was dissolved, losing all authority, and the colony was handed over to the Dutch colonial government in 1800. Consequently, Catholicism was once again permitted in the archipelago, albeit with certain restrictions. The arrival of two Dutch Catholic missionaries in Java marked a revival of the faith. Initially, they were permitted to serve only Dutch Catholics, mainly civilians and military personnel. However, almost a century later, the Catholic Church began to evangelise the local Javanese. This later period was characterised by active strategies and efforts involving many parties, demonstrating various aspects of how Catholicism developed in Central Java.*

**Keywords:** Catholicism, Central Java, Van Lith, Liber Baptismi, Indonesia

### 1. Introduction

Historical studies reveal the presence of the Catholic Church in the Nusantara archipelago: in Baros on the northern coast of Sumatra<sup>1</sup> in the seventh century, and in Maluku from 1512 to 1677, when Catholic missionaries arrived with Portuguese and Spanish trade fleets<sup>2</sup>. However, following the Dutch trading company, the *Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie* (VOC), assuming control of the Banda Islands in Maluku in 1622, banned Catholicism. Only about two centuries later when the VOC era ended and was replaced by the colonial government in the Dutch East Indies, did Catholicism start to revive in the Nusantara archipelago. This change in the Dutch colony mirrored the political developments occurring in the Netherlands, which had been under French military control since 1795. The Dutch government implemented the French principles of "equality" and "freedom" in its Dutch East

1 Y. Bakker, "Umat Katolik Perintis di Indonesia + 645 - + 1500", in *Sejarah Gereja Katolik Indonesia* Volume 1, 1974, pp. 19, 27, 35. Bakker referenced this based on a report by an earlier historian, Syaikh Abu Salih al-Armini, translated by B.T.A. Evetts, MA in 1895 and reprinted in 1969 in London. Indonesian historian Prof. Dr Sucipto Wirjosuparto confirmed the existence of this 7th-century community in 1970, building upon the earlier research by historian Rachmat Subagya, "Gereja Kristen Tertua di Indonesia," *BASIS*, (Yogyakarta, 1969), p. 18: 261-265.

2 Fl. Hasto Rosariyanto, , *Van Lith, Pembuka Pendidikan Guru di Jawa*, 2009, p.2.

Indies colony, which is now Indonesia.

A decree by King Louis in the Netherlands on 4 March 1807 granted the request of Fr. Jacobus Nelissen and Fr. Lambertus Prinsen, two Roman Catholic priests, to be permitted to go to Batavia as missionaries and to include a third person as a co-helper in the mission. On 8 May 8, Pope Pius VII, with the King's permission, designated Batavia as an Apostolic Prefecture covering the entire Dutch East Indies. However, as the mission developed, Central Java became its central focus. Questions regarding when it began, how the process unfolded, and who was involved in establishing this mission centre are important to explore. This study examines the emergence and early development of Central Java from 1809 to 1940, concluding when the Catholic hierarchy in the region was upgraded to an Apostolic Vicariate led by a bishop based in Semarang. Following the division outlined in the history of the Semarang Catholic Church, this research is divided into two periods: the Dutch Church Period (1808–1882) and the Missionary Church Period (1882–1940).

## **2. The Dutch Church Period (1808–1882)**

On 4 April 1808, two diocesan priests from the Netherlands, Fr. Jacobus Nelissen and Fr. Lambertus Prinsen, arrived in Batavia (modern-day Jakarta). These two priests had travelled for approximately six months from Amsterdam via New York to Java. Since 30 May 1619, the VOC government had controlled its trading activities in Asia from its centre in Batavia. After the VOC was dissolved in 1799, the colony was taken over by the Dutch government, and Batavia became the seat of the Governor-General. On 27 December 1808, with the official governing decree or *Besluit* from Governor-General Herman Willem Daendels, Fr. Prinsen, one of the two priests, moved to Semarang in Central Java. There, on 29 January 1809, a meeting of the Catholic community was held immediately, and a Council of Church and The Poor, or the "Church Council," was formed. This Church Council marked the official establishment of the Catholic Church Semarang Station (*Stasi*), which was named St. Joseph. Lacking a designated place for worship activities, the Catholic community, with the permission of the Governor-General, used the *Gereformeerde* Church for Holy Mass. It was only in 1815 that Fr. Prinsen relinquished his house to serve as a used as a place of worship.

