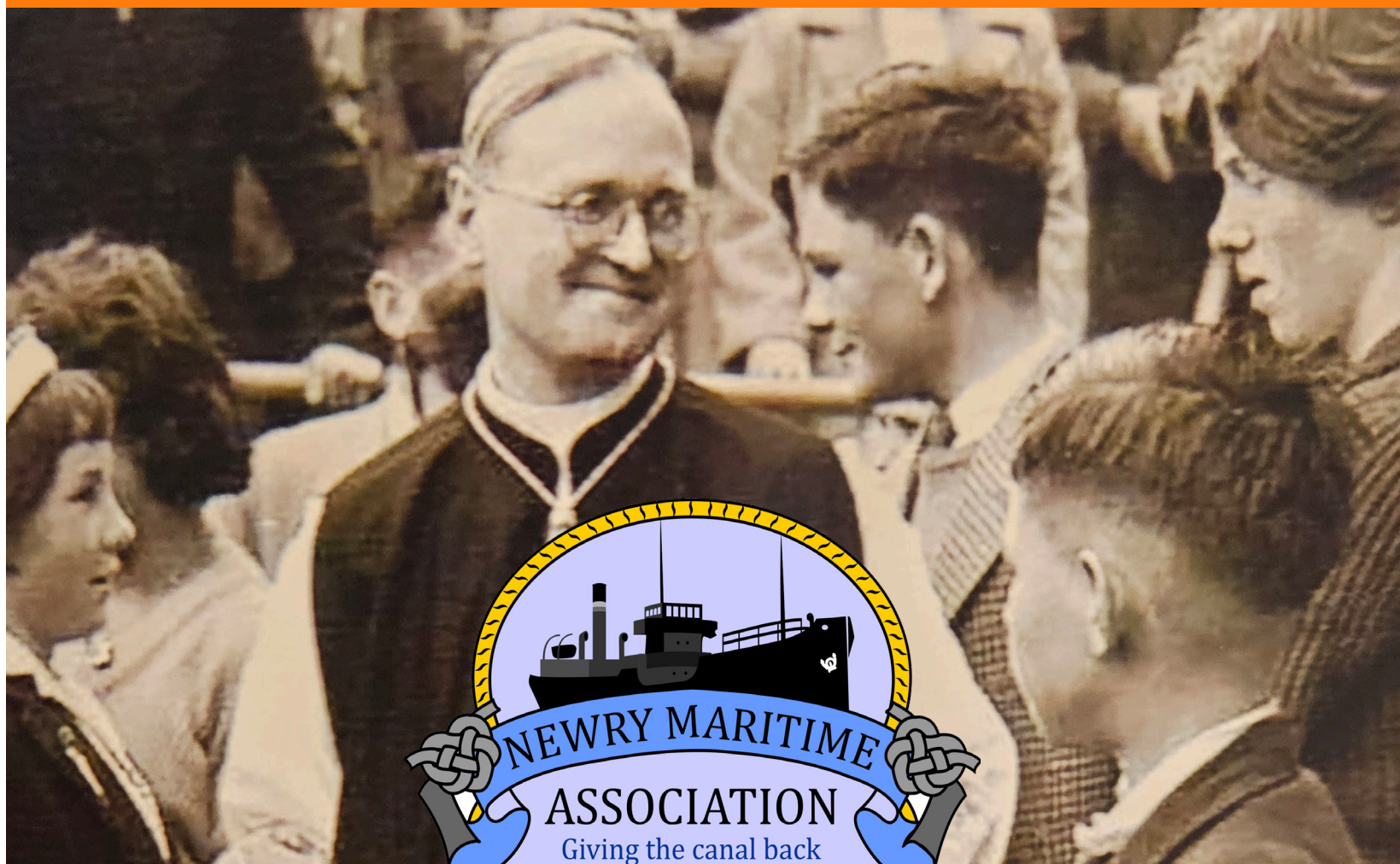




Remembering Bishop Eusebius John Crawford OP. D.D C.M.G.



