

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC
DIOCESE OF DARU-KIUNGA
SERVING THE WESTERN PROVINCE OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA

OUR LAND

The country of Papua New Guinea is a cluster of Islands located south of the equator to the north of Australia and to the east of Indonesia. the Diocese of Daru-Kiunga is one of the 18 Catholic dioceses in this country and covers the entire state of Western Province. The geography of this massive area of approximately 42,000 sq. miles is most challenging: swamps, lakes, rivers and mountains (most of which are dense tropical forests) cover the area. The country is very close to the equator and is very hot and humid throughout the year.



The Western Province of Papua New Guinea is the least populated and least developed of all the provinces. It covers 42,000 square miles with a rugged coastline broken by river deltas and open expanses of seasonally flooded grassland rising to a mountainous spine with the highest peak of 12,410 feet. In the area of the Star Mountains there are two seasons best described as “wet” and “wetter wet”. The average monthly rainfall is 10 to 34 inches.

Two of the countries greatest rivers, the Fly and Strickland flow through the province and end in a huge island filled delta. The Fly River’s 2664 miles fall only 66 feet in the river's rush to the sea. The

Western Province is a land of spectacular flora and fauna (especially freshwater bird life), swamps, mangroves, rain forests and giant streams.

The mining towns of Kiunga and Tabubil are linked by 87 miles of road, but the rest of the province is dominated by impenetrable dense forest, steamy jungle and swampy marshes. Barges and cargo vessel travel up and down the Fly River and its tributaries but do not carry passengers. Passenger travel on the river is by dugout canoe and small motor boats.



A RELIGIOUS REFLECTION ON OUR NATIONAL FLAG

The national flag is divided in two: the lower part represents the earth (colour black) and the sky (southern cross). This reminds us that God created this country: rivers, mountains, rocks, minerals, all natural resources were there before we were created, as a gift from God. The upper portion of the flag represents all living creatures in our land: red is the colour of blood, representing the human race, and the bird of paradise represents all other living creatures in our land. We are on this land, as the red is on black. But we must not spoil it. It would not be good for the red to invade the yellow and swallow the bird. We have a responsibility to our land. Every country is both a gift and a project, a call from God to use the country wisely. We must always thank God for the land and pray Him to make us wise so that we may use it well.