Fr. Prinsen then continued his journey to Surabaya and established a mission station there. With this new station, Fr. Prinsen's service covered an area of 42,000 square kilometres from Tuban - Bojonegoro to Banyumas - Tegal. Thus, in 1815, the number of Catholics was 1,057, consisting of 643 full members who received all the sacraments and 414 non-full members who did not. In 1818, Fr. Prinsen was appointed Apostolic Prefect in Batavia to succeed Fr. Nelissen, who had recently passed away. However, Fr. Prinsen remained based in Semarang. When the cholera epidemic struck in 1821, priests became involved in public health services.



Additionally, with the outbreak of the Diponegoro War (1825-1830), Fr. Prinsen was tasked with providing spiritual support to the army. Some relief was provided in 1827 when Fr. J.H. Scholten joined the Semarang station; the Apostolic Prefect subsequently appointed him to offer spiritual services to the soldiers. When Fr. Prinsen moved to Batavia, he handed over the Semarang station to another priest, Father Mourik. Later, when Fr. Prinsen returned to the Netherlands, Fr. Scholten succeeded him as the Apostolic Prefect of Batavia; however, the colonial government did not approve the appointment.

### **3. The Apostolic Vicariate of Batavia and the New Mission Station**

Despite the good efforts of the early Catholic missionaries, relations between the Dutch colonial government and the Catholic Church faced difficulties. On 20 September 1842, Batavia was made an Apostolic Vicariate led by Mgr. J. Groof, who had previously served in Suriname. He arrived in Batavia on 21 April 1845 but was unable to take up his duties. Only priests appointed by the government or those holding a permit to practice, called *het radicaal*, were allowed to conduct public religious ceremonies. The issue was that Mgr. Groof was accompanied by five other pastors, but not by the radical from the colonial government. Mgr. Groof's attempt to "cleanse" the Catholic Church of all deficiencies displeased both the colonial authorities and the priests he rebuked. Fr. Grube in Semarang, a government-sanctioned priest, opposed this. For this "subordination", Mgr. Groof removed Fr. Grube from his position in Semarang, and the Church council sealed the church. In response, the colonial government issued a decree stating that Fr. Grube remained in office, and the church was reopened in February. However, attendance was low, indicating that the Catholics in Semarang obeyed church authority more than the colonial government. This conflict culminated in February 1846 with the deportation of Mgr. Groof from the Dutch East Indies back to the Netherlands.

Mgr. Groof received considerable sympathy from Catholics in the Netherlands. They sought support from the government, and King Willem II issued a decree justifying him. As a result, the priests who had rebelled against Mgr. Groof were dismissed from their positions and recalled to the Netherlands. This decision left Fr. Staal at the Padang Station as the only priest working throughout the entire Dutch East Indies until Fr. J.P.H. Sanders arrived on 17 October 1847 at the Semarang Station. He served there until Fr. H.V. Grinten arrived in February 1848. Later, Mgr. Groof was remembered as "the fighter of the local church rights" in the Dutch East Indies because he had strongly criticised the Cultuur Stelsel policy, which had caused significant suffering among the local peoples.

In the second half of the 19th century, the mission station was expanded from serving only St. Joseph of Gedangan in Semarang to include two new ones, namely:

1. Ambarawa Station in 1859, whose service area extended to Salatiga, Surakarta, Madiun, and Pacitan.
2. Yogyakarta Station in 1865 with its service area reaching Kedu, Bagelen and Banyumas.

With the opening of these two new stations, the service area of St. Joseph Church in Semarang now covers only the north coast of Central Java and Purwodadi.