PRIEST, PRELATE
AND
A SON OF WARRENPOINT.



**The Square, Warrenpoint.
Saturday 20th September 2025.**

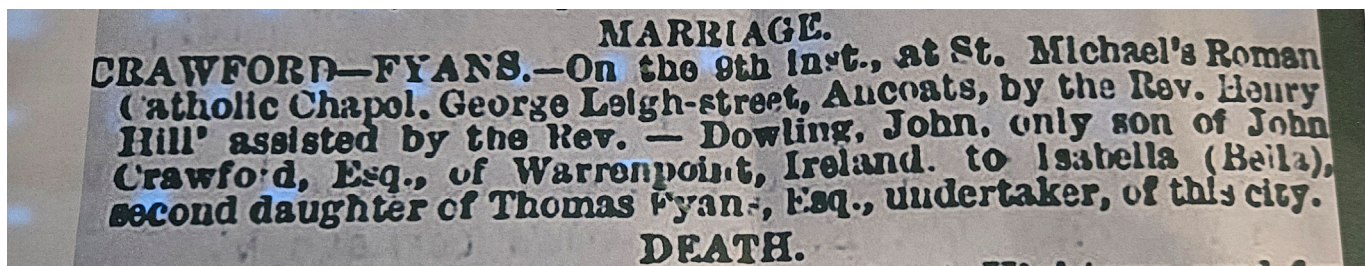
Today we remember, and pay tribute to, a local man from an old established family from Warrenpoint whose religious calling brought him to the opposite side of the world to continue his Ministry. As the first Bishop of Gizo, and a Dominican, he laboured in the Western Solomon Islands for 42 years.

Compiled by James Mc Arevey.

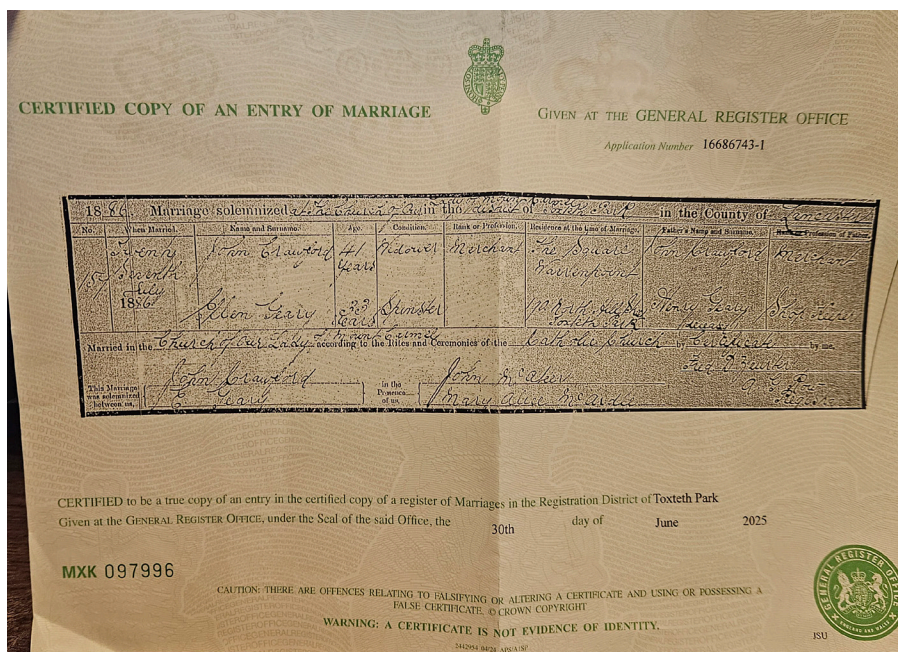
The Crawford Family.

THE CRAWFORDS CAME TO IRELAND FROM LANARKSHIRE, SCOTLAND CIRCA 1770 AND SETTLED IN THE TOWNLAND OF AUGHNAMOIRA WHICH OVERLOOKS THE SALTMARSH OF THE NEWRY RIVER AND LIES OPPOSITE THE TOWNLAND OF FATHOM IN CO. ARMAGH.

