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CHURCH

Alive

2022 Pastoral Letter

Salt & Light: The Culture of Life

Elections: Responsible Stewardship

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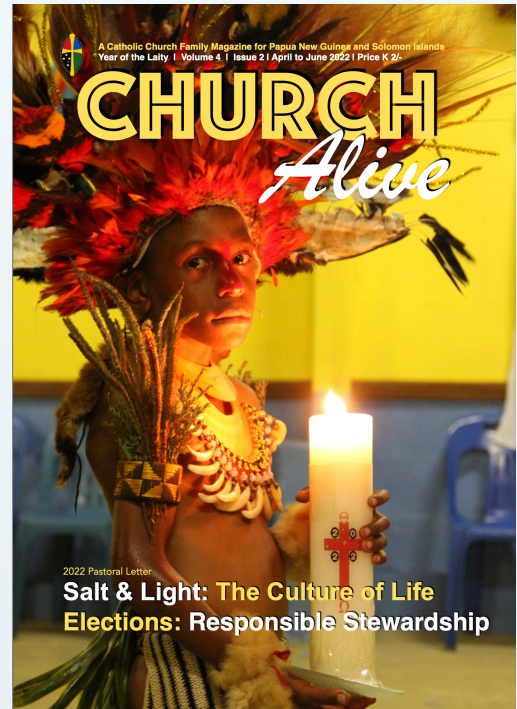
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Essy Max Ariel, hails from Mingende, Diocese of Kundiawa. He carries the Light of Christ at the commencement of the first session of the General Assembly on the 21st April, 2022.

Photo: Br Wiktor Kanarski

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Church Alive Invitation

The Catholic Bishops Conference of PNGSI have chosen 'Salt and Light' as the theme for this Year of 2022.

In the midst of the Elections we are happy to bring you this issue of Church Alive with stories and articles that will inform and inspire you. Thanks to all those who have contributed to this issue of Church Alive.

Articles of persons who have led committed lives and inspired many can be sent for publication together with photographs. Reflections, inspirational stories and news items are also welcome.

All material are to be sent to:
socom@catholic.org.pg.

Trust you will enjoy reading this issue.

With gratitude. God bless.
Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb, Editor

Make your VOICE heard



God has made human beings the stewards of creation to cultivate it, guard it (Gen 2:15), govern it and all that it contains with justice and holiness (GS 34).

Large hoardings and banners across crossroads are a familiar sight. Blaring loudspeakers and a diversion to the regular flow of traffic have been a regular occurrence during the past weeks. Gatherings of people for events and meetings, as candidates outline their plans for the benefit and the good of their people. Our leaders are presenting plans for a new and vibrant country, a country where justice and peace, respect and holiness will be present (GS 34). Once again, the people of Papua New Guinea have the privilege of casting their vote from the 2nd to 22nd July, 2022. They have the opportunity of making their voice heard and electing representatives to form a democratic government.

Catholics are instructed to participate in the political process, be informed voters, and to encourage elected officials to act on behalf of the common good. Our Bishops, the Catholic Professionals and other groups are concerned that the elections enable the voters to select their leaders and hold them accountable for their performance in public office. The Church and Church organizations are not to be involved in partisan politics. Expressions of preference for a political party and of direct or indirect support for or in opposition to specific candidates or political parties are not permissible. Advocacy for or against a specific issue, however, is permissible and in fact is encouraged.

This Church Alive publication dwells on issues that face Papua New Guinea as it strives to move into a new chapter with the current elections. **Fr. Joel Bernardo cm**, invites us to reflect on, track and overcome some bad habits, systematic social ills, nepotism, gender violence, social irresponsibility, civil unrest, infighting that are permitted in a weak state. **Cecilia Teliwa** reminds us of the personal qualities that each good citizen should possess. **Rosa Koian** reflects on the power of our vote, while **Paul Harricknen** advocates a free, fair and safe election with the security of the ballot. Our Bishops remind us of electing persons who have good moral conduct, good family life and are informed by gospel values. We all look forward to a fair election result.

My sincere thanks to all who have contributed to make this issue a reality. Thanks for your articles and reflections. Gratitude to all our Bishops and Social Communication delegates in our dioceses in PNG and SI. Appreciation to the dynamic Social Communication Commission, Abigail Seta, Nigel Akuani, Jessica Oata and Isabella Saleu who have worked with dedication and commitment to share the Good News. Gratitude to CBC, SIGNIS, MISSIO, CARITAS Australia, media outlets and all who support this and the other media initiatives spearheaded by the Social Communication Commission. Communication crystallises the issues we face and the awareness brings about policy change at the level of government. †

Fr Ambrose Pereria sdb
Editor Church Alive
Secretary, Social Communications Commission
June 2022



Cultivating Responsible Citizenship in a ‘Weak State’

Fr. Joel Bernardo cm, has served in the PNG mission for six years (2015-2021) as the Head of the Research and Education Unit of the Melanesian Institute (MI) in Goroka, EHP. He practices Social Anthropology, with academic studies from the University of the Philippines and University of London (London School of Economics), and promotes Grassroots Development alternatives, using Participatory Action Research (PAR) approaches, Adult Learning principles and Cultural Critique-Revaluing processes.



Tracking the Unexpected

Can we expect responsible citizenship to emerge in a ‘weak State’ like Papua New Guinea? Has this democratic ideal remained unexpected in the so-called ‘land of the unexpected’? Is it something beyond expectations or an indication of failed expectations? But who are actually falling short of expectations? Irresponsible citizens? A failing State? or both? Does PNG remain a ‘Weak State’ due to a weak sense of citizenship? Or do we continue to have weak citizens due to a persisting ‘weak State’? Can responsible citizenship turn the tide and push for an accountable PNG State?

It might sound strange to begin this brief reflection with a battery of apparently leading questions. But I reckon we need to pose such leading questions to lead us out of a chicken-and-egg cycle of blaming and impasse. It would not make much sense to talk about ‘responsible citizenship’ without a reality check on the ‘status quo’ of both the sense and quality of citizenship, of statehood and statecraft in PNG. We can avoid falling under the spell of fairy tales and the nightmares of horror stories by starting with a reflective diagnosis of the symptoms of ‘weak citizenship’ in a ‘weak State’.

The State of the Status Quo

Nearing 50 years of enjoying a ‘gifted’ Independence as a sovereign State, glaring patterns of failed expectations persist. But

instead of facing the bitter reality of failure to tap into and cultivate an Indigenous sense of Melanesian citizenship and grassroots Democracy, the ‘Melanesian Way’ often even gets the blame for almost everything that goes wrong in the State and Governance of PNG.

We can reflect and check over some persisting patterns of missed opportunities and taken-for-granted resources for cultivating responsible Melanesian citizenship and an accountable Melanesian State. These segments of the status quo seem quite consistent to fit a template of bright expectations that continue to go away.

- *The Melanesians remain to be the indigenous majority of remarkable diversity but are still relegated as ‘ethnic minority’ that at best attracts global tourism with colourful crafts and performances of exorcized cultures.*
- *The landed resource-owners of 97 % of customary lands have turned into homeless rent-seekers fighting over windfall wealth from seasonal compensation and conspicuous consumption.*
- *The traditional merit-based brand of leadership (‘big men’, ‘great men’, ‘chief’ models) has mutated into variants of ‘big men’ politicians that capitalise on patronage politics rather than uphold dynamic party politics, succeeding as independents even with a handful of wantok loyalists and without any party affiliation.*
- *The claimed status and pride as a ‘Christian State’ has mystically endowed a pseudo-mandate from above for church ministers to turn into politicians and*

for politicians to behave and preach like church ministers.