#### **4. Construction of the Church Building in Semarang**

Construction of their own church in Semarang began in 1824, when they purchased a house on North Paradeplein, Block L.A., No. 5. The governor granted a partial loan of 6,000 guilders, which was to be repaid by 1827<sup>3</sup>. After renovations, the building was ready for worship on the main floor on August 1, 1824, while priests resided on the upper floor. During a visit to Semarang on March 13, 1848, Mgr. Vrancken expressed his wish that the missionaries make an effort to establish a church building in Semarang where Catholics could worship.

Hence, an effort was made by the Church Council to purchase a piece of land located on the east side of the Orphan's house in Gedangan. Architect van Bakel led the construction work, and on October 1, 1870, Fr. J. Lijnen with Fr. P.J. den Ouden laid the first stone. Fundraising included collecting donations, selling some church lands, and obtaining loans. In early 1875, when the church building was almost finished, the shortfall was covered by selling the old church and organising a lottery. Mgr. J. Lijnen inaugurated the new church building, which reportedly cost 110,000 guilders.

It would take more than 20 years to complete the construction of St. Joseph Church. In 1880, a new Gothic-style altar was installed, in 1882, a communion pew and a steeple decorated with a clock were installed, and finally, in 1903, a picture glass window, a gas lamp, a confessional room, an organ and pictures of the Stations of the Cross were installed. All of this made St. Joseph, the oldest Roman Catholic church in Semarang, the most beautiful church in the entire Dutch East Indies at that time. From this new church building in Gedangan the Catholic Mission at Semarang Station controlled all of Central Java from Madiun in East Java to Cianjur and Indramayu in West Java.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Panitija Pusat Jubileum, *Satu Setengah Abad*, p.16-17.

<sup>4</sup> Panitiya 180th Gereja St.Joseph, *Buku Kenangan 180 Tahun Paroki St. Yusup Semarang*, 1988, p. 3.

## 5. *Liber Baptismi* and the Journey of Fr. Lambertus Prinsen (1809 – 1833)

A baptismal certificate is a valid proof that someone embraces Catholicism and is kept at the local church or at the “mission station”. In the *Liber Baptismi* of Semarang Station, the first baptism was recorded for Robertin Jauffret on March 9, 1809. Although priests in Semarang were permitted to serve only Dutch Catholics, the official registry also recorded local names, such as Philippus Tudjulazar, who was baptised at the age of 25; Petrus Tjhie, a Chinese man, in 1817; and Alexander Raden Soesman, who had a Javanese name.

The Book of *Liber Baptismi* also revealed that Fr. Lambertus Prinsen had undertaken long-term missions to the hinterland of Central Java; he provided priestly service even in parts of Eastern Java and West Java. His journey can be summarised as follows:<sup>5</sup>

1812 Salatiga, Boyolali, Solo (Surakarta), Klaten, Yogyakarta

1813 Rembang, Jepara, Tegal, PeMagelang, Pekalongan, Magelang

1823 Tomo, Palimanan, Cirebon, Ungaran, Kudus, Ampel (continued by Fr. Mauriks)<sup>6</sup>

1829 Bawen, Bandungan, Wonosobo, Tegalwara, Cianjur, Indramayu, Kamar, Kedungkebo, Nanggulan, Wates, Kanigoro, Getasan

1831 Semangle, Bedogunting (continued by Fr. Grube)

1833 Pati, Banyumas, Nusakambangan, Kebumen, Bagelen.

The journey of the priests at that time was arduous and long. For example, Fr. Mauriks went to Indramayu and Cianjur in 1829 and returned to Semarang by taking a buggy through an unpaved road. The whole trip took about six months, from after Easter in April to October. During the priest’s visits to the hinterland, Catholics in Semarang worshipped under the laity’s leadership. This was also done during 1845-1847, when Bishop Grooff and all the priests were expelled from the Dutch East Indies by Governor-General Rochussen, who was “interfering too much in the internal affairs of the Catholic Church”<sup>7</sup>.