Following a tenancy dispute, John Crawford (Great Grandfather of the Bishop) relocated with his family to Warrenpoint in 1824, aged 14. He was apprenticed to Daniel Dougherty, who was a ships chandler in The Square, for a period of 7 years. In later years, John took over the business and expanded it into a vibrant entity.



His son, John, left Warrenpoint to pursue a career in merchandising in Liverpool where he married Isabella Fyans, a daughter of a prominent local undertaker, in St. Michaels RC Church, Ancoats on 9th April 1877. Returning to Warrenpoint they had two children in quick succession. Annie, born 1878, became a nun with the Order of Mercy in Newry. Her sister Elizabeth was born in 1879 and married a doctor in Kenya, Dr. H. L. Henderson. Sadly, their Mother, Isabella, died after an illness on 22nd April 1881 at the age of 32. Romance however blossomed again for this young Irish merchant and on 27th July 1886 he married Ellen Geary in The Church of Our Lady in Toxteth. Ellen was a daughter of Harry Geary, a well known Liverpool shopkeeper. John and Ellen returned to Warrenpoint and John took the reins of the family business in The Square.



MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE FOR JOHN CRAWFORD AND ELLEN GEARY

Their marriage was blessed with 5 children, 4 boys and 1 girl, John Geary, Henry (HJ), Vincent, Margaret and Thomas.

In the census of 1901 all the children are living at home but by 1911, 2 are missing. Henry Joseph (HJ) had emigrated to America whilst Vincent had a teaching post in Scotland. In 1915, Vincent was appointed as Town Clerk for Warrenpoint, a position which he held until his retirement in 1961. John Geary (Jack) became a teacher in St Peters PE and remained in post for over 40 years. Thomas became a Marconi radio operator with the Merchant Navy and was employed by Harrisons of Liverpool.

SORROW and TRAGEDY.

THE CRAWFORD FAMILY ENDURED AN "ANNUS HORRIBILIS" IN 1926.

Sr Mary (Annie Crawford) died from Meningitis in May 1926 in the Convent of Mercy Newry. She was just 48 years old.

On 9th July Ellen Crawford passed away and just 3 months

later her youngest son,

Thomas, was killed in a railway

accident in Lancashire. He was on

leave from his ship and was due to sail for Galveston in Texas a few days later. Thomas was buried in England. On 5th November John Crawford, the family Patriarch, passed away at home aged 81.

In July 1927, Elizabeth Henderson (sister of Annie) died in Kenya and like Annie, she too was 48. Previously, Jack (b 1888) and Vincent(b 1891) had married. Vincent married Rose Kelly from Church St. in the town with the wedding being held at St. Josephs Church, Berkeley Road in Dublin on 7th February 1917. Just 2 years later, Jack followed suit and he too got married in St. Josephs Church. This time the church was in Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal and Ellen Gallagher was a local girl. Our focus is now on Vincent Crawford and his wife Rose (known as Rosie) who was the daughter of a retired Liverpool policeman, John Kelly.

Just like his parents, Vincent and Rose had a family of 5 but this time there were 2 boys and 3 girls. Their first child was John who was born on 4th December 1917 and followed by Cherry, Ellen, Margaret and Vincent. Cherry never married and lived at home whilst her sisters embraced married life. Vincent pursued a career in the Irish Army, married and raised his family in Dublin. He retired as GOC Western Command, Irish Army.

This Marriage was solemnized between us, { Charles Mc Dermott. } in the Presence of us, { Joseph Carroll, Josephine Mc Dermott. }

1917. Marriage solemnized at the Roman Catholic Church of St. Josephs. in the Registrar's District of N. City, No. 16. in the Union of N. Dublin in the County of City of Dublin

No. (1)	When Married (2)	Name and Surname (3)	Age (4)	Condition (5)	Rank or Profession (6)	Residence at the Time of Marriage (7)	Father's Name and Surname (8)	Rank or Profession of Father (9)
209	February 7 th 1917	Patrick Shelly	Full	Bachelor	Tom Clerk	The Square, Warrington	John Crawford	Hardware Merchant
		Vincent Crawford	Full	Bachelor	—	Church St. Warrington	John Kelly	Retired Policeman

Married in the Roman Catholic Church of St. Josephs. according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Roman Catholic Church by me, Felix Mc Dermott, Adm. Warrington.