· The independent sovereign State that was born without bloodshed continues to be overwhelmed by violent inter-group fighting and is still in need of big-time rescuing by International police (especially for safeguarding electoral processes), while still outsourcing day-to-day safety and policing to security agencies.



The list can probably go further but the common underlying thread would foreground a 'weak State' as the missing link. The majority of indigenous citizens are yet to master the craft of holding the PNG State to account for the adverse impacts of its shortcomings. But to be able to put the weak PNG state in the hot seat of social accountability, some bad habits need to be challenged and outgrown by a democratic country that can not claim to remain young forever. The fairy tales of a still growing and a perpetually failing State ought to be demystified. Only then will the citizens be able to start unmasking and confronting the statutory failures and accountability for the systemic social ills in PNG. They will then be able to account for the structural injustices in disguise and hold the weak State accountable, instead of remaining at the receiving end of the blame game: perennially absorbing the blame as weak citizens still struggling to be part of the PNG state; uncritically maligning their own Melanesian *kastoms* by misappropriating some cultural fibers like *wantok system* for nepotism or male authority for gender violence; and, stigmatizing and stifling grassroots activism or ferments of social movements with a blanket suspicion of cargo cultism. Demystifying the weak State will further set the ground for cultivating healthy expressions of grassroots Democracy and active citizenship that can change the toxic narratives of unruly citizens misfiring right left and center. The time is ripe for developing alternative venues and platforms for redressing grievances democratically instead of resorting to civil unrest, disruption of services, and partisan inter-group fighting, and, in the process, allowing weak States to go scot-free of accountability.

Indigenizing Responsible Citizenship

How can we cultivate a Melanesian sense of responsible citizenship in the context of a persisting 'weak State'? The fundamental groundwork would involve both putting the weak PNG State in the spotlight of accountability and demystifying the alibi that the 'Melanesian Way' is responsible for breeding such a weak State in

PNG. Without falling under the romanticist spell of fairy tales, we need to fairly contest the unfounded claim that the 'Melanesian Way' is a counter-colonial alibi for the failure to indigenize the Westminster parliamentary system of democracy and statehood. The Melanesian *kastoms* cannot be used as a blanket smokescreen for mystifying the 'State Accountability' for all the social ills (*'gutpela pundaun'*) that are symptomatic of bad governance (*'gutpela sindaun nating, nating'*) and structural injustices committed by a weak State. We can not afford to keep on mystically attributing anything that goes wrong 'to the unexpected', but it is about time for critically setting and tracking the expectations of transparency and accountability from the sovereign State.

How can we break the ground for indigenizing participatory Good Governance (not just Government) where responsible citizens stand as the watchdogs (not just lapdogs) of Democracy and State accountability? Collective participation for Good Governance is at the heart of Melanesian reciprocity as opposed to the mutated system of patronage governmentality that sustains a brood of governable subjects who will deliver the votes and tolerate corruption through tokens of clientelist benefits. Affected citizens can stand shoulder to shoulder to hold the failing State to account for the unrequited reciprocity and betrayal of democratic trust. The collective lobbying for State accountability can be solidly backed up by revaluing the Melanesian grassroots resources (indigenous majority, customary lands, diverse cultures of reciprocity) as key collective stakes for principled participation in Good Governance. Christianity as an indigenized Melanesian heritage can further provide the 'Christian top-up' if the Churches promote enabling environment for empowering lay leaders with critical consciousness to be in the frontline of responsible citizenship. Doing so will also help dispel any excuse or temptation for the indigenous clergy to engage in politicking. 🇯🇵



Responsible Citizenship



Being a citizen means that you are a part of a group and that you have legal and constitutional rights within that group. It brings with it both 'privileges and obligations'

Cecilia Teliwa hails from Milne Bay Province. She is the daughter of Timothy Teliwa and Assumpta Mensa. Cecilia shares her insights about Responsible citizenship.

No one can truly be a responsible citizen if he or she is not courageous and have the heart to stand up for what is right and be an “agent of change” in today’s world that acts out against injustice in social, economic, and environmental sectors by greed, injustice, unfairness, war and bribery, etc. We all need to remain vigilant and resilient in a world that is being materialized.

In today’s world, being a citizen means that you are a part of a group and that you have legal and constitutional rights within that group. It brings with it both ‘**privileges and obligations**’. I would argue that we each have a duty or an obligation, to be good citizens. After all, a nation is only as healthy as its individual citizens.

A GOOD CITIZEN IS PATRIOTIC: Patriotism is having and showing devotion for your country. It means having an attachment to certain national cultural values and showing critical loyalty to your country. A good citizen loves his or her country. They obey the rule of law, pay taxes, brush up on their country’s history etc. Keep in mind that Patriotism should not be confused with nationalism. Nationalism is thinking of your country as being superior to others and worthy of dominance. Patriots are proud of their

country, but they understand that other people are also rightly proud of theirs. Some personal qualities of a good citizen would include the following.

- Honesty – tell the truth
- Integrity – be morally upright
- Responsibility – be accountable for yourself and your actions
- Respectfulness – treat others how you want to be treated
- Compassion – show fellowship with your compatriots who are down on their luck by volunteering and/or making donations to charities
- Kindness – be friendly
- Tolerance – be tolerant of other races and religions
- Courtesy – be considerate of others
- Self-Discipline – have self-control and cultivate the ability to follow through on what you say you are going to do
- Moral courage – stand up for what you consider to be wrong and defend those who cannot defend themselves
- Love of Justice – be fair and ask that others be so as well.

Imagine what a country would be like if all its citizens strived to achieve these personal qualities. The challenge has to start from us individually.

**Start small-
create order
at home.
Good homes
lead to good
neighbours,
which lead to
good cities,
which lead to
good states,
which lead to
good
countries,
which leads to
a good world.**

BE A PRODUCTIVE MEMBER OF SOCIETY:

A good citizen contributes to their country by being productive. They are productive employees, business owners, public servants, care-givers and so on. Good citizens share their skills, talents and abilities with others. They make positive contributions to their country.

- Keep to a budget and do not go into debt
- Pay your bills on time
- Do not waste water or electricity
- Recycle. Do not accumulate
- Create a list of simple rules for your family to follow
- Set personal development goals and strive to achieve them.

BE VIGILANT: A country depends on a well-informed and civic-minded population to safeguard its citizens' individual freedoms and political rights. A good citizen remains vigilant in order to ascertain that the government is doing all of the following;

- Meeting its obligations to its citizens
- Acting appropriately within its sphere and jurisdiction and;
- Adhering to the limits of State action

To do this, a citizen must have the basic skills necessary to be able to assess arguments locally and critically. In addition, if a citizen believes that the government is overstepping its bounds or failing in its duties, the citizen must speak up with boldness. As citizens, we have the right to have our voices heard. Let us exercise that right.

ORDER YOUR CORNER OF THE WORLD:

Our homes are a microcosm of our country. If we want to live in a clean, healthy, prosperous, happy nation, we must all start by creating these circumstances at home. The Chinese philosopher Confucious once said the following and I fully agree.