### 5.1. New mission stations

The Book of *Liber Baptismi* also revealed that in addition to Semarang, four other mission stations administered baptismal certificates: Yogyakarta (1812), Purbayan

<sup>5</sup> Based on the analysis and conclusion in “Satu Setengah Abad Stasi Semarang”, 1958, p. 20.

<sup>6</sup> “Buku Kenangan 180 Tahun Paroki St.Yusup Semarang” (1988) mentioned that the trip was conducted in 1825. It is possible that this duty trip was conducted during the period of 1823-1825.

<sup>7</sup> Panitiya 180th Gereja St.Joseph, Buku Kenangan, p. 3.

Solo (1859), Boro Kulon Progo (1864) and Magelang (1865). The *Liber Baptismi* documented the pattern of Catholicism's spread and the specific journeys undertaken by Catholic priests to visit Dutch civil servants and military personnel for the colonial government.

## 6. The Missionary Church Period (1882 – 1942)

In 1882, three notable changes took place. Firstly, St. Joseph Church in Semarang was elevated from a station to a parish. Secondly, leadership shifted from the diocesan priest to the Jesuit order. Thirdly, the focus of service expanded from solely serving Dutch Catholics to also including the indigenous population. This third change marked a significant departure from the previous Dutch missionary approach. The Catholic mission in Java initially faced substantial pessimism. Culturally, as the Javanese had already adopted Islam, many believed it was pointless to pursue Catholic activities on the island. Moreover, since the sixteenth century, the VOC had controlled the Dutch East Indies and prohibited Catholicism, making it very challenging to introduce or propagate the Catholic faith among the Javanese. According to historian G. Moedjanto, the success of the Protestant Church mission (the Zending) in Java during the nineteenth century was also uncertain, as it "has not borne much fruit". Consequently, the Catholic mission in Java encountered 'double barriers': the majority of the population was already Muslim, and there was strong competition for converts from the Protestant Church mission, which was heavily supported by colonial authorities. The following events illustrate the commencement of the Catholic mission in Central Java.

### 6.1. Starting Point: Semarang

In 1882, after Mgr J. Lijnen at St. Joseph in Semarang, who had greatly contributed to its development, passed away, Fr J. Keijzer continued to lead this parish. In response to the call to evangelise the local populace with a limited number of priests in the area, he complained in 1889 that "If 10 new priests came this year, they would all have to fill the immediate posts [and this] left no one to work among the Javanese." Due to this shortage of priests, much of the evangelisation work then involved the laity.

In 1894 Mattheus Teffer a Protestant religious teacher who had worked as a *zen-deling* or missionary in Nusa Tenggara visited Fr. Keijzer in Semarang. At that time, he worked for the garrison and the poor at a Protestant congregation in Ambarawa and Bedono Central Java, but had created a conflict with the local missionary. When Mattheus had an eye problem requiring a long stay in Semarang, Fr. Keijzer assisted him by allowing him to stay at the Gedangan rectory. In November 1895, Mattheus expressed his intention to join the Catholic Church. After having studied the catechism, he was baptized as a Catholic on Easter 1896 which coincided with

his 69<sup>th</sup> birthday<sup>8</sup>. Through him, some of the Protestant congregation in Ambarawa also came to know Fr. Keijzer and "will be accepted as Catholics after attending sufficient religious lessons (the catechism)."<sup>9</sup>

In January 1895, a new companion, Fr. W. Hellings, arrived from Kasiuwi, Maluku, to start studying Javanese in Semarang. As his learning quickly advanced, by the end of that year the "Pocket Book of Prayers for the Roman-Catholics" was published<sup>10</sup>. Also, in 1895 Johannes Vreede joined the Catholic mission. This Javanese with a Dutch name was a former fired Protestant catechist who understood the Bible and had all kinds of local connections. Johannes and his brother, Martinus Martoredjo, actively catechized in Bedono and Semarang, Central Java. Together the two brothers led as many as 340 Javanese to convert to Catholicism, 47 of whom were previously Protestants.

