

# Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood

## Beginnings

The story of Mount Alvernia Hospital began with the arrival of three Sisters from the Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood (FMDM) on 7 March 1949. They took over the tuberculosis wards at Tan Tock Seng Hospital, which eventually became known as Mandalay Road Hospital.

Compelled by the needs they saw, the Sisters began to plan to build Singapore's first Catholic hospital. Their years of Government salaries were used to seed the hospital building fund. They also started canvassing for donations all over the island of Singapore.

Land on Thomson Hill was bought in Oct 1956 and the construction of the hospital began in 1957 with the bulldozers moving in to clear the land. A J Braga who was then Minister of Health performed the ground breaking ceremony in 1959.

On 4 March 1961, Mount Alvernia Hospital was declared officially opened by Dato Lee Kong Chian, a great supporter of the Sisters and the Hospital. At the time of opening, the hospital had two operating theatres, an anaesthetics room, a recovery room, two labour wards, a nursery and a milk kitchen. There was also an X-ray department, physiotherapy department, an outpatient department and a dispensary.

Amazingly, the hospital was entirely staffed by the Sisters who were professionally trained as nurses, midwives, physiotherapists, radiographers, laboratory technicians and other support services. The Sisters who ran the hospital received all their professional healthcare qualifications, religious training and hospital work attachments in England. What is more, before and after ward duties, the Sisters also doubled up as housekeepers, chefs and meal server.

To view the history, click on link below

<http://history.catholic.org.sg/mount-alvernia-hospital-3/>