

**Church right to say Allah describes God, says Vatican's first envoy to Malaysia**  
**Malaysian Insider**  
**July 11 , 2013**  
**By Jennifer Gomez**

In his first interview with the Malaysian media, the first resident diplomat sent by the Vatican to live and work in this country spoke on the controversial issue of the use of the Arabic word "Allah" to describe God in any religion.

Archbishop Joseph Marino said he supports the stand of the Catholic Church in Malaysia.

He applauded the arguments made by the Christian Federation of Malaysia to use "Allah" in its texts to refer to God as very well done.

Archbishop Marino is the Apostolic Nuncio to Malaysia. This position, also often known as a papal nuncio, is the Vatican equivalent to an ambassador.

This is the first time the Vatican has opened what is the equivalent to an embassy in Malaysia.

The diplomat said the only way to stop deterioration in race relations in Malaysia is through dialogue, saying it would work out if people sat down and talked.

On his experience being the former nuncio in Bangladesh, Archbishop Marino said the people in that Muslim country have great respect for Christianity. - July 11, 2013.

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