In October, 1896, two missionaries arrived in Semarang and started to learn Javanese. Petrus Hoevenaars came from the Netherlands with the motivation to fulfill his ideals of working in the mission land. His colleague, Franciscus Van Lith, came "for the sake of religious observance". Van Lith thought that evangelization would not bear fruit in Java and was more interested in working to evangelize in mainland Europe, but he came to Java due to his vow of obedience. In the same year, two small schools were opened in Mlaten and Nglamper in Semarang. Then, in 1897 four pupils from Minahasa in Sulawesi and 10 students from Central Java attended a catechist course that was started in Semarang at Gedangan.

Additionally, Andreas Manasse, a lay Protestant catechist came back to his birth city of Semarang. He had met Fr. C. Wenneker, SJ in 1894 in Surabaya where he studied the Bible and was baptized before his return home. His parents and several siblings also converted to Catholicism, and he became a lay catechist, known as "the very diligent and honest," in Semarang and later in Muntilan.

The Catholic mission also developed in Muntilan concurrently. In 1895 Fr. Voogel in Magelang appointed a catechist named Josaphat Mertodimejo. That year ended with the baptism of twelve Javanese in Magelang and eighteen in Muntilan. On certain days Fr. Voogel also came to Muntilan to offer Holy Mass in several villages. In other places several colleagues of the catechist Vreede were also reported to serve as catechists. Additionally, in August 1896, another missionary, Fr. Stiphout, stayed in a rented house near Muntilan's Chinatown, where he supervised a newly established small school and guided the believers.

## 6.2. *Shallow Comprehension of the New Faith*

On this way to his assignment in Muntilan, Fr. Van Lith, the reluctant Dutch mission-

8 Weijtjens, "Sejarah Gereja Katolik di Wilayah Keuskupan Agung Semarang", 1974, p.844.

9 Moedjanto et al, Garis-garis Besar, p.18.

10 The book is written in Javanese entitled: "Kitab Sembahjang Tjilik Kanggo Para Wong Room-Katolika"

ary, stopped in Ambarawa and Bedono where he found that the people's understanding of the Catholic Faith as very shallow. He observed the same weak understanding among the Muntilan Catholics. Fr. Van Lith then conveyed his assessment to Fr. Stiphout in Magelang. It was concluded that the cause was the catechist's lack of qualifications. Fr. Stiphout then radically suggested to fire or transfer catechist Josaphat Mertodimedjo, but Fr. Van Lith wanted to scrutinize further what really had happened. Fr. Van Lith then moved the presbytery from the Chinatown area to Semampir, a Javanese village. Later, this location became the mission centre in Muntilan.

The Dutch missionary priests realised that the root of these faith problems lay in their limited proficiency in Javanese and their understanding of local culture. Consequently, they decided to concentrate their efforts on studying the Javanese language and culture and to establish direct contact with various levels of society in Muntilan and the surrounding areas. They began engaging directly with farmers and endeavoured to assist them with their difficulties. As many farmers were in debt, Fr. Van Lith helped by redeeming their mortgaged fields; the landowners would then settle their debts by handing over half of the harvest to the priest. In these interactions with villagers, the missionaries collaborated with or received assistance from catechists who had greater knowledge of Javanese. Some of these catechists were also involved in lending and borrowing transactions, as well as in the procurement of rice fields.

An unpleasant incident involving lay catechists occurred in October 1897 when Fr. Van Lith was purchasing land for the cemetery garden in Muntilan. It involved the catechist Josaphat Mertodimedjo. Apparently, a legal issue or fraudulent practice led to the dismissal of the catechist. After an investigation, Fr. Van Lith also dismissed another catechist in Kiringan, near Magelang, for having two wives. As Fr. Van Lith found other catechists of similar poor quality, only a few of high quality remained, such as Andreas Manasse, who would then assist the mission centre in Muntilan for many years.

