



'To Bear Witness to the Light' - Jn 1:7

# The Catholic Reporter

Catholic Bishops' Conference of PNG & SI - Commission on Social Communications, P.O. Box 398, Waigani, NCD Tel: 325 9577 Fax: 323 2551

December 2024

Issue No: 228

## Pope at Angelus: Be vigilant and turn your gaze to Heaven

- Thaddeus Jones

At the midday Angelus on the first Sunday of Advent, Pope Francis encourages us to turn our gaze to heaven and to open our hearts to the Lord who carries our burdens and sustains us on our journey.

Pope Francis led the customary Angelus prayer on this first Sunday of Advent and reflected on the Gospel reading in which Jesus speaks to us about cosmic upheavals and the anxieties and fears humanity faces. The reading recounts how the Lord offers words of hope and encouragement. When speaking of the coming of the Son of Man, He tells his disciples to stand up and raise their heads to heaven as their redemption is at hand.

**Look to Lord with trust:** Persecutions, wars and natural disasters made up the catastrophic events of many of Jesus' contemporaries, the Pope pointed out, and anxieties for the future and the end of the world abounded. The Lord knows their hearts are burdened with fear, the Pope observed, and He helps the disciples be free of worldly anxieties and false convictions of security, by showing them how to be vigilant with their minds and hearts, remembering God's plan for salvation even amidst the most dramatic events of history. He explained that by turning our gaze to heaven, we can better put into context the challenges in our lives as we journey to the Lord.

**Mindful and hopeful hearts:** The Pope said Jesus' call to vigilance and awareness extends to all of us as well. He suggested we reflect on our own lives and outlooks, whether we are letting ourselves be discouraged or crushed by the anxieties and worries of our lives and world situations, or if we have the faith and courage to lift our heads up to see the Lord who is our help and salvation.

In conclusion, the Pope prayed that this Advent season may be "a precious opportunity to lift our gaze to Him, who lightens our hearts and sustains us on our way."



The Holy Father after the Angelus (Picture Courtesy: ©Vatican Media/Dicastery for Communication)

## Meet your Bishop: Bp Jozef Roszynski SVD (Bishop of Wewak Diocese)

- Jessica Oata



In this issue of the Catholic Reporter, we are delighted to reintroduce the 'know your Bishop' section after featuring reflections from the Holy Father's recent visit to PNG.

We are thrilled to be featuring His Lordship Bishop Jozef Roszynski SVD, the Shepherd of the Diocese of Wewak. He is also the Bishop Deputy for the Social Communications Commission.

Born in Nidzica, Poland on August 18, 1962, Bishop Roszynski has fond memories of growing up on the farm with his eight siblings and parents working with animals.

"I was the eighth out of nine children born to my parents. There were nine of us - five girls and four boys"

Bishop Roszynski also recalls walking long distances to school.

"We walked long distances to school, in the summer and in the winter and to the church as well... We would run to the chapel in the village at the crossroads to pray and sing songs. And every May during the devotion to Mother Mary, we would also go on Monday afternoons and sing songs and pray because we had plenty of work to do on the farm on other days"

After eight years of primary education, he entered a technical college to study electronics.

"I was always interested in gadgets during my time. Before, we had tape recorders, amplifiers and disco lights. I constructed disco lights so they would be blinking to the rhythm of the music and I was even a DJ (disk jockey) during my high school in our village"

Bishop Roszynski applied to the seminary to join the SVDs in 1981 after college and was accepted and started his formation. He was a novitiate for a year, he did philosophy for two years and then went on to study theology for four years. He did his deaconate practice for almost a year and was ordained priest on April 30, 1989.

After his ordination, he remained in Poland for two years as part of the requirement for the SVD missionary program where a priest had to work in a parish within Poland to be absorbed in the Ministry of Priesthood before they could go out and learn foreign languages before being sent out for mission in other countries.

"In Poland we speak Polish, in high school I learnt German and Russian and so I had to learn English in Ireland before I came to Papua New Guinea. I finished my language course but somehow my superior at that time didn't make any move to send me to the mission so I went one day to the travel office and bought a one-way ticket to Papua New Guinea using my student ID".

By the end of September 1992, Bishop Roszynski started his remarkable journey to Papua New Guinea and arrived on October 13, 1992.

Bishop Roszynski's first stop in the Diocese of Wewak was in Timbunke village to learn the language.