- Keep a clean and organized home environment
- Eat healthy meals but do not waste food for when we waste food we are stealing from the table of the poor.

Start small-create order at home. Good homes lead to good neighbours, which lead to good cities, which lead to good states, which lead to good countries, which leads to a good world.

In conclusion, some of us are making an effort to be good citizens of Papua New Guinea and of the world. How about you? Live your best life by being a good citizen.

As Papua New Guinea prepares for its National General Elections in 2022, let us refrain from entertaining bribery at all levels. I am hoping that our people will open their eyes and make the right choice in voting for upright and transparent leaders who have the attitude of Servanthood and a Good Samaritan looking out for the common good of others. For democracy to succeed, we as citizens must be active, not passive. Dear fellow citizens bribery is not an option to gain votes. Our election should be fair and transparent. Together let us create a more just and fraternal world. In solidarity, we stand.

Here on earth, let us make a true and worthy representation as permanent citizens of Heaven with JESUS as our KING. Let us be "Agents of Change" and be the Salt of the Earth as we journey in a world of wilderness, looking up to JESUS as our Role Model. 🇯🇵



Our Responsibility



Rosa Koian is a free lance journalist. She has been editor of the WANTOK and is concerned about the issues that we face in our country today.



Women in Bougainville checking the candidates list before they voted.
Photo: Paul Wagum

What is our responsibility in a democracy?

Every Papua New Guinean has a responsibility to uphold this country. Many of us take this country, its land and its systems for granted.

We forget why our forefathers and mothers worked so hard to win for us an independent country. It wasn't a battle of guns and crossfires, but the articulation of why we needed to be a country. There were lessons very close to us, and that was not the future our past leaders wanted for us.

Our land was once free where our people walked freely and lived in harmony with everything around them.

In their quest for wealth, people from foreign lands traveled across the sea and took our land and turned our people into slaves or demanded their time and muscle. But we didn't know it then.

Over the years as some of our people started



traveling outside of home they began to see the injustices and oppression. And so the journey to a nation began and today we are

proud to call Papua New Guinea our home.

In July, we the citizens of Papua New Guinea go to the polls. For this democratic nation, we who are eligible to vote, have the opportunity to elect our leaders every five years and so it has come around again. It is a critical time and the way we vote this time will bring home the kind of leaders we want for our 11th parliament.

As voters, we need to ask ourselves some hard questions. Would voting for a relative benefit our communities? How will situations improve if we voted following a gift of a mobile phone, rice and lamb flaps, some cash and other gifts?

Many of us do not understand the power of our vote. One vote per person gives a leader the mandate to act on our behalf in a constitutional office and in this case, in a national general election we are voting for our representative to the national parliament, the highest decision-making house in the country.

Our elections have become so politicised that the hunger for power is crippling and distorting our free choices to vote as we see our development journey as a country.

We have developed a mentality that those in leadership cannot do what someone else can do. And so we encourage competition of leadership frivolously without thinking that in the end, we lose. We lose focus on basic government services. Our children will continue to walk long distances meandering through barriers in order to get an education. Our sick and pregnant women will continue to lose their lives on their way to access basic health care.



As citizens may we go into this national general elections not blindly but as people with a clear heart and mind to make Papua New Guinea a home fit for all.

Over successive elections, we have returned leadership that has yet to give us some promise that PNG will be safe, that our women and children will be protected from all harm, that our children will receive the best education there is on our land and that our old and vulnerable can access quality health care closer to home.

It takes responsibility to make sure that happens and responsibility starts at home. To teach every child to take responsibility of small tasks is to give them a big start. When children learn to complete tasks, and take responsibility for their errors they will for a long time carry that with them.

Many Papua New Guineans are challenged when it comes to taking responsibility of the results from their actions. Take for instance the state of a health center or a school. Who is responsible for those services? Is it the government? Is it the church? Or the NGO or the company?

We exist as families, clans and communities before all other

structures. Within these units, we experience various health issues. Some more urgent than others. Whose responsibility is it, first and foremost to make sure we get the health care we need? Yes, we would like our own to represent us in parliament but do they have the credentials to lead us?

There is already educational information out there to help us make informed choices about our national leadership. Are we paying attention to them? Are we sharing with others this information?

We cannot afford another five years of complaints about lack of services, of wasted money on inquiries on our leaders.

How can we help make our country strong? We can start by informing ourselves and making the right decisions when we go into polling. As citizens may we go into this national general election not blindly but as people with a clear heart and mind to make Papua New Guinea a home fit for all. 🇯🇵



Free, Fair and Safe Election

The President of Catholic Professionals, Mr. Paul Harricknen, joins other concerned groups and sections of the society who are advocating and calling for a free, fair and safe election 2022, as reports and

learnings from the past especially 2012 and 2017, have seen great malpractices.

There are already reports of violence, unruly behaviours and intimidation by candidates and their supporters which is not a good start to this election 2022.

Our biggest concerns are on allowing every citizen to vote without harassment, for the election processes to be safeguarded and not rigged, and for the entrusted officers of the electoral commission and the disciplinary forces to carry out their responsibilities as required by the law of this nation.

Particular concerns are on the security of ballot papers which are always tempered with by the people expected to safeguard, namely the election and security officials, entrusted with

conducting the elections. There is fear that there may be a repeat of this, this time if not taken seriously by the election and security leaders and officials, PNG may be poised for a broken political system. In fact, already there are signs of a broken political system, which we need to rectify.

Mr. Harricknen said, while education and awareness are conducted targeting the voters to vote wisely and a free, fair and safe elections, the real danger is with the security of the ballots. Voters usually vote for the candidates of their choice. However, their votes are tempered and altered on transit from locations and at the counting venues. We need commitment from the election officials and the security personnel to turn up for duties to ensure free, fair and safe elections for their people and country.

CPS is also calling on Christians and people of faith to pray and entrust the elections to the grace and love of God. Corruption is evil, which must be fought physically and spiritually. 🇯🇵

Paul Harricknen
President of Catholic Professionals Society



Salt and Light

Catholic Church & Society

The 3rd General Assembly of the Catholic Church of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands was held from 21st - 26th April 2022 in Mingende, Diocese of Kundiawa, Simbu province. It focused on celebrating the Catholic Faith, propose a 5 year-conference pastoral plan and share the experiences of journeying together.

Mingende: The 3rd General Assembly of the Catholic Church of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands had as its theme 'Salt and Light' and dwelt on reigniting the faith of the people.

The six-day program was held from 21st to 26th April and had 111 delegates in attendance from all 19 dioceses in Mingende, Simbu Province. The distinguished delegates included Bishops, Priests and Religious, Secretaries from CBCPNG&SI, Church Leaders and Coordinators, Lay persons and Chaplains, support staff, and media personnel of Catholic Communications. The Assembly was facilitated by Fr Victor Roche svd, New Evangelization Secretary of the Catholic Bishops Conference of PNGSI.

The program began with a declaration ceremony on the evening of Thursday 21st April, in the Fr Stanislaus Auditorium of St Mary's Technical School which was led by Bishop Dariusz Kaluza MSF, of the Diocese of Bougainville.

