

# From the Archives

*"Every scribe who becomes a disciple of the kingdom of heaven is like a householder who brings out from his storeroom things both new and old."*

*Matt. 13.52*

*Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2011*

*Vol. 3 No. 2*

Editorial: When I was making Sr. Adelfia's Album and searching for information regarding the volcanic eruption in Rabaul Harbour in 1937, I came across a letter from our Sister Potentiana describing the events of that terrible day, Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May 1937, as she experienced them at the Mission Station, Malaganan. She is writing some weeks later from the safety of Vunapope but the descriptions are so graphic that one can see them vividly in imagination – the earthquake, the eruption, the roaring fire, the spewing lava, the dense clouds of smoke and ash, the lightning and the thunder, a ship exploding in the harbor, and the desperate flight to safety. She thought the end of the world was nigh. But even in the midst of the cataclysm there are expressions of faith, trust in God to strengthen and deliver, resilience, courage in the face of cosmic upheaval, tender care for fearful children and, when calm is restored, thanksgiving. This long letter makes for inspirational reading and I print it here in full that we all may wonder at the marvellous work of God that is the human spirit. Sister Potentiana was one of the many who survived through that Spirit. Over 500 lives were lost that day when the forces of nature were too fast and furious to allow them to escape. *Pat*



I discovered this photo in our Archives. It was taken at St. Paul's in 1927, ten years before the volcanic eruption of 28<sup>th</sup> May 1937 which Sr. Potentiana describes in her letter. Sr. Potentiana is on the right.