"I was just given a tape and a book. The people were there, the kids were there, the mighty Sepik River was just in front of the house with its million dollar view or 10 million dollar view, the beautiful Sepik culture and the *haus tambarans* added that special touch to my journey in the Sepik."

When asked about his inspiration to join the religious life, he said the interest began back in his parish when he attended retreats given by the SVD priests who also talked about the mission, the work of the missionaries and the need for missionaries.

"Our parish priest was very close to the SVDs and was always inviting them for retreats. In Poland we have special retreats during Advent and Lent for the whole parish. Their talks on vocation promotion were in line with my personal interest in tropical countries and so I wanted to become a missionary to bring the good news to the people living in the natural environment. Apart from that, attending a vocation promotion retreat at the seminary also gave me the opportunity to know more about the mission life"

When asked about how he felt when he was appointed Bishop of Wewak, he said he never imagined himself being a candidate to become a Bishop since he was generally a shy person.

"When the news came in 2015, I was rather full of fear and feeling unworthy to take on the role of a bishop and lead the diocese. I was content and felt that I had already fulfilled my life as a missionary but as the superior of the SVDs in the district at that time, I also felt the need to continue the mission work"

Setting his Motto as: **Jesus I trust in you** and based on the need of God's help to fulfill the role of the Bishop, he took on the challenge and was ordained on April 25, 2015.

Reflecting on his journey so far with his diocese and looking forward, Bishop looks forward to developing more pastoral programs with his priests and implement these programs with the help of the creative laity.

"I'm happy of how the people work together in Wewak. We have the clergy who work together with the seminarians and the lay people, so I believe the church is very much alive in every aspect of our activities to assist people to grow in the love and light of Christ"

When asked what he enjoys doing his leisure time, Bishop Roszynski said he enjoys going to the beach to relax and swim, be in touch with nature or just simply in the company of his people.

He enjoys seeing his people working together to achieve a common goal and attending big celebrations.

"Attending big celebrations and seeing the power of God present in the life of the people makes me feel inspired. Seeing people take part in pastoral activities and how they respond positively to the Church's call gives me joy and peace.

In his final advice to the young people in the Church in PNGSI, Bishop Roszynski is encouraging the young to be close to Jesus despite the distractions from the world.

"I was once young and I was a DJ in my little village, but that did not stop me from attending mass on Sundays and the Catechesis that were taught afterwards. You can have a social life, and that is normal for young people, but make sure you have time for God. Strive to develop your personal relationship with God and you will experience his goodness as you go through life's challenges as a young person."

### IN THIS ISSUE:

1. Pope at Angelus: Be vigilant and turn your gaze to heaven.
2. The importance of the rule of law.
3. ADVENT - A time of waiting.
4. Eleven Religious Sisters take part in inaugural SOCOM Formation Program.



### The importance of the rule of law



In the animal kingdom we easily observe a spontaneous and somehow orderly organization of hierarchies, powers, control of space and resources. It is not a result of conscious planning and mutual agreement, but it depends on physical strength, adjustment to situations and conditions of life, ingenuity driven by instinct. Eventually the survival of the fittest determines the power and the role one individual or a species can aspire to acquire and impose on others. Among humans, things work the same way except for the fact that the gift of reason and intelligence, sitting in the brain, allows at times the existence of a level of cynicism, cruelty and wickedness unmatched among animals. Indeed, it also allows for the opposite, when good intentions take the lead and kindness, care and love are being displayed in abundance. To minimize excesses and guarantee decent and respectable conditions of living, human communities have evolved over millennia and organized themselves to the current prevalent form of independent political states. The use of physical force, brutality and savagery is excluded in principle

in favor of debate, consensus and the will of the majority with pertinent guarantees and safeguards for the minorities. This human endeavor at its formal level of implementation is called the rule of law. Communities agree on principles, practices, institutions and a legislation that guarantees and safeguards them from any outburst of arrogance, ignorance, and selfishness by individuals and groups including, ad it is frequently the case, the government of the day. A state with a strong respect for the rule of law is generally recognized by the accountability of its institution, the fairness of its legislation, the openness of its government and an efficient and impartial justice system. Economy, education, peace and order, and quality of life greatly benefit from the rule of law. Signs of contempt for the rule of law, on the other hand, include, among others, the weaknesses of the legislative and the judiciary power, the covert, if not overt, occupation by the executive branch of key positions in independent state regulatory bodies, the tendency to frequently and easily amend the Constitution of the country to fit particular interests and sensitivities. Where does Papua New Guinea stand as far as the rule of law is concerned? The system itself does not