"Harim singaut bilong Holi Spirit. Let us learn to 'LISTEN' and let the Holy Spirit guide us in all our work of Evangelisation," said Bishop Dariusz after officially declaring the 3rd General Assembly open. He moderated the assembly's progression and formed part of the panel were Dame Jean Kekedo; Fr Andrew Moses, Vicar-General of the Diocese Daru-Kiunga; and Fr Victor Roche svd, Head of the GA Organising Committee.

In his description of the General Assembly, Bp Kaluza referred to Pope Francis' message of 'Communion and Caring Together' and said that it was about walking and journeying together in our Catholic faith through communion and participation.

"We are the Church alive in Christ and we need to recognize our mission and calling from God. Each person has a unique role set apart by God to serve and build the living Body of Christ, and we all have a due diligence to allow the Holy Spirit to guide us on the spiritual path intended for in our lives. It is through Jesus Christ that each of us are anointed Prophets, Priests, and Kings and stand tall for the kingdom and glory of God," stated Bp Dariusz.

A special Eucharistic Celebration was held to mark the commencement of the assembly on Friday, 22nd April. The mass was held at the St Joseph's Grand Stand and was celebrated by His Eminence Sir John Cardinal Ribat MSC, and the homily given by Bishop of Daru-Kiunga, Joseph Durero SVD.

In the session that followed, Archbishop Douglas Young svd, Archbishop of Mt Hagen gave a brief history of the General Assembly.

1st General Assembly: Self-study and identification of cross cutting issues were



reflected upon at the first Assembly that commenced in 2003 in Banz and concluded in 2004 in Rabaul. It used an Appreciative Enquiry that encouraged inclusivity and participation. The 1st National Assembly developed the National Pastoral Plans of 2006-2010 with the theme: “We are Church Alive in Christ”.

The 2nd General Assembly held at DWU Madang with the theme “Go tell Everyone” used the Perspective Method of evaluation. It developed the Conference Pastoral for 2015-2020. It had as its focus: We are Church Proclaiming, We are Church Sanctifying, We are Church Serving. While it celebrated the unity and the identity of the Catholic church in PNG it focused on: the Holy Father’s exhortation in *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, the findings of *Ecclesia in Oceania*, Pastoral practices, and pastoral priorities for the church in PNG.

While the 3rd General Assembly used an evaluation process. It began in 2020 with the invitation to the Synod 2023 emphasizing and encouraging the themes of communion, participation and mission. The assembly should have the following: Critical thinking; a full and active participation of clergy and laity; the voice of the church in the country’s Political, Economic and Social spectra; the fruits of planning and reflection through the men and women who have lived exemplary lives and a light that shines brightly for all to see.

The presentations from the different dioceses then commenced. Each diocese presented one or two persons of holiness from a long list of committed Catholics. Amongst the inspiring presentations were young people ready to live

and die for their faith, a sure sign that the faithful are ready to live their Catholic Faith. The presentations captivated the members. Each diocese had beautifully painted banners and presented a seedling brought from their own diocese. The presentations usually concluded with a song on ‘Salt and Light’.

The discussions on Saturday, 23rd April commenced with understanding the evaluation made throughout the PNGSI in preparation for the General Assembly. An outline on the proposals for a new conference pastoral plan then followed. These were discussed and presented to the General Assembly.

The entire church is on the journey of sharing, reflecting, and listening to the theme of the Synod: ‘Communion, Participation and Mission.’

On Sunday, 24th April, mass was celebrated by the bishops in the different parishes. The afternoon session continued with the conference pastoral plan.

The evening entertainment celebrated the Catholic Faith by the hosts and participants.

The session on Monday, 25th April dwelt on Synodality by Fr Victor Roche as each group shared and reflected on the topic. The entire church is on the journey of sharing, reflecting, and listening to the theme of the Synod: ‘Communion, Participation and Mission.’

This was followed by evaluations and the concluding mass that also had the proposals being presented to Abp Anton Bal, President of CBC.

Following mass, as a token of appreciation and signifying the theme ‘Salt and Light’, the assembly’s participants were given a sapling of a local Yar Tree and a Votive Candle. 🕯️



Fr Tomás Ravaioli, IVE



Salt and Light among us

Fr Tomás Agustin Ravaioli is a priest of the Institute of the Incarnate Word (IVE), He holds a Degree in Theology from Rome and is currently the Director of the LCI and Postulator of the Cause of Canonization of Blessed Peter ToRot.

Peter ToRot was salt for his own people because he preserved the moral and good customs among them. He was also light for them because with his teachings and example, he showed them the road to heaven."

Jesus commanded us to be "salt of the earth" and "light of the ground." (Mt 5:13-16) But, what does it exactly mean to be "salt" and "light"? From the very beginning of the Church, many Fathers of the Church and saints have given different explanations to these words of Jesus. But there is something which is common to all of them: to be "salt" means to preserve from corruption, and to be "light" means to show the road to those who are astray.

The salt was always connected with purity due to its glistening whiteness and to its power to hold putrefaction. Saint Hilary (310 - 367) wrote, "The salt, used as it is by men for almost every purpose, preserves from decay those bodies which are sprinkled with it. The Apostles are preachers of heavenly things, and thus, as it were, salters with eternity; rightly called 'the salt of the earth,' as by the virtue of

their teaching, they, as it were, salt and preserve bodies for eternity."

And the light was always connected to something which makes clear the way we should follow. However, sometimes light can also become a "warning light" which indicates the way we should not follow. Again Saint Hilary teaches us, "It is the nature of a light to emit its rays whithersoever it is carried about, and when brought into a house to dispel the darkness of that house. Thus the world, beyond the knowledge of God, was held in the darkness of ignorance, till the light of knowledge was brought to it by the Apostles, and thenceforward the knowledge of God shone bright, and from their small bodies, whithersoever they went about, light is ministered to the darkness."

Blessed Peter To Rot was both of these. He was salt for his own people because he preserved the moral and good customs among them. He was also light for them because with his teachings and example, he showed them the road to heaven. Let's see three stories of his life that might help us to better see his example of being salt and light.

1) Peter To Rot showed the road to heaven by being a tireless preacher






great number of native chiefs and proclaimed that they were no longer bound by Christian principles; polygamy and brothels would also be established.” (Idem, p. 240) Unfortunately, many young Tolai girls were recruited for the brothels against their will by the Japanese. But -for some reason unknown to me- the Japanese respected the married girls and did not oblige them to work in these houses of perdition. Knowing this, Peter To Rot paid the “bride price” of many young girls from his own pocket and from the money he collected for this purpose. He did this so that in the eyes of the Japanese these young girls were now “married,” and couldn’t be recruited for their sinful intentions. As good “salt of the earth,” by doing this Peter To Rot preserved many girls from falling in the corruption of sin.

of the truth. In 1957, Archbishop Leo Scharmarch, MSC, wrote, “When the Japanese occupied his district, they sent Father Laufer, the priest in charge of the station [of Rakunai], to the prison camp in Vunapope. The Father entrusted To Rot with the spiritual care of his station. Full of zeal, he took on the difficult responsibility. He witnessed marriages, visited the sick and prepared the dying to meet their Divine Lord in the state of grace. He exhorted the children and grown-ups to lead a truly Christian life and not to fall back into immorality and pagan practices. This task was the more difficult as there was no Confession, Holy Communion or Mass to give them spiritual strength. But one source of gaining grace was not blocked: the daily prayers. On account of the air raids, it was too dangerous to assemble a big community for prayer. To Rot organised smaller groups who met in special houses and later in dugouts and tunnels.” (From the book “This Crowd beats us all”, p. 239) As a good “light of the world,” Peter To Rot showed the road to heaven to his fellow Tolai even amid the tragedy of war.

