

Our Capuchin Brother Archbishop Anthony S. Apuron Celebrates his Twenty-Fifth Episcopal Anniversary

On Saturday, 21 February 2009, our Capuchin brother Archbishop Anthony S. Apuron together with the Church of Agaña celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving at the Dulce Nombre de Maria Cathedral-Basilica, Hagatña, Guam on the occasion of his twenty-fifth Episcopal Anniversary.

Anthony Sablan Apuron was born on the island of Guam; the eighth child of ten of the late Manuel Tajjito Apuron and Ana Santos Sablan on 01 November 1945. Soon afterward, he was baptized by Alvin LaFeir, O.F.M. Cap. on 18 November 1945.

For a decade after the war his father, Manuel Apuron worked with the Navy both at the Naval Station near the former village of Sumay and the Naval Air Station. His mother Ana, took care of the home, and lovingly nurtured her family with her strong faith.

Young Anthony grew up in Mongmong, where his parents moved from Agaña after the devastation of World War II. At the age of seven he began his formal education in Mongmong Elementary School [1952-1957]. During his time he received his First Holy Communion from Timothy Kavanagh, O.F.M. Cap. on 05 December 1953 and one year later was confirmed by Bishop Apollinaris Baumgartner, O.F.M. Cap. on 05 May 1954. Anthony then attended Cathedral Grade School [1957-1960]; and later Father Duenas High School [1960-1964].

It was during these formative years that he relates continued encouragement from Capuchins Antonine Zimmermann, Donan Hickey, Alexander Feely, Marcian Pellett, Daniel Cristobal and Mel McCormack.

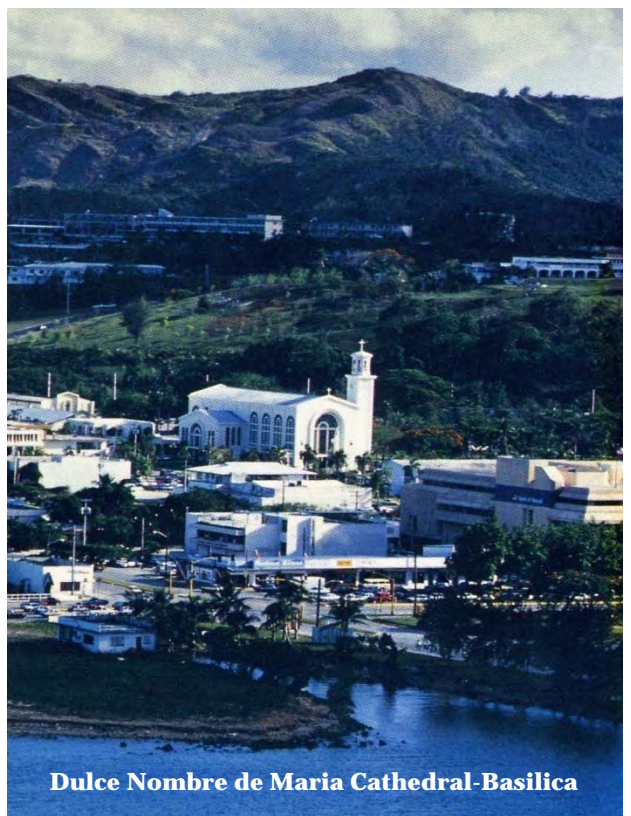
In his junior year at Father Duenas, typhoon Karen struck the island on 10 November 1962. In the aftermath of the storm he took counsel with his seminary rector Donan Hickey, O.F.M. Cap. about the path of his vocation.

In July, 1964 he left Guam for the Capuchin novitiate in Milton, Massachusetts. His novitiate classmates included: Raymond Richard and Senan Taylor. Upon completion of his novitiate year, Anthony pronounced his first vows on 01 September 1965. For the next four years he studied and resided at Saint Anthony Friary in Hudson, New Hampshire majoring in philosophy. Three years after his first profession, he made his solemn profession on 01 September 1968 also at St. Anthony Friary. The following summer he was awarded a Bachelor of Arts on 01 June 1969.

The next five years would be dedicated to the study of theology and liturgy, first at Mary Immaculate Friary at Garrison then at the Maryknoll School of Theology in Ossining, New York earning his Masters in Divinity [1972] and Masters in Theology [1973].