appear to be as safe as most would wish. There is hardly a clear demonstration of acceptance of separation of powers between the legislative and the executive with the only chamber of parliament easily dominated by the government in charge. With a small number of people's representatives on the opposition side, come repetitive and generally unsuccessful attempts at a vote of non-confidence; even with a government that over many years now has proven itself unwilling or unable to address basic issues: foreign exchange currency availability, electric power and water supplies beginning with the capital city, air and maritime transportation, not to mention lack of employment opportunities, criminality, peace and order, basic health and education, widespread corruption practices. Besieged by public mistrust and unwilling to surrender to its own ineptness, any government will inevitably delve into the tenets of the rule of law to weaken public guarantees and welfare and strengthen an already delegitimated and inopportune hold on power. Stability becomes the mantra. But what can guarantee it are only successful policies which earn the public trust. Otherwise it's mere struggle for political survival.

- Fr. Giorgio Licini, PIME | CBC General Secretary

### The Letters of St Paul: 1 Thessalonians



**Date:** It is widely held that 1 Thessalonians is the oldest letter we have from Paul and may be the oldest book in the entire canon of the NT. Most scholars agree that Paul must have penned this letter in the winter months of late 50 or early 51. **Destination:** Thessalonica was established by the Romans as the provincial capital of Macedonia (northern Greece) in 146 B.C. Paganism and idolatry dominated the religious environment in Thessalonica, although it was also home to a Jewish colony with at least one synagogue. Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy (1:1) founded the Thessalonian Church in A.D. 50 on the apostle's second missionary tour (Acts 17:1-9). Initially, they spent several weeks preaching in the synagogue and saw the conversion of Jews, Greeks, and several leading women from the city (Acts 17:4). However, enraged by the missionaries' success,

certain Jews from the city incited riots and forced the missionaries out of Thessalonica only weeks (or possibly months) after their arrival, causing them trouble as far as Berea (Acts 17:5, 13). The community left behind remained a target of local persecution (1 Thess 1:6; 2:14; 2 Thess 1:4). A majority of the community were Gentiles who had abandoned idolatry for Christianity (1:9). **Purpose and Themes:** First Thessalonians is a predominantly pastoral letter with a pastoral focus. Paul wrote out of a deep concern for these recent converts who were unexpectedly left alone to withstand the rising tide of persecution and the constant pressures of paganism. Absent in person and eager to return (3:10), Paul sent the epistle in his place to strengthen them through these difficult times (3:3-5), to encourage them to be chaste and charitable (4:1-12), and to console the bereaved among them with the hope of resurrection (4:13-14). Expressions of joy, gratitude, and encouragement

punctuate the letter as Paul affirms them for their astonishing growth (1:8) in faith, hope, and love (1:3; 3:6; 5:8). There are no rebukes for the Thessalonians, only appeals to stay on the same course (4:1; 5:11). The substance of the letter, though more personal than theological, is not lacking in doctrinal content. This is evident in Paul's emphasis on eschatology (teaching concerning the end times). At least once in every chapter he mentions the return of Jesus Christ in glory. According to Paul, Christ will come again from heaven to deliver us "from the wrath to come" (1:10) and give us the final "salvation" for which we yearn (5:9). His prayer is that Christ will perfect the "love" of his readers (3:12) and establish them forever in "holiness" at his arrival (3:13; cf. 5:23). The apostle is confident he will be proud of the Thessalonians on that day and expects to wear them like a "crown" before the Lord (2:19).

- Fr. Tomás Ravaioli IVE  
Liturgical Catechetical Institute Director

### Good bye.....



Dear Friends,  
This is my last article for the Catholic Reporter, most probably! I say Good-bye to Papua New Guinea, which has been my home for 43 years. I am returning to India to begin another ministry. There were lots of challenges and at the same time more joys in my life and ministry in PNG. I thank Jesus, who chose me to be a Missionary to PNG and the friends from all walks of life, who gave me the strength to serve the people of Papua New Guinea. I leave PNG with a great sense of satisfaction. I have finished my race in PNG. I like to give my humble comments to the Leaders and Lay Faithful of the Catholic Church:  
1. Catholic Church has contributed greatly to the development of the country in all levels: Spiritual, Social, Intellectual, Material and Political. While