This Marriage was solemnized between us, { Vincent Crawford. } in the Presence of us, { John Henry Crawford, Mary Kelly. }

1917. Marriage solemnized at the Roman Catholic Church of St. Josephs. in the Registrar's District of N. City, No. 16. in the Union of N. Dublin in the County of City of Dublin

No. (1)	When Married (2)	Name and Surname (3)	Age (4)	Condition (5)	Rank or Profession (6)	Residence at the Time of Marriage (7)	Father's Name and Surname (8)	Rank or Profession of Father (9)
		Vincent Crawford					John Henry Crawford	
		Rose Kelly					Mary Kelly	

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE OF ROSE AND VINCENT CRAWFORD

1917. 1917

No. (1)	When Born (2)	Name and Surname (3)	Age (4)	Condition (5)	Rank or Profession (6)	Residence at the Time of Birth (7)	Father's Name and Surname (8)	Rank or Profession of Father (9)
1017	1917	James Henry Hazley	7	Formerly Hazley	Formerly Hazley	Warrington	James Hazley	Warrington
21	1917	James Hazley	7	Formerly Hazley	Formerly Hazley	Warrington	James Hazley	Warrington
22	1917	James Hazley	7	Formerly Hazley	Formerly Hazley	Warrington	James Hazley	Warrington
23	1917	James Hazley	7	Formerly Hazley	Formerly Hazley	Warrington	James Hazley	Warrington
24	1917	James Hazley	7	Formerly Hazley	Formerly Hazley	Warrington	James Hazley	Warrington
25	1917	James Hazley	7	Formerly Hazley	Formerly Hazley	Warrington	James Hazley	Warrington

BIRTH CERTIFICATE OF BISHOP JOHN CRAWFORD, O.P.

A True Follower of St. Dominic. The Ministry of John Crawford.

JOHN CRAWFORD ATTENDED THE LOCAL ST PETERS PE SCHOOL IN WARRENPOINT AND THEN, LIKE JACK, HE WAS A PUPIL OF THE CBS SECONDARY SCHOOL AT THE CAR STANDS, MARGARET SQUARE, NEWRY. PART OF THE UPPER STOREYS OF THIS STRIKING RED BRICK BUILDING ARE STILL INTACT TODAY BUT THE GROUND FLOOR HAS BEEN REDEVELOPED AND OVER A 1/3RD DEMOLISHED.

It was whilst at school in Newry that John became familiar with the Dominican Order with whom the Christian Brothers always had a strong affinity.

This was mainly due to the fact that both communities were drawn from across the island and they shared common ground whereas they wouldn't have had the same familiarity with the Diocesan priests.

In September 1934, John entered St. Marys Novitiate in Tallaght, Dublin to study for the priesthood, taking the religious name Eusebius, and on 29th March 1941 he was ordained a priest at Clonliffe College, Drumcondra, Dublin for the Dominican Order. The following year he obtained a Degree of Lectorate in Sacred Theology and was appointed to Newbridge College in Co Kildare where he lectured for the next 4 years. His prowess for academia had been noted and a decision made to keep him as an educator in the Order rather than deployed on parish work.

In 1946 Fr John Crawford received his next assignment. He was appointed Professor at the Dominican House of Studies at St. Dominics, Melbourne, Australia. Not just a shunt down the road !!! He taught until 1951 when he became Master of Novices and Students. He was accorded a signal honour in 1955 when he was chosen as one of three Dominicans to represent Australia and New Zealand at the General Chapter in Rome.

This was a man going places on an upward trajectory.