2) Peter To Rot preserved many young girls from the corruption of sin. Archbishop Scharmach wrote, “The Japanese assembled a

3) Peter To Rot was convinced that fidelity to the Lord was the only way to heaven. Many times Peter To Rot was arrested and led to the police, but he was always allowed to come back to his village with the condition of abandoning his ministry as a catechist. But, as Saint Peter and the Apostles, he knew that “*We ought to obey God rather than men.*” (Acts 5:29) And so he continued with his ministry, knowing that it could mean a new imprisonment and, eventually, death. When he was arrested for the last time, he discouraged his friends from pleading for him with these words, “I know they are going to kill me. Don’t worry. I am prepared to die for my religion. Tell everybody to be faithful to Our Lord. Show them we are capable of living up to the precepts of our religion.”

May the Good Lord and his Mother, the Queen of Martyrs, give us the courage needed to help our fellow brothers and sisters to be preserved from the corruption of sin and to illuminate their road to heaven. 🙏



Prayer To Blessed Petro ToRot

Blessed Petro ToRot,
God called you to serve Him
among your own people,
as a catechist.

You loved your work and
you were faithful to the Divine call.

Your heroic witness to serve your creator
strengthened them in the faith.

We rejoice and thank God,
for exalting you to be the
first Beatified Martyr of our country.

Pray for us,
that we may remain faithful
to our vocations and stand firmly
committed
to God and his people,
especially in times of trials and difficulties.

Amen.

Please send us your favours, graces and miracles received through the intercession of BI Peter ToRot, together with photographs and documents. These will support the cause of his canonisation.



Salt and Light

Continued from Church Alive Volume 4, Issue 1. Edited

In promoting a culture of life and addressing the social ills of our time, we draw on the great wealth of the Catholic Church's social teaching, based as it is on the dignity of the human person, the common good, the universal destination of created goods, care for God's creation, subsidiarity, community and participation, solidarity, peace and reconciliation, the preferential option for the poor, and the fundamental values of social life—truth, freedom, and justice. (*Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 2004*).

In recent times we have attempted to provide the best possible advice on what the Gospel has to say about the refugee crisis, the current pandemic, Sorcery Accusation Related Violence, the move to change the Constitution to declare PNG a confessional state, and how the Christian should respond to these challenges using these principles.

Our Church's social teaching has a lot to teach us about political life. Over the years we have provided advice on how a Christian ought to take part in elections, and how they might provide political and other leadership to the nation: We value democracy and human rights greatly and appeal as always to all people in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands to participate in elections (PNG 2022 and Solomons 2023) honestly and respectfully. We note that in fact there has been little progress on the key issues of tackling corruption, establishing a common roll and taking steps to strengthen the possibility of a free and fair election.

The Church's social teaching also has a lot to teach us about economic life. We value the dignity of human life, labor and full employment. We promote a just wage, i.e. a fair day's pay for a fair day's work, and the right of workers to organize themselves. Those involved in fast money schemes, the "easy money" attitude, "claim culture", serial compensation demands, and loan sharks, rather than committing to hard work, do great harm to society. On the other hand, those providing employment, decent housing, water, sanitation, electricity, and otherwise strengthening economic life, offer legitimate forms of service to society.

Economic activity and material progress must be placed at the service of man and society. If people dedicate themselves to these with the faith, hope and love of Christ's disciples, even the economy and progress can be transformed into places of salvation and sanctification. (*Compendium 326*)

In recent times we have tried to address another important issue of the age: climate change. Pope Francis, following principles laid down by his immediate predecessors, has taken a lead in responding to this issue, especially in his Encyclical

Laudato Si' which calls for an integral ecology that recognizes the close connection between work for the environment and the option for the poor.

"[Pope Benedict] observed that the world cannot be analyzed by isolating only one of its aspects, since "the book of nature is one and indivisible", and includes the environment, life, sexuality, the family, social relations, and so forth. It follows that "the deterioration of nature is closely connected to the culture which shapes human coexistence". (Laudato Si' 6; Caritas in Veritate 687)

In 2022 we urge our priests and lay people to work together to make the political, economic and social life of our two countries reflect more fully the life of the Kingdom of God. To this end, we invite all our Catholic people to:

1. Request your Diocesan Caritas Coordinator to provide some training on the social teaching of the Catholic Church and apply it to the real-life situation in which you find yourselves.
2. Dialogue with leaders to let them know that you expect them to conform to Christian principles in their personal and public life.
3. Plan some action (cleanups, tree planting, etc.) for the protection and care of the environment and for the care of the poor in your community and parish.
4. Undertake some activity in your community to promote law and order, such as defending the rights of innocent women and young people, and protecting them from any unjust treatment by courts or police.
5. Make use of traditional and modern means of conflict resolution and mediation to deal with land and other disputes, taking a public stand against any form of violent self-help.
6. Work to promote free and fair elections and take an active part in them with a commitment to electing leaders whose governance will be informed by gospel values.
7. In your own life, do nothing to promote or encourage any forms of corruption, greed or violence.
8. Study the Bible to understand and appreciate the values of the Ten Commandments, love of God the Creator, and our fellow human beings.

Your bishops want to encourage you--priests, religious, and lay people - to work together with us to bring the gospel more fully into the political, economic, and social life of our two countries. May the light of our faith shine before others so that they may see our good works and give glory to our Father in heaven. 🙏

On behalf of the bishops of PNGSI
Archbishop Anton Bal, President, CBC, PNGSI
21st September 2021



Catholic Bishops on PNG National Elections



The Catholic Church maintains its neutrality. We do not support any candidate or political party in this election and any other election. We want the process to be free, honest and without fear or favour.

The Catholic Bishops Conference respects the rights and freedom of all citizens to support and elect candidates at their own choice using their own prudent judgment and conscience. They have the democratic right to choose trustworthy and God-fearing people. We ask you to vote wisely because your vote is your power, and it determines you and your children's future.

The Catholic Bishops Conference wish to advise that all Priests, Deacons, Catechists Pastoral workers, Communion Ministers, and Group Leaders do not accept gifts and materials from any candidate and do not use Church time and facilities for campaign. Parishes are not to allow political campaigns conducted in Church facilities like schools and health centres.

The bishops would like to request that politics are kept away from service delivery facilities. Politics come and go. They are seasonal events, but those services are there to still support our people after elections. Other public utilities, such as roads, bridges, public vehicles, and transportation are to be respected at all costs.

They are there to help us make our life go on smoothly. We know from previous elections and after elections, that there were social disorders and destruction. We had a time of hunger, increase of people with HIV/AIDS, children without proper parents, family breakdown, school fee problems etc.

We shouldn't forget that we have to keep our human dignity in high esteem and practice proper moral conduct. We still have COVID-19 surge in different places around the globe. The virus is around, changing forms and continuing to spread. We have to be careful not become victims during the campaign and elections.