preaching the Good News in the most rugged places, the first Catholic Missionaries built sound communities, roads, bridges and air strips. They were influential in the formation of the early leaders and the constitution of the country. The Catholic Church still continues to be a leader in building up the people and the country.  
2. Amidst great material and social developments in the country, we find a great sense of social restlessness: high cost of living for the common man; violence and killing in the streets and the communities with no respect for law and order; corruption at all levels of political life; sorcery related violence has reached new heights and the youth of the country are in search of meaning in life. The Churches and the Government are struggling to find solutions.  
3. Students and young people are looking for a meaning in life amidst struggles in today's life in PNG. We need to teach the students and young people

moral, spiritual, social, material and political values. We have to use our Catholic Institutions to teach them values and not valuables.  
4. We need to give on-going formation to all age groups in the church. Sunday homily is alone is not enough for the people. We need to find one hour of teaching on a week-day or on Sundays.  
5. We need to make known to the Catholics and other Christians, the riches of the Catholic Church; the positive aspects of the Catholic Church. The other churches seem to know only the negative aspects of the Catholic Church in PNG.  
6. The Lay people should take ownership of the growth of the Catholic Church in PNG. The cooperation between the Church authorities and the Lay people need to reach newer heights.  
7. Thank you for journeying with me. Good Bye- PNG!  
God Bless you.

- Fr. Victor Roche SVD  
Director of the Pontifical Mission Societies

### Priest administers Sacrament of Holy Matrimony to 20 couples in West Papuan Refugee Camps

**Iowara Parish, Kiunga:** Twenty couples across three different camps West Papuan Refugee camps had their unions blessed by Fr Andrew Moses recently. Originally from the North Fly region of Western Province, Fr Andrew hails from a small village called Bolivip. He blessed the couples' unions from the three camps of Komopkin, Terakbits, and Yogidome on different dates throughout the year —5 in Komopkin on 7th July 2024, 10 in Terakbits on 21st July 2024, and 5 in Yogidome on 10th November 2024. To reach each camp, Father Andrew walked long distances: two hours to Komopkin, one and a half hours to Terakbits, and one hour to Yogidome. Reflecting on this meaningful milestone, Father Andrew shared: "I am a proud priest. It gives me great joy to be able to witness and administer this sacrament. It's encouraging to see how deeply people want to live out their faith, commitment, and love." He continued, "I also enjoyed spending time with the

couples, helping them prepare and ensuring they were ready to face the commitment they made. As a pastor, seeing them take this important step is fulfilling and motivating for me." Father Andrew is also preparing additional couples. However, serving the refugee communities presents unique challenges. One of the main difficulties is the continuous movement of refugees, which affects their stability. Many cross borders to visit family or to join their "wantoks" (relatives). Additionally, refugees often have diverse political views and concerns regarding their defense. Despite these many challenges, Father Andrew has learned to adapt to the needs of his parishioners and remains committed to being there for them when needed. As a priest, Father Andrew's goal is to continue supporting the spiritual well-being of the community.

"I want to help them stay connected to the sacraments, share the Gospel to give them hope, and liaise with organizations to ensure they have access to clean water, food, schools, and health facilities," he explained. "These are some of the ways I can help them live their faith and stay hopeful."



Fr Andrew Moses takes a group picture with the couples at Tarakbits.

- Ahisha Mangot



**ADVENT - A time of waiting**



**Advent, from the Latin *adventus*, does not simply mean *coming* or *arrival*.**

There are at least two other Latin words that could be translated this way, not counting several interjections. So why did the early Church go with the term *adventus* to describe the period leading up to

Christmas?

In the Latin, the word had an intriguing range of meanings. *Adventus* is a form of the verb *advenio* which is defined not only as *arrive, come to, but also as develop, set in, and arise*. *Adventus* itself also refers to an *invasion, incursion, ripening, and appearance*—all denotations that are rich with implications for the gospel accounts of Christ. (Steven Beale, *Catholic Exchange*, 2021)

Advent is a season of expectation during which the Church cries out with peoples of all time, “Come, Lord Jesus.” The hope of Christians who eagerly await the coming of the Lord and the fulfillment of his Kingdom is an echo of the hope of the People of Israel who anticipated the coming of the Messiah with devout longing. They were eagerly awaiting the fulfillment of

the promise God had made to the house of Israel and Judah, just as the Prophet Jeremiah proclaimed.