John received his next assignment in 1957, a transfer 600 miles North of Melbourne, as Prior of Wharoonga. The Dominicans had established a House of Formation for students entering the Order in this suburb of Sydney in 1948. Around the same time, Cardinal Norman Gilroy the Archbishop of Sydney created the Parish of the Holy Name as a parish of the Archdiocese of Sydney and placed it in the care of the Dominican Order. John Crawford ministered here for 2 years until 1959 when he was recalled to Melbourne as Prior of St Dominics. The man from Warrenpoint had covered a lot of ground in just 18 years and there was a lot more to come !!



Christian Brothers' Schools, Newry.

"Salve Regina"



HINDSIGHT, THEY SAY, IS A WONDERFUL THING AND AS WE LOOK BACK ON THE FORMATIVE YEARS OF THE CAREER OF FR. JOHN CRAWFORD HIS DESTINY WOULD APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN DECIDED BY HIS SUPERIORS MANY YEARS PREVIOUSLY. JOHN WAS A PAWN TO DELIVER A MUCH BIGGER GAMEPLAN.

There had been talks about introducing the Dominicans to the Solomon Islands since 1937 amid concerns that the Marist Order lacked the capacity to serve all the islands but the outbreak of WW2 in 1937 halted progress. There was a hiatus after the War ended in 1945 and then the subject was broached again but with renewed vigour.

At the invitation of the Holy See, the Dominican Friars entered into partnership with the Dominican Sisters and lay associates in 1954 to open a mission in the Solomon Islands. The first mission party left Sydney on 20th January 1956 destined for the islands. To facilitate communication between these widely separated places a second hand naval boat was acquired and outfitted in 1957. Renamed "Salve Regina", it was then sailed from Sydney to Nila on Poporang Island, the voyage taking 2 weeks !!! The vessel saw service until 1970 when it was wrecked on a reef in Choiseul Bay. The ship was replaced with a purpose built vessel, "MV Demonic" in 1973.

The Dominican party meanwhile purchased "Loga" an old Lever Brothers plantation, a short canoe trip from Gizo.

In 1960 the Mission became the Vicariate Apostolic of the Western Solomon Islands with Fr John Crawford appointed as Vicar Apostolic on 1st March 1960. On 8th May 1960 in St Peters Basilica in Rome, Pope John XXIII consecrated 14 new Bishops, one of whom was Eusebius John Crawford as Titular Bishop of Caffa. Shortly afterwards, Bishop Crawford returned on holidays to Warrenpoint and whilst home, celebrated Mass in St Catherines Newry on Sunday 24th July 1960.

The plan had come to fruition in The Solomons with the Dominicans in charge and the chosen one at the helm.

No doubt, Bishop Crawfords role in The Solomons was the envy of many dreaming of living on sun kissed islands in the Pacific Ocean. However, the reality was very different. The islands had been occupied by the Japanese during WW2 and in early 1942 the Americans unleashed a fierce bombardment which succeeded in driving the Japanese out. Strategically, the islands were very important and control gave the Americans the upper hand in the surrounding area and vital control off important shipping lanes.