Politics is part of every human person's life, but it should always be guided by the principles of honesty, transparency and good moral conduct. Thus, lay Church workers have the right to stand for elections as candidates, support and vote for candidates they believe are in good standing in the society, and who could contribute positively to the development of the people and the country as a whole. However, to maintain the independence and integrity of the Church, we advise that active and full-time Church workers voluntarily step aside from their active ministry during the time of the campaign and election period. This separation is not because politics is bad and evil but rather because the practice of politics in PNG naturally divides people, which is against the Church's principle of unity.

The bishops would like to encourage citizens to use this opportunity and privilege to support parties and candidates who have good moral conduct, good family life and good political platforms, not because they are your family member, tribal group or belong to your associations.

The Catholic Bishops Conference would like to stress that: *a. Vote in national elections is the right of each individual citizen, therefore follow the law of the electoral commission. b. It is morally wrong to sell your vote for money and other material goods. c. Every vote represents you and your citizenship. Respect it and cast your vote in your own name and follow the preference given. d. All citizens cooperate with the electoral commission for a good, free, and fair election result.*

The Catholic Bishops of Papua New Guinea would like to ask all citizens of goodwill to put our efforts together and join hands in prayer that this coming national election be one of the best and a starting point for future elections. 🇩🇪

+ ANTON BAL
Archbishop of Madang | President of CBC PNGSI



Marriage

A strong foundation of LOVE

Clement Kapapal, currently employed as the Executive Manager Business Support Division at NiuSky Pacific, shares with us his insights into living life with faith and commitment.

Clement Kapapal is my name and I am married to Elizabeth. We are both from Lemanmanu Village on Buka Island we met each other in 1987 while I was doing my Electrical Engineering course at the University of Technology and she was working in Lae, Morobe Province. We had our first daughter Rene'e on 11th August 1991, son Clement Junior on 7th September 1994 and another son Bacchus on 26th April 1996. We later adopted a baby girl Anjabertha into our family in 2001.

Kapapal Family



I am currently employed as the Executive Manager Business Support Division at NiuSky Pacific, the Air Navigation Service Provider for Papua New Guinea, while Elizabeth retired from her long-time Employer K K Kingston in February 2020. Rene'e graduated as an Economist from the University of Papua New Guinea and is currently

employed by Islands Petroleum as a Price Analyst, based at their Takubar Head office Kokopo, East New Britain Province. Clement Junior stays at home with his mum. Bacchus graduated as an Electrical Engineer from the University of Technology and is currently employed by Newcrest Mining Ltd. Anjabertha is doing her final year in Anthropology at the University of Papua New Guinea School of Social Sciences.

As we were brought up in Catholic families, and while residing at the Aviat Compound since 1994 at Konedobu we started and have since been attending masses at St. Mary's Cathedral Parish in Port Moresby's CBD. It was not until 1998 that we became fully committed to participating actively in Church activities and I started to attend masses every day. We were invited by a very good family friend to join the Divine Mercy Prayer Apostolate of the Parish, praying with other members at 2pm every Sunday afternoon.



Kapapal Family altar

“Always keep your family in your heart and offer your family daily to God because the family is your safe refuge, it is the place where you will run to find peace and comfort amidst all the everyday difficulties.”

Through our religious commitment, we decided to and eventually got married, while on holiday at home in Buka Island on 31st December 1999 at St. Cletus Chapel, a sub-Parish of St. Therese of the Child Jesus Parish, Lemanmanu.

Since 1998, we dedicated a special room in our house as our prayer room and that legacy continues to this date. Recently, we built a family grotto where we have prayers with other devout Christians and still maintain a special family grotto in our main living room for nightly family prayers. Each family member is encouraged to have a grotto in their own bedrooms for their private prayers. That culture of family prayer has helped our children and they are continuing that legacy within their own families. I believe that such a practice of having grottos in respective bedrooms reminds us that Jesus remains the center of our individual and family lives.

Our marriage is built on a strong foundation of love, honesty and faithfulness. Despite the everyday challenges, we always strive to remain loyal and dedicated to our commitments for each other and for our children and grandchildren. While we have our differences, we always maintain a high level of trust and mutual respect for our respective decisions, which in most cases are usually for and in the best interest of our family. We accept the fact that it does not hurt to disagree, however, any differences of opinion must be discussed openly to reach a fair and balanced compromise.

Over time, we learned to admit and take responsibility for our mistakes, something that was very difficult to accept as it is human nature that nobody wants to take the blame for any wrongdoings.

Family meetings are conducted to give an opportunity for all family members to contribute to the health and well-being of the family. This also provided a means for any family

member to express any grievances or concerns that need to be addressed. Nowadays through IT technology and applications, we encourage daily dialogue not only on family matters but also on current events and any other topics of interest.

Maintaining a strong bond through family celebrations on important dates especially birthdays or anniversaries for any family member is not missed. In fact, small committees are formed with tasks and chores distributed evenly, so all members take ownership of their areas of responsibility. These results in greater awareness and ongoing reminders that only strengthen that sense of belonging and togetherness.

Such attributes have helped our family find inner strength, peace and comfort and allowed us to open ourselves to that fundamental source of love, grace and blessings to remain closely knitted despite the everyday challenges. The natural love that emanates from within our family continues to sustain us and keeps us going. That unconditional family love is quite literally everything to us – nothing compares because it is the core of our life, it brings happiness, and it keeps us blessed. I thank God for everything that I have and for the gift of my family, it is God’s masterpiece.

To those thinking of starting a family or those recently married, always acknowledge and be thankful to God for such a wonderful gift. Always keep your family in your heart and offer your family daily to God because the family is your safe refuge, it is the place where you will run to find peace and comfort amidst all the everyday difficulties. It is the place where you will find happiness.

And remember to make your family that sacred place of respect, honour and dignity. It is your life, your heaven here on earth, Don’t let the worries and happiness of the earth distract your commitment to your family, because you will always go back to your family at the end of the day and you will rise with your family to begin a new day. Such will cultivate and grow that seed of love to mature into a world of happiness for you and your families. 🙏



Moving ahead with Laudato Si

World Environment Day is to be celebrated from 5th June to 31st July. Pope Francis is highlighting the need for awareness and practical action to ensure that our planet will be there for generations to come.

In Papua New Guinea forest degradation is driven by logging, and clearance for subsistence agriculture with oil palm plantations on the increase. 24% of Papua New Guinea's rainforest has been destroyed or degraded states Rhett A. Butler, 2009. Understanding the impact on the environment and consequently on our lives is fundamental to bringing about a change in attitude and behaviour in our people.

Community events can offer special moments to draw us together, developing our relationships with our Creator, each other, and all of creation. The events can be organized at institutions or in communities in small groups. Every event is precious and will be useful to create awareness and contribute to saving the planet.

Events and celebrations:

Each event will have its own focus. There can be general types of events that others have hosted, events focused on spiritual enrichment, lifestyle changes, and above all policy engagement.

Spiritual Events

All of us have the spark of the divine within us. Hosting spiritual enrichment programs can develop ties within the community. It can transform hearts and minds and encourage us to embrace a greater love of God, each other, and creation. Celebrating an outdoor Mass or prayer service, a creation pilgrimage, nature meditation, reading a Laudato Si' Chapter, incorporating

Laudato Si' in Homilies or Bible studies, holding Season of Creation celebrations, or blessing an outdoor space for prayer and meditation.

Action Events

Many communities hold events with concrete activities that protect creation. Planting of trees, especially that of fruit trees to create a fruit forest for food sustainability in the future, a community litter clean-up, the planting of a community garden, a swap of plants or clothes, a recycling drive, and a Laudato Si-themed educational event.

Policy Events

Many communities hold events to explore public policies that support sustainable and equitable development. Examples of advocacy events include participating in public walks in support of issues, holding signature drives, meeting with local decision-makers, hosting chat shows on environmental events, poster competitions and engaging with members of the local media on issues of interest.

Steps to a successful event

As you plan your event, it can be helpful to consider the following steps.

Identify your objectives:

Having clear objectives for an event is important to achieving desired outcomes. Identify a need in your community to be addressed. For example, a lack of awareness of Laudato Si', results in using one-time use of plastic which in turn results in plastic pollution and an increase in landfills. Work with others to identify how you can help to address these challenges.

Develop a team and a plan

A small team can share ideas and the effort of organizing an event. Be sure to include a wide variety of community members. Work together to identify a date, a place for the event, the people you wish to invite, the materials you need, and a Plan B in case the weather disrupts an outdoor event. Give each person a role and clearly defined responsibilities. If appropriate, work together to approach the leader of your Parish, school, organization, or similar to explain your idea and obtain permission.

Develop an event program

Develop your program in line with a theme and your outlined objectives. Your Laudato Si' event should include a prayer for creation or a reading from Laudato Si' to set the intention for the day. You can select readings from Laudato Si'

Find a venue

Laudato Si' events are best experienced outdoors in nature, e.g. parks, gardens, forests, for an emphasis on connection with creation. When choosing your venue, be sure to pick a location that is easy to get to for most people you'll invite. Depending on your context, you may be required to gain permission. Be sure to comply with local rules and regulations.

Invite people

Start promoting your event two weeks to one month ahead of the date. Reach out to invitees in multiple ways, such as assigning each member of your small team a list of people to contact



personally, promoting the event during regular meetings at Mass or organizational meetings, publishing invitations on social media and in bulletins, and coordinating with the different departments and ministries at your institution. In each form of outreach, include the time, date, and place of the event, information about how to register, and a brief overview of what will happen at the event. Be sure to do each form of outreach multiple times, as it often takes repeated invitations before an invitee makes a commitment.

Follow up

Thank all invitees. If possible, send them follow-up communications to share outcomes from the event and encourage them to take further action. Know that if your awareness has been good, different groups will carry on and put into practice what you have been doing. 🌍





- Nigel Akuani

Walk together on the path of holiness

Welcome Bp Walenty GRYK, SVD

On 14th February at 9pm 2022, the Apostolic Nunciature in Port Moresby announced that **His Holiness Pope Francis** appointed Reverend. Fr Walenty GRYK, S.V.D as the new Bishop of Goroka. He was ordained as the 7th Bishop of Goroka on 7th May 2022.

Kefamo, Eastern Highlands Province: The Diocese of Goroka rejoiced as they welcomed the seventh Bishop, Walenty GRYK, SVD, on Saturday, 7th May 2022 at the Episcopal Ordination that was held at Kefamo Parish.

A jubilant vibe filled the atmosphere and grounds around the Kefamo Parish, as thousands gathered to witness the ordination of their new Bishop. Key consecrators to the ceremony included His Eminence, Sir John Cardinal Ribat MSC; and Archbishop Douglas Young SVD of Mt Hagen.

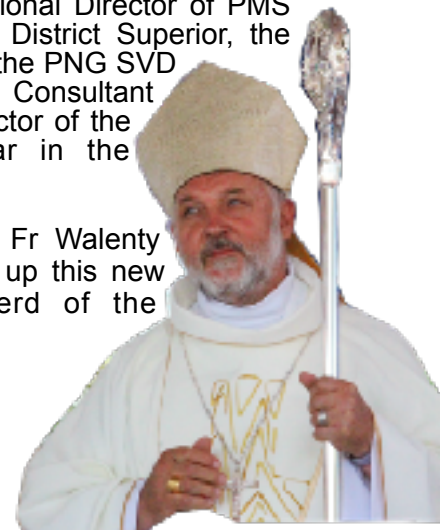
The consecration was graced by the presence of the Apostolic Nuncio to PNGSI, Fermin Emilio Rodriguez, thirteen Bishops, Priests, Religious, Seminarians, delegates from Rome, Poland and the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) Congregation, parishioners from surrounding communities, families, friends from far and near, media personnel. Bp Gryk in sharing his sentiments as the new Bishop, thanked both clergy and lay who had gathered to celebrate the Diocese's prestigious milestone and reminded all of their important roles as Christians.

"Jises em laikim yumi olgeta long kamap wanpela aninit long em. Bipo long em ibin dai em bin pre na tok olsem husait laik bihainim em bai kamap wan wantaim em," he said.

In his speech, the Nuncio urged for all people to stand firm as Christians and to walk with their new Bishop on the path of righteousness. "I invite all people of Goroka to walk together with your new Bishop on the path of holiness. Altogether, we build the sanctification of love. My dear Bishop Valentine, may Mother Mary guide your steps toward her son and bring you peace in your heart so you can guide with wisdom the diocese you have been entrusted," he stated. Cardinal Ribat congratulated the Catholic communities of Goroka and described Bp Gryk's ordination as being an achievement for all Christians throughout the country.

Hailing from Uzbiereż, Poland, Bp Walenty spent more than 30-years serving in Goroka before being appointed by Pope Francis as the diocese's new Bishop. He has held assignments in the Highlands region and in the Diocese of Wewak. He also served as the National Director of PMS for PNGSI, the Mt Hagen District Superior, the SVD Mission Secretary for the PNG SVD Province, SVD Provincial Consultant and most recently the Director of the Holy Spirit Senta in Par in the Diocese of Wabag.

We pray for Bishop elect Fr Walenty GRYK, S.V.D as he takes up this new responsibility as Shepherd of the Diocese of Goroka.



SOCOM Seminar for diocesan media coordinators

- Diocesan Communications Coordinators



A Social Communications (SOCOM) seminar for the catholic media coordinators from the Dioceses in Papua New Guinea was held from 16th to 20th May 2022 with the focus on print media and photography.

Thirteen participants made up of priests, religious sisters and lay personnel from the dioceses of Aitape, Wewak, Lae, Alotau, Kundiawa, Mount Hagen and Mendi gathered for the week-long training at the Catholic Bishops Conference (CBC) at Gordons in Port Moresby with the theme 'Listen. Do everything with

Love.' Joining the participants was Archbishop of Rabaul, Rochus Tatamai MSC.

The participants were trained on Writing News Articles using the 5W's and 1H, following the inverted pyramid style and understanding the difference between current news and stale news.

The sessions highlighted creating diocesan newsletters and the tools needed and capturing photographs with a positive message. Spirituality of Communication, Misinformation, disinformation & malinformation and netiquette and online ethics were dwelt upon.

During the week, the participants paid a special visit to one of PNG's daily newspaper *The National*. They also visited the Adventure Park at 14 mile for a practical photography session.

The seminar was hosted by CBC SOCOM with the aim to promote a thriving network of Christian communicators who can regularly report, capture inspiring image and create diocesan newsletters to evangelise and spread the Good News.

CCHS launches 10-year strategic Health Plan

The Catholic Church Health Services officially launched its Strategic Health Plan for the next ten years (2021-2030) on Friday May 13th. The plan is aligned with the new National Health Plan 2021-2030 and other relevant national documents such as Vision 2050.

The CCHS Strategic Plan was developed to reflect the commitment of the Church to the new National Health Plan for 2021-2030 and uses similar Key Result Areas, intentions and commitments to improve health for all the people of PNG.

National CCHS Board Chairman Bishop Francis Meli commended the CCHS Secretariat and staff for the high ideals captured in the Strategic Plan and assured the team and those they serve.



The Strategic Plan will provide the reference framework for operational planning and implementation for the Catholic Church Health Service National Office, Provincial Dioceses, Provincial Health Authorities, National Department of Health and other stakeholders.



RR Formative workshop for Nazareth Sisters

The topics covered for the workshop were Boundaries and importance of boundaries in life, Boundaries for healthy relationships, Relationships, Healthy and unhealthy relationships and mending broken relationships.

They also touched on Rights and values in relationships, Human Sexuality and celibacy, Ministerial relationships and Appropriate and inappropriate behaviours in ministry and Guidelines for ministerial relationships.

This Formative Program was designed for the young candidates and religious sisters who are still in their religious formation program.

The objective of the workshop was to give them some kind of awareness to prevent themselves from any form of abuses particularly in their ministry as they will be sent out to work with different groups of people.

Bougainville: A weeklong Right Relationships Formative Workshop was conducted for the CSN Sisters from 9th – 13th May 2022 at Nazareth Center for Rehabilitation, Chabai, Buka, Bougainville.

There were 18 participants made up of 15 sisters and 3 young girls who are in their formation program and was facilitated by Sr Ancy John SCSA, the directress of RR Ministry.



CISP facilitates first land management program

Sessions on different land matters were presented, including forest management, land allocation, the PNG Land Dispute Settlement Act 1975,

The Church Institutional Strengthening Program (CISP) Development Commission of the Catholic Bishops Conference of PNGSI recently held its first Land Management Program for representatives from all dioceses in the country.

The program was held from 9th-13th May 2022 at the CBC conference centre with facilitators from the Church and the Department of Lands and Physical Planning.

customary land lease, survey boundaries, land and property valuation and zoning.

A session on Laudato Si was also presented by Fr. Ambrose Pereira sdb, Secretary for Social Communications.

Amongst those present were Bishop Otto Separy, bishop of Bereina and Bp. Rolando Santos of the Alotau-Sideia diocese. Participants included priests and laity.

Late Archbishop Emeritus Michael Meier laid to rest in Rebiamul

Late Archbishop Emeritus Michael Meier passed away in his home country in Germany on April 4th at the St Wendel Nursing Home for the Society of the Divine Word at the age of 94.

His casket arrived in Mt Hagen's Kagamuga Airport and was welcomed by priests, religious, diocesan staff, Catholic Health staff, the teaching staff of the Holy Trinity Teachers College and many Catholic faithfuls on Tuesday May 3rd.

The local church hierarchy had been in negotiation with the immediate family, the SVD congregation and relevant authorities for the body to be repatriated to PNG.

The body of late Archbishop Emeritus Michael Meier was laid to rest in Rebiamul, Western Highlands



Province on Friday May 6th 2022 where he spent most of his active mission.



Youth leaders attend capacity building workshop

- Daru-Kiunga Youths

The youth leaders and animators were enlightened with well-informed and educational sessions from different facilitators on the topics of Legal Basic Knowledge, proposal writing, financial literacy, awareness on synodality in the Catholic Church and media and communication during the workshop.

Vicar General of Daru-Kiunga, Fr. Andrew Moses said that such workshop is a way of empowering the youths with skills and knowledge to progress and live their lives meaningfully. "Many youths today are confused, lost or dissatisfied with their lives and we are not fully aware of the potential within them to be successful", he said.

Facilitators in the program included the Diocesan Youth coordinator Mr. Ambie James, Catholic Youth Professionals representative Mr. Desmond Aigilo, Vicar General of the Daru-Kiunga Diocese Fr. Andrew Moses, BSP Kiunga Branch Manager Mr Ruben Atai and his staff and Social Communications representative, Ms. Jessica Oata.

Kiunga, Western Province: A two-week Youth Leaders Capacity Skills building Workshop held from March 28th – April 8th had 20 Catholic youth leaders and animators representing 12 parishes in Western Province.

Held at the Peter ToRot Formation Centre in Kiunga, the workshop was aimed at equipping the youth leaders and animators with the necessary skills and knowledge to be effective in their roles as leaders when they are conducting youth programs in their respective parishes during the course of their leadership.



Film Review:

Miracles from Heaven

Miracles from Heaven is a 2016 American Christian drama film directed by Patricia Riggen and written by Randy Brown. It is based on *Miracles from Heaven* by Christy Beam, which recounts the true story of her young daughter who had a near-death experience and was later cured of an incurable disease. The film stars Jennifer Garner, Kylie Rogers, Martin Henderson, John Carroll Lynch, Eugenio Derbez, and Queen Latifah. Principal photography began in Atlanta, Georgia, in July 2015.

Set in Burleson, Texas, between 2007 and 2012, the film centres on a little girl named Anna (Kylie Rogers), daughter of Christy Beam (Jennifer Garner). One day, Anna starts to vomit, and when is examined by her doctor, he does not find anything abnormal. On March 20, 2008, Anna wakes up her family at midnight because of an intense stomach pain, severe enough that her parents decide to take her to the hospital. Doctors find no signs of illness, except to

say it could be either acid reflux, or lactose intolerance, but Christy is not convinced by this.

The following morning, Christy finally finds a paediatrician in the hospital that is able to diagnose Anna with an abdominal obstruction, and he tells them he must operate immediately or she will die. After the emergency surgery is performed, the doctor explains that Anna has been left with intestinal pseudo-obstruction and she is unable to eat, so feeding tubes are needed for her nutrition. The doctor then tells the Beams about America's foremost paediatric gastroenterologist, Dr. Samuel Nurko (Eugenio Derbez), who practices in Boston, but explains it could take months for them to be seen. In January 2009, Christy and Anna travel to Boston despite not having an appointment with the doctor.

Dr. Nurko has a last minute opening, and when Anna is subsequently examined at Boston Children's Hospital, the extent of her chronic illness is found. She then goes through extensive treatment. During this ordeal, Anna and her mother befriend a local Massachusetts resident named Angela Bradford (Queen Latifah), as well as Ben (Wayne Peré) and his daughter, Haley (Hannah Alligood) who has cancer.

On December 29, 2011, Anna, along with her bigger sister Abbie (Brighton Sharbino), climb up to a very high branch of an old cotton tree. While they are on that branch, it begins to break. Anna goes to the trunk for safety, whereupon stepping on it, she falls in a hole to the base of the tree. When Christy finds out what has happened, she desperately calls her husband Kevin (Martin Henderson), as well as the fire department. Anna is then rescued by the firefighters, who warn Christy to expect the worst by saying that nobody could fall 30 feet without sustaining a serious injury; broken bones or paralysis. Once out, Anna is airlifted