The spirit of Advent expectation is very different from passive longing. We don’t simply sit and wait for the Lord to arrive. Rather, as captured in the Collect of today’s Mass, we pray that God grant us “the resolve to run forth to meet” the Lord. We are called to be actively engaged over these weeks to prepare a place for the Lord, to be ready for his return.

As we hear in the Gospel, the Lord himself, in speaking to his disciples about the coming of the Kingdom at the end of time, exhorts his disciples, “Be vigilant at all times!” Our anticipation of the coming of the Lord is to be active: standing with heads raised high, alert and clear, never afraid, because our redemption is at hand.

One of the ways in which we can prepare ourselves for the Lord’s coming is to be watchful and alert for his presence and action among us. The more we accustom ourselves to being aware of God’s love acting in our lives and the more we strive to be attentive to following his will for us – especially in the charity we have for one another, as Saint Paul reminded the Thessalonians – the more we prepare our hearts for an eternity spent near to God. Such

- Sr Daisy Anne Lisania Augustine MSC  
Secretary for Social Communication

closeness to the Lord will also be for us the experience of the fullness of joy in his presence.

In Papua New Guinea, WAITING is often not a joy. The long queues in the bank, the shopping centres or the traffic can be a pain as well as a time of impatience and blurting out of unkind words.

Why not take this time of advent to work on a little patience when the car in front of you is rather a little slow or the old lady in front on the checkout counter is telling the lady a story she never told anyone because she lives alone. In addition, try some discipline when you are in the edge of saying an unkind word to someone you do not like and try some patience on the long queues at the bank.

We are reminded this advent that grace comes from living the virtues of patience and of love and compassion.

As Christians our hope is in the salvation which the Lord comes to offer us, and this hope keeps us focused on eternity even as we pass through the course of this life. At the end of Mass today we pray, “For even now, as we walk amid passing things, you teach us by them to love the things of heaven and hold fast to what endures.” May our attitude be such until the coming of the Lord!

**Mendi Diocese, Kam! Yumi adorim em!**

**Mendi:** Hundreds of Catholic Faithful from the three deaneries in the Diocese of Mendi comprising of Southern Highlands and Hela Provinces gathered for the first Diocesan Eucharistic Congress that was held from November 22-24, 2024.

The program began on Friday November 22 with colorful processions from Mendi town by the three deaneries. The pilgrims braved the highlands heat with an array of colorful banners highlighting the theme and identifying the different parishes singing joyfully with pride of their Catholic Faith as they marched from Mendi town into the Diocesan Premises.

The processions took place at different intervals of the day; morning, midday and afternoon. Opening the processions were the pilgrims of the Central Deanery. The next deanery to arrive was the Eastern Deanery with the Western Deanery arriving in the afternoon.

Each of the processions were lead with a Monstrance containing the Holy Eucharist carried by the deans that was given to each of the Deaneries at the opening of the year of the Eucharist earlier this year.

The faithful were met by their Shepherd, His Lordship Bishop Donald Lippert OFM Cap at the Mary Mother of the Divine Shepherd Cathedral grounds who received the Monstrance from the deans and then took it to the altar before leading them in adoration of the Holy Eucharist.

In his address to the respective deaneries, Bishop Lippert OFM Cap welcomed the pilgrims to the Diocesan Eucharistic Congress.

“We are gathered here to celebrate the Holy Eucharist and this gathering is the first of its kind. At

the beginning of the year when the Year of the Eucharist was launched, three Monstrances were given to the three deaneries to journey with the people. Jesus has journeyed with you in your families, parishes and outstations through the blessed sacrament present in the Monstrance.”

The Bishop also invited everyone to pray for peace in the diocese and offer all their intentions and burdens to the Lord in order to fully participate in the Eucharistic Congress.

Highlights of the Diocesan Eucharistic Congress include:

- Evening adorations before the blessed Sacrament and the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Lively animated Eucharistic celebrations with colourful processions.
- Ordination of three new deacons: Deacon Clement Tarmat OFM Cap, Deacon Jim Bikine OFM Cap and Deacon Paul Leme.
- Enriching Catechesis to help the people in their faith.
- Touching drama performed by youths from the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary - Kewabi Parish.
- 47 children receiving the Sacrament of Holy Communion.
- Coadjutor Archbishop's presence to be the main celebrant of the Christ the King feast day mass.
- Celebration of the feast of Christ the King with a march around Mendi town by all the faithful that gathered for the event.
- Donation of offertory food items to the St Francis Care Home for the Orphans.