Archbishop Anthony S. Apuron- 19 February 1984



Dulce Nombre de Maria Cathedral-Basilica



In the winter of 1971, because of his mother's failing health, Anthony returned to Guam to be present to her. She died on 06 December 1971. He was ordained a sub-deacon at Saint Fidelis Friary in Agaña on 11 December 1971 and the following day ordained to the diaconate at the Agaña Cathedral. Two days later, the newly-ordained deacon delivered the eulogy at the funeral of his mother on 14 December 1971.

"I believe that my mother who fostered my vocation at home and allowed it to grow in the church is now with the Lord receiving her hundredfold not in this life but in her present eternal life. And I believe that if we too do the will of the Father, we shall also receive that hundredfold if not in this life but in the next."

Anthony was ordained to by priesthood on 26 August 1972 in Dulce Nombre de Maria Cathedral by newly-appointed Bishop Felixberto Flores, Bishop of Agaña.

Following his ordination, he returned to Garrison to complete his fourth year of theology. He went regularly on weekends to Saint Barnabas parish in Bellmore, NY and ministered as an assistant, moderator of the folk group and in conducting services for the children in religious education. Tony remarked about his wonderful experiences at St. Barnabas: "My life has been continually renewed because of the many efforts and interests of people I love, know and work with and for all this I am very grateful. My ministry so far has been enriching and self-fulfilling because of those who continually share their lives with me."

The following year, Anthony continued his studies and was awarded a Master of Arts in Liturgical Studies [1974] from Notre Dame University, South Bend, IN.

He began his pastoral ministry as rector of the Minor Seminary at Father Duenas [1974-75]; associate pastor of Mt. Carmel Church on Saipan [1975-76]; and pastor of Mt. Carmel Church in Agat [1976-78]. Anthony was elected first councilor of the Marianas Islands Mission in 1976 and served on the leadership team until 1979. The Capuchin mission in the Marianas became the Vice Province of Our Lady Star of the Sea in January, 1982 and he was once again elected first councilor.

Anthony was appointed rector of Dulce Nombre de Maria Cathedral on 19 June 1978 and held that position until his episcopal ordination. He was appointed auxiliary bishop to Bishop Felixberto Flores and ordained 19 February 1984.

Bishop Anthony, who is the first native Capuchin Archbishop, was installed as the second Archbishop of Agaña by Archbishop Antonio Magnoni, DD, Pronuncio, Wellington, New Zealand and Apostolic Delegate to the Pacific Islands on 11 May 1986.



Francis Lonergan & Brian Champoux-1984





Bishops Anthony Apuron & Peter Baptist Ishigami-1984

Since his priestly ordination in 1972, nearly 37 years ago, our brother Anthony has stood as an instrumental figure in both the religious and secular sectors. He has remained steadfast as shepherd of Guam's Catholic community. Over the years he has lead Guam's pro-life movement and efforts to ban all forms of organized gambling making him a central figure of guidance and authority in the community.

The twenty-fifth Episcopal Jubilee of Archbishop Anthony was joyfully acknowledged by the Church of Agaña. To highlight his momentous occasion, the archdiocese hosted events on three consecutive days in praise and thanksgiving for a devoted son of Guam who continues to serve God and lead God's people.

On 19 February 2009 at 5:45 a.m. the actual day of the Archbishop's elevation as Auxiliary bishop, a Eucharist was celebrated at the Cathedral-Basilica. A breakfast gathering, hosted by family and friends, took place following the liturgy at the Archbishop's residence on Cuesta San Ramon.

That evening at 6:00 p.m. an Ordination Mass to the Diaconate was celebrated. The Eucharistic celebration was followed by a dinner hosted by the Redemptoris Seminary and the Neo Catechumenal Communities on the grounds of the Academy of Our Lady of Guam.

On 20 February 2009 a Mass for Vocations to the Diaconate, Priesthood and Consecrated Life was celebrated at 6:00 p.m. This gathering was followed by dinner hosted by the Silver Jubilee Committee on the grounds of the Academy of Our Lady of Guam.

The Silver Jubilee Mass was celebrated at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, 21 February. The Province of Saint Mary was represented by our brothers James Gavin, who ministered at preacher and Francis Gasparik, director of the Mission and Development.



Celebration at Mary Immaculate- 1984: Roy Richter, Senan Taylor, Thomas March, Bp Anthony, Michel Dalton & Raynold Thibodeau



Novice Master- Donatus Goetz



Neal Kerrigan



Paulo Kosaka, Bp Anthony, Antonine Lizama &Minster Provincial Don Bosco Duquette-1984