On December 20, 1898, Fr. Van Lith, Fr. Hoevenaars, Fr. L. Hebrans and Fr. E. Engbers met in Magelang to discuss the progress of evangelising the local population and the formation of the Java Mission. The four priests decided not to initiate the Java Mission in Semarang but considered Kedu the most suitable area. They planned to establish a new station in Magelang next to Muntilan because the area was purely agricultural and neighbouring Yogyakarta and Surakarta, the centres of Javanese culture—formation of the Java Mission. The four priests decided not to initiate the Java Mission in Semarang and considered Kedu the most suitable area. They planned to establish a new station in Magelang, adjacent to Muntilan, because the area was predominantly agricultural and close to Yogyakarta and Surakarta, the centres of Javanese culture.

## 7. Java Mission Strategy

Fr. Hoevenaars and Fr. Van Lith explored various methods to evangelise the local population. They sought to establish direct contact with Javanese society near the regions of Mataram Kingdom, the Surakarta Sultanate, and the Yogyakarta Sultanate; these cultural centres were close to their mission posts. At first, the colonial government of the Dutch East Indies prohibited Catholic missionaries from operating within the kingdom's territory. Later, a Dutch permit allowed European missionaries to work only among European residents. Because of this restriction, evangelisation among the Javanese relied on the Javanese themselves. Another obstacle was language proficiency. As the Dutch missionaries had yet to master the Javanese language, they depended on translators or native speakers to communicate and introduce the Catholic faith. In the earlier period, converts with Indonesian or Chinese names listed in baptismal records had likely interacted naturally with Dutch Catholics at mission centres or posts, eventually developing into mission stations. During the missionary church era (1882-1942), engaging with the Javanese and indigenous populations required extra effort.

Fr. Van Lith and Fr. Hoevenaars, two central figures, adopted a direct approach to Javanese society. Both priests brought different motivations from the Netherlands and employed different strategies in the field. As each was confident in his own approach, which sometimes conflicted with the other's, the mission leader at the centre (Superior Misi) had to select a single strategy to be implemented across all of Java. Consequently, the Mission Superior asked both to write down their views, opinions, and approaches related to the strategies they used. Generally, they both utilised formal and informal education and supported rural entrepreneurship. Other religious orders, such as the OSF Sisters, FIC Brothers, or CB Sisters, provided charitable services, including hospitals, orphanages, or nursing homes. While both priests had similar objectives, their methods varied.

According to records, Fr. Hoevenaars had baptised more converts than Fr. Van Lith. However, this included several controversial incidents; for example, the blessing of students visiting Mendut church by sprinkling holy water on them was seen as 'baptism' that parents later protested. Consequently, on 2 July 1906, Fr. Hoevenaars received a letter of protest from Governor-General Van Heutz regarding the 'imprudent' practice of baptism. Additionally, Fr. Hoevenaars faced criticism from Resident J. Ament in Yogyakarta for conducting mission activities within the Yogyakarta and Surakarta palaces.

The conflict between the two priests over their differing methods persisted for a long time. For instance, each used a different version of the Lord's Prayer. Since 1901, Fr. Van Lith, based in Muntilan, had his own translation that differed from the one used by Fr. Hoevenaars in Mendut, a place only about ten kilometres away. The Mission Superior was managing differing methods and approaches used in the

Java Mission but had not yet resolved this ongoing dispute over procedures when he was replaced. When Fr. Engbers was appointed the new Mission Superior, he did not consult the two priests but instead asked other missionaries for their opinions on the mission strategy of these two. After considering all the information, the Mission Superior decided to adopt Fr. Van Lith's plan and to relocate Fr. Hoevenaars to Bandung starting in May 1905.

### 7.1. Key point: Sendangsono

The Mission Superior's decision to select Fr. Van Lith's strategy cannot be separated from the baptism of 174 people at Sendangsono in 1904. This was a significant achievement for Fr. Van Lith, although he had never thought it could happen. It also rejuvenated him, as his efforts did not seem to bear fruit. The baptismal event in Sendangsono could not have occurred without the involvement of an ad hoc indigent catechist named Barnabas Sarikromo.

At that time, Barnabas whose name was Sariman had a wound on his leg. He could not heal himself, although he was known as an "*orang pintar*" or a gifted people who was able to cure based on the spiritual guidance (*wangsit*) he received. Then he received the spiritual guidance.

At that time, Barnabas, whose name was Sariman, had a wound on his leg. He could not heal himself, although he was known as an "*orang pintar*", or a gifted person who was able to cure through the spiritual guidance (*wangsit*) he received. Then he received spiritual guidance that, to recover, he had to walk northeast from his house in Kalibawang, Kulon Progo. He then walked in the indicated direction, arrived in Muntilan, and stopped at the St. Anthony Muntilan Church complex. At this church, he met Brother Kersten, SJ, who offered that Sariman stay and be treated there. His approximately two-month stay allowed him to interact with Fr. Van Lith. Kalibawang, Kulon Progo. He then proceeded in the indicated direction, arrived in Muntilan, and stopped at the St. Anthony Muntilan Church complex. At this church he met Brother Kersten, SJ who offered that Sariman stay and be treated there. His approximately two-month stay allowed him to interact with Fr. Van Lith.

During his daily treatments, Sariman overheard the Holy Mass from the church. Because the services were recited in Latin, he did not understand the prayers unless someone explained them. However, an interest in praying in that way developed within him. Thus, he made a promise (Javanese: *nadar*) that if his leg wound were healed, he would dedicate the rest of his life to God. After about two months of treatment, his leg healed completely, and he was able to walk normally. Although he also intended to be baptised, Fr. Van Lith could not grant his wish until he studied the Catholic faith (catechism) for about a year. Sariman agreed, but first he returned to Kalibawang, where everyone was astonished that he had recovered. Sariman recounted all his experiences in Muntilan — how he had met Brother Kersten, lived



and was treated at the church complex, and had regular contact with Fr. Van Lith. Sariman stated that his trip to Muntilan had healed him both physically and spiritually; he had found the right way of life.

Together with Sariman, three other individuals studied the Catholic catechism in Muntilan. They were Lukas Surotirta (Barnabas' father-in-law), Markus Sukadrana, and Yokanan Surowijaya. After completing the catechism, Fr. Van Lith baptised the four at the Muntilan Church on 20 May 1904. In the *Liber Baptismi* of the Muntilan mission station, it is recorded that their godfather was Andreas Martaadmadja. This Andreas was most likely the lay catechist who assisted Fr. Van Lith in providing religious instruction to these four individuals.

After these four were baptised, a village official from Kalibawang approached Fr. Van Lith in Muntilan to report that other villagers intended to be baptised. Consequently, the villagers studied the catechism in their own village of Kalibawang, rather than in Muntilan. The first four individuals to serve as catechists were the first to be baptised and were most likely assisted by Andreas Martaadmadja, who resided in Muntilan. At certain times, Fr. Van Lith also visited Kalibawang to deliver catechism instruction and provide support. After completing their lessons, as many as 174 people were baptised into the Catholic Church on 14 December 1904, not at the Muntilan church but at Kalibawang, in the complex of Sendangsono spring. This place in Central Java is now well known and is nicknamed "Bethlehem van Java".

## *7.2. New mission stations*

The Book of *Liber Baptismi* recorded baptisms and provides information on the development of new mission stations. During this period, from the original five stations, others were established. From the Semarang station, nine new stations arose: Karangpanas Semarang (1915), Randusari Semarang (1928), Salatiga (1928), Atmodirono Semarang (1932), Girisonta (1932), Ungaran (1933), Pati (1934), Demak (1936), and Kudus (1939). From the Yogyakarta station (Kidul Loji), 14 new stations emerged: Bintaran (1896), Medari (1917), Ganjuran (1930), Sedayu (1930), Klepu (1930), Wonosari (1930), Wates (1930), Somohitan (1930), Kotabaru (1933), Pakem (1934), Bantul (1934), Gamping (1934), Pugeran (1934), and Mlati (1936). From the Surakarta (Purbayan) station, three additional stations appeared: Ambarawa (1896), Klaten (1923), and Purwosari Surakarta (1940). Furthermore, from the Magelang station, three new stations were established: Muntilan (1894), Borobudur (1899), and Temanggung (1937). The only station that did not generate any new stations was Boro (1894).

## **8. Conclusion**

At the beginning of the 19th century, the Catholic community in Java was estab-

lished with the arrival of two Dutch missionaries. During this early period, the role of the laity was limited to being members of the Church Council and acting as worship leaders to conduct religious services when the priest was away on hinterland journeys. Although the religious permit granted by the colonial government restricted services solely to Dutch Catholics, the Book of Liber Baptismi listed the names of Javanese, other indigenous Indonesians, and Chinese individuals. These persons were most likely workers at the Catholic mission stations or those who interacted with the missions.

During the Dutch Church Period (1809-1882), the Book of Liber Baptismi specifically detailed the routes of the journeys undertaken by Fr. Lambertus Prinsen, the first missionary in Semarang, from which four new mission posts were established. These posts later developed into stations and subsequently parishes responsible for issuing baptismal certificates. In addition to the main mission post in Gedangan, Semarang, established in 1809, four more were founded in the 19th century: Yogyakarta (1812), Purbayan, Surakarta (1859), Boro Kulon, Progo (1864), and Magelang (1865).

During the second period of the Missionary Church (1882-1940), Dutch missionaries recognised the importance of lay catechists and developed a solid understanding of Javanese language and culture. This led to the mission centre relocating southward to Muntilan in the Magelang area, which was close to centres of Javanese culture, the Mataram Kingdoms of Surakarta and Yogyakarta. During this era, lay catechists increasingly participated in the Java Mission. By speaking the common language, they served as translators and interpreters of the new faith for the Javanese. They primarily served as the "middleman" between European missionaries and the Javanese. They also supplied information that helped missionaries make key decisions. However, the motives of some were questioned, as in October 1897, when a catechist was involved in a fraudulent purchase of cemetery land. Consequently, Fr. Van Lith, appointed as the "mission conductor" by the Mission Leader (Superior Misi), spearheaded the creation of schools to educate local people and prepare those interested in becoming qualified lay catechists. In Muntilan, this included Kweekschool A, Kweekschool B, and later Xavier College.

The Liber Baptismi recorded baptismal certificates, which showed the geographic spread and growth of stations. Over approximately 150 years, the initial five stations in the first period (1809-1882) expanded to 34 mission stations in the second period (1882-1940). With these developments, the Java Mission can be considered successful. The growth was varied and can be classified into four groups: (1) stagnant (Boro), (2) moderate (Magelang and Surakarta), (3) expanding (Semarang), and (4) highly expanding (Yogyakarta). Further study of the developmental dynamics within each group would provide a more comprehensive picture of how the Dutch mission in Java began and evolved from 1808 to 1940.

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## **Развој постаја мисија Римокатоличке цркве на Централној Јави, 1809-1942.**

### **Апстракт**

Историјске студије указују да је присуство Римокатоличке цркве на Нусанта-ра архипелагу забележено први пут у 16. веку, нарочито у Малукуу. Но, католичанство је прекинуто када су Холанђани преузели контролу над Бандом 1633. године, након што су успоставили седиште администрације Холандске источноиндијске компаније у Батавији 1619. Готово двестотине година касније, 1799., ова компанија је развлашћена и угашена, док је колонијална управа Холандије 1800. преузела управљање. Ово је праћено и дозволом католичког присуства у архипелагу, иако уз ограничења. Долазак двојице холандских католичких мисионара на Јаву довело је до оживљавања католичанства као вере. У почетку, било им је дозвољено да њихову паству чине само холандски цивили и војно особље. Но, стотину година касније, Римокатоличка црква почиње са покрштавањем аутохтоног локалног становништва са Јаве. Ова период карактеришу и активне стратегије и напори са много страна, осветљавајући различите начине на које је католичанство развијано на Централној Јави.

**Кључне речи:** Католичанство, Централна Јава, Ван Лит, "Liber Baptismi", Индонезија