- Sr Grace Nakan and Jessica Oata

Expressing his appreciation, Shepherd of the Diocese, His Lordship Bishop Donald Lippert OFM Cap thanked all those who pilgrimed to take part in the Diocesan Eucharistic Congress and all those who organised such an event and encouraged everyone to go back home and live out full Christian lives by celebrating the Holy Eucharist.

“This Diocesan Eucharistic Congress closes the Year of the Eucharist and is also preparing us for the National Eucharistic Congress that will take place in the Archdiocese of Mount Hagen from December 12 - 15”.

Everyone went home expressing sentiments of joy and looking forward to the National Eucharistic Congress.



Group picture of the priests with Coadjutor Archbishop Clement Papa and Bishop Donald Lippert OFM Cap after the mass on the Solemnity of Christ the King.

- Fr Mathew Sobin PIME and Donovan Pintol

**First Archdiocesan Eucharistic Congress**

The first Archdiocesan Eucharistic Congress (AEC) was held on the 29<sup>th</sup> and the 30<sup>th</sup> of November 2024 at St John the Apostle Parish at Tokarara meditating the theme “Come Let Us Adore Him”-Mt 2:11. The Archdiocesan Youth Meet too was organized parallelly which began the previous day on 28<sup>th</sup>. On 29<sup>th</sup> the eucharistic catechesis were presented to the faithful by Fr. Edward Ante, Fr. Justin Nenat SVD and Fr. Mathew Sobin PIME. The night vigil adoration to the Blessed Sacrament was led by various parishes following their turn of the holy hour. The crowd was facilitated to participate in the Sacrament of Confession.

On the morning of November 30<sup>th</sup> the solemn Eucharistic Celebration was presided over by His Eminence Sir John Cardinal Ribat, the Archbishop of Port Moresby concelebrated by the diocesan clergy and participated by a great number of the faithful including the youth, catechists, parish leaders, lay ministers and the religious.

His Eminence, by his words rekindled in the faithful the flame of the richness of the Eucharist as the priceless Gift given to us. He reminded those gathered to understand and to respond to this heavenly Source of every Christian life. “The Eucharist is the source and summit of our faith,” Cardinal Ribat said. “It signifies the presence of Christ, who offers Himself to us in the most intimate way. It is through

the Eucharist that we draw strength for our journey of faith.”

In his homily, Cardinal Ribat shared a moving story that highlighted the transformative power of the Eucharist. He recounted the experience of a man from another faith tradition who attended a Catholic Mass out of curiosity. During the breaking of the bread, the man felt a mysterious yet unmistakable inner voice calling him.

“That moment changed his life forever,” Cardinal Ribat told the congregation. “He felt the presence of God speaking directly to his heart. This profound encounter led him to embrace the Catholic faith. Today, he is a baptized Catholic and one of the leading theologians in our Church.”

After the holy Mass, the Blessed Sacrament is enthroned on the truck-top and motorcaded to the St Mary’s Cathedral. The praises and prayers arose from the long line of motorcade added more devotion to the *Santissimum Sacramentum*.

As the sacred Monstrance was passing through the city roads hundreds of people on the roadsides received the celestial blessing. The Blessed Sacrament was devotedly welcomed to the cathedral and processed onto the altar for the Eucharistic Blessing.

The first AEC was an event of inspiration to increase the faith in the real Presence of Jesus in the

Eucharist. It prepared them for the First National Eucharistic Congress. After the Congress many Christians opined that it recreated in them the dignity of the eucharistic people, it united them around the Lord’s Table, they felt the ‘awe’ of the heavenly presence of the Almighty, it generated in them the ever need of participating in the Eucharistic Adoration.

“This was a powerful moment for us as a Church,” one parishioner shared. “The procession reminded us of the beauty of our faith and the strength we draw from being part of a community united in Christ.”



The Catholic Faithful attending mass.



### Eleven Religious Sisters take part in inaugural SOCOM Formation Program

- Jessica Oata

**Kefamo, Goroka:** Eleven Religious Sisters from different congregations were the pioneers of the SOCOM Formation Program for Religious Sisters held at Kefamo Conference Center in the Diocese of Goroka from November 11 – 15, 2024.

The formation program was an initiative of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands Social Communications Commission under the leadership of Sr Daisy Anne Lisania Augustine MSC as the Secretary.

The aim of the program was to form the Religious Sisters to be effective communicators in their respective ministries while emulating Christ as the perfect communicator, especially in today's digital era.

The sessions were centered around theme: **Empowering Religious Sisters to be Communicators in the Digital Age.**

The brief introductory session on the evening of Monday November 11 set the tone for the workshop when the SOCOM team outlined the ground rules and expectations while distributing materials needed for the duration of the workshop.

The sessions for the first day dwelt on the Catholic Church's documents on communication to help the Sisters understand communication from the Church's perspective. His Lordship Bishop Walenty Gryk SVD, the Shepherd of Goroka Diocese was the guest presenter and took the participants through a session on Evangelizing Communication to help them explore new and creative ways of evangelizing.

The first day ended with a short visit to the Goroka Bilum Market for a practical activity of encountering people and communicating with them. The Sisters enjoyed the afternoon mingling with the friendly and hardworking locals listening with empathy to their struggles while admiring their talents and perseverance.

Sessions for the second day focused on Ethics in Internet, the advantages and disadvantages of the internet, and tips on how to E-vangelize on the internet. The day concluded with an introductory session on news writing that later had the sisters unleash their creativity in news writing.

The last day allowed the Sisters to go deeper into the basics of news writing. Concluding the series of sessions was the photography session. The session highlighted the basics in photography followed by a practical activity that had the Sisters testing out the skills they just learnt using their mobile phones. The day ended with the presentation of photographs from the activity that left a lasting impression of amazement in the Sisters at how beautiful their pictures turned out with the basic photography guidelines and the use of a simple mobile phone.

To conclude the program, a closing ceremony was held to present the certificates to the Sisters. Present as the guest speaker in this small but significant event was His Lordship Bishop Walenty Gryk SVD. Several participants of the workshop had the opportunity to share their testimonies before the presentation of the certificates. To show their appreciation, the participants also presented a gift to Bishop Walenty,



Group picture of the Sisters with Bishop Walenty Gryk SVD after the closing ceremony.

the Sister in Charge of Kefamo Conference Center Sr Merylyne RSM and the facilitators.

His Lordship Bishop Gryk SVD congratulated the participants for their dedication and eagerness to learn and encouraged them to put into practice what they have learnt from the workshop when they return to their communities.

"You have gained new insights on Church Communication during this workshop, therefore, you have a big task to go back to your communities and be communicators of the Digital Age. Look for creative means to communicate with the people. Meet people where they are, as they are and communicate with them from your hearts"

SOCOM Secretary Sr Daisy Anne Lisania Augustine MSC expressed sentiments of joy saying that Commission is looking at programs that empower and enable the religious to be critical thinkers and creative communicators in their respective pastoral ministries.

"We started last year with the first SOCOM Formation for Priestly Summit which had 36 participants and we're continuing this initiative, this time with the Religious Sisters and we look forward to hosting other programs like these two in the coming years"

The evening concluded with a final blessing given by Bishop Gryk SVD and a group photograph to mark the occasion.

Participating Archdioceses/Dioceses include Madang, Mount Hagen, Mendi, Wabag, Bougainville, Wewak, Aitape and Vanimo with participants belonging to different congregations such as Sisters of St Therese of the Child Jesus, Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Oblates of Notre Dame, Franciscan Sisters of Mary, Sisters of Mercy, Sisters of Nazareth, Rosary Sisters and Sisters of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

- Sr Veronica Mond SSCJ

### SSCJ Sisters celebrate Silver Jubilee in Religious Life

**Kundiawa:** Members of the Sisters of Sacred Heart of Jesus (SSCJ) Congregation came together in the Mary Help of Christians Cathedral on Saturday November 16, 2024 in the Diocese of Kundiawa to witness and share in the jubilant festivities to commemorate 25 years of Religious life for two members of their congregation.

Joining the SSCJ Community was the Catholic Faithful who came in numbers to share in the joy of witnessing Sr Anna Kiruai SSCJ and Sr Anna Imbuka SSCJ celebrate their Silver Jubilee of Religious Life.

The celebrations had theme: **I am the way, the truth and the life.** Most Reverend Bishop Paul Sundu of Kundiawa Diocese presided over the Silver Jubilee Holy Eucharistic Mass with Parish Priests from Kundiawa Diocese concelebrating.

The readings selected by the two Sisters complemented the event and the beautiful sharing by Fr Christian Sieland accompanying the theme left everyone who attended inspired.

The First Reading from Exodus on the 'Burning Bush'. The Second Reading from Ephesians 1:3,

'Spiritual Blessings in Christ'. Gospel, Luke 24:13 'The Walk To Emmaus'.

"In the Burning Bush, God attracts, and we respond to our calling as either as a religious or lay person. When in union with Christ, we receive spiritual blessings, therefore, we must thank God for all the blessing we received"

Fr Sieland urged everyone not to forget that Christ is journeying with us through the word of God and the Sacrament of Communion, the source and summit of our Catholic faith.

"Christ said, I am the way, the truth and the life. Come to me! May the 25 Silver Jubilee theme: **'I am the way, the truth, and the Life'** continue to be the signpost for the next 25 years to come"

Following the mass, Sr Anna Kiruai SSCJ gave a thank you speech to thank everyone who contributed one way or another toward the Silver Jubilee Anniversary.

"It is worth mentioning that we are touched by the overwhelming support in cash and kind from the priests, other religious congregations, our families,

associates, benefactors and catholic faithful towards our 25 Silver Jubilee Anniversary in Religious Life"

"The gestures of kindness from the Catholic faithful shows their faith, trust and support to the Congregation of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Papua New Guinea and it gives us the strength and support we need to continue our mission to show God's tenderness and merciful love to others"



Group picture of the two Sisters with Bishop Paul Sundu and the altar servers after mass.

- Catholic Communications - Solomon Islands

### 34 Women and Girls graduate from MMDC

**Henderson, East Honiara:**The Mary Mazarello Development Centre (MMDC) celebrated the graduation of its 22nd cohort, with 34 women and girls completing training under the theme "Let the brightness of education help women change for a better life" on November 27, 2024.

The event commenced with a Holy Mass presided over by Archbishop Christopher Cardone OP, joined by Fr. Aneal, Parish Priest from Noro in the Gizo Diocese, and Fr. Peter, Assistant Priest of Christ the King Parish.

In his homily, Archbishop Cardone congratulated the graduates and reflected on the mission of MMDC, reminding them of the center's motto: "Let every skill be an act of God's love."

He emphasized the transformative power of education in their lives.

"Bright is what we reflect today—bright is light, and light is Christ," he said. "Every graduation is an opportunity to thank God for the gift of education and development. Use these skills not just for yourselves, but for your families, communities, and our country."

The ceremony included speeches from special guests, the presentation of certificates, refreshments, and entertainment. Sr. Claudia Aragon, MMDC's principal, expressed gratitude to the families of the graduates for their support. She highlighted the center's commitment to equipping women and girls with life skills for a brighter future.

Sr. Claudia acknowledged the challenges faced during the program, including varying educational levels among students, which required tailored teaching methods and personal counselling. She noted that a few students were dismissed after repeated warnings, reinforcing the center's commitment to high standards.

Keynote speaker Mrs. Ellen Bina, a pioneer MMDC graduate, shared how the program transformed her life mentally, physically, and spiritually.

Among the distinguished guests were Archbishop Cardone, SIARTC Director Mr. Cherry Galo, South Pacific Community Country Coordinator Mrs. Margereth Illisia, and pioneer student Mrs. Ellen Bina.

The MMDC continues to play a pivotal role in

empowering women and girls through education and skill development, ensuring they contribute positively to their communities and beyond.



Graduating cohort with their cake...Picture supplied

## The Catholic Reporter Team

You are invited to send in your articles, photograph and reflections on events and happenings in your parish, community, institution and diocese. Please send in your material to: [socom@catholic.org.pg](mailto:socom@catholic.org.pg) on or before **20th of the Month, 2024.**

<b>EDITOR</b> <b>SR DAISY ANNE LISANIA AUGUSTINE MSC</b> Phone: <b>325 9577</b> Email: <a href="mailto:secretary_socom@catholic.org.pg">secretary_socom@catholic.org.pg</a>	<b>SUB-EDITOR</b> <b>CBC SOCOM</b> Phone: <b>325 9577</b> Email: <a href="mailto:socom@catholic.org.pg">socom@catholic.org.pg</a>	<b>LAYOUT AND DESIGN,</b> <b>EDITING &amp;</b> <b>PROOFREADING:</b> <b>CBC SOCOM</b>
--	--	---

PUBLISHED BY: **CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONFERENCE** ~ PRINTED & DISTRIBUTED BY: **WANTOK NIUSPEPA**