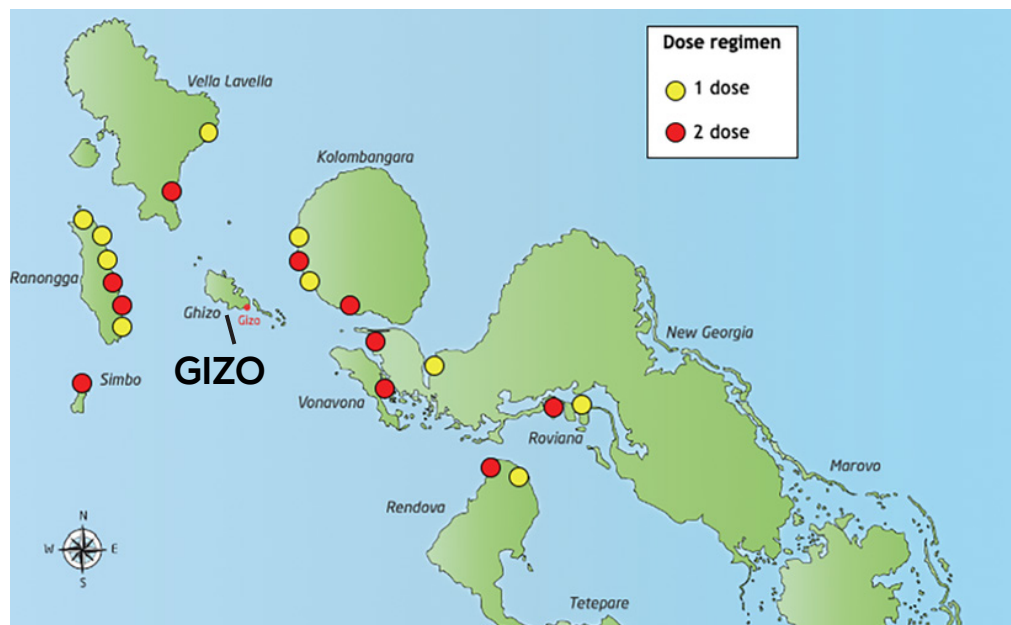
Gizo was virtually obliterated during the intense fighting and recovery was painfully slow after the conflict had ended. Building projects were undertaken using second hand materials left by the Japanese and American armies and Gizo was anything but a Pacific paradise.

On arrival the Bishop lived in a native house "among the coconuts" and then a lay missionary from Canberra, Joe De Dassel, built a new house for him on the Mission station of Loga. In 1962, Bishop Crawford made an extensive tour of the islands on "Salve Regina" and also by canoe into more remote areas. This had been the first visit by a Bishop in many years. On 18th June 1964 he opened St. Peters Cathedral in Gizo, a plain, fit for purpose wooden structure.

In December 1966 Pope Paul VI gave the Vicariate Apostolic full Diocesan status and on 15th November 1966 Eusebius John Crawford was appointed Bishop of Gizo. Cometh the hour, cometh the man and Bishop Crawford was now centre stage. Also in 1966, a telephone exchange and a radio station were opened. Gizo also got its first cafe and tea shop and an electricity generating plant was opened. A Township Advisory Committee was established in 1968 to facilitate cooperation between church, state and commerce with the aim of progressing for the common good and Bishop Crawford was an important and highly respected contributor.

The Diocese of Gizo is one of three Dioceses in the Solomon Islands and was formed from the Vicariates of North and South Solomons in the early 1960s. It encompasses three Provinces: Choiseul, Santa Isabel and the Western Province. It spreads over an area of 12,600 square kilometres populated by 129,000 people, of whom approximately 14,000 are Catholics. There are seven Parishes, in the Diocese).

There are a few larger settlements. Gizo, a town of 3,500, is the headquarters of the Diocese and is an administrative centre for the Western Province. Noro, the official overseas port for the



area, has a fish cannery and other light industry. At Ringi Cove is one of the few sustainable logging industries in the Solomons, and Taro, the Provincial Centre for Choiseul also is a small administrative centre. Otherwise, most of the people of this area live in small coastal villages, accessible only by outboard powered canoes.



ST. PETERS CATHEDRAL IN GIZO

Civic Recognition.

HM Queen Elizabeth II celebrated the Silver Jubilee of her coronation in 1977 and in an Honours List published on 11th June 1977, Bishop Eusebius John Crawford was awarded a C.M. G.

A C.M.G. Is a Companion of the Order of St Michael and St. George and is awarded for Distinguished Service in a Foreign Country or in Relation to Foreign or Commonwealth Affairs.

This includes individuals holding high office or those rendering extraordinary service.

The man from Warrenpoint had made his mark and was deservedly acknowledged.



Retirement

Bishop Crawford retired from active Ministry in the 'Diocese on 3rd August 1995 having overseen transformative changes which brought his diocese into the 20th century. He chose Blackfriars Priory in Canberra, Australia for his retirement sojourn and was appointed Bishop Emeritus of Gizo. During his retirement he visited his hometown regularly, renewing old acquaintances and meeting lifelong friends. He often said that he accredited his achievements to his formative years living at home in an ordered environment where everything was done to plan.

Bishop Crawford Passed away on 31st May 2002 and was laid to rest in Canberra, far from his native Warrenpoint. He was an achiever and his legacy is the vibrant modern Diocese which he has shaped in Gizo. His Ministry extended across 61 years, of which he served as a Bishop for 42 years.

He may have been Bishop Crawford, Bishop of Gizo but he always remained John Crawford from Warrenpoint on the shores of Carlingford Lough.

1962

PRICE 10

BISHOP GOES BY CANOE TO CONFIRM CHILDREN

His Lordship, Most Rev. Dr. E. Crawford, Bishop of the Western Solomons Vicariate and native of Warrenpoint, has just completed his first comprehensive tour of his territory.

Travelling by mission launch—the M.V. *Salve Regina*—the master and navigator a Dominican lay-brother—Bro. Paul conducted Dr. Crawford to the remote villages and out-lying mission centres of his Vicariate and there the Sacrament of Confirmation was administered to children and adults many of whom were seeing their Bishop for the first time.

It was the first time that Confirmation had been administered at Gizo and the natives made it a big occasion.

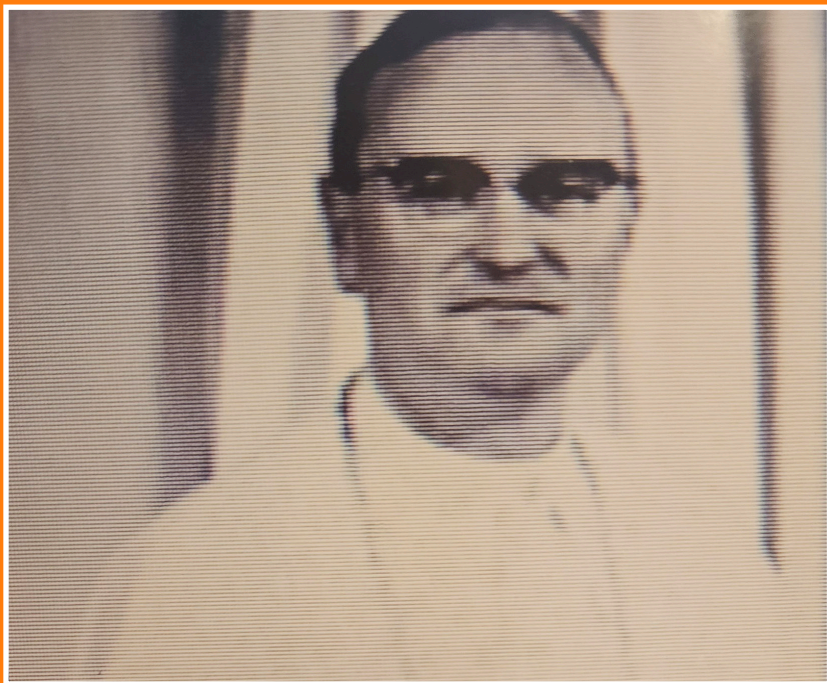
Part of his Lordship's tour was conducted by canoe from Kandova to Lamberate.

His Lordship's visit to the far distant lands was the first undertaken by a Bishop for many years past.

MOVING INTO NEW "PALACE"

Since his arrival at Loga, off Gizo, Bishop Crawford has been living in a temporary, native style house "amongst the coconuts," as one of the boys described the "palace."

This residence was situated on top of a hill on the island, and it was decided, for various reasons, to build, when opportunity pre-



Sincere thanks to,



Our Corporate Member, The Braham Group,
for their generous sponsorship of our tribute to a local man.



Historian, archivist and good friend of NMA, Maud Hamill.

Chris Cassidy, Heritage Officer Newry City Library, for his advice and direction.

The Prior, Fr. Patrick Desmond O.P., and the Dominican Community of St. Catherines, Newry.

Hugh Heatley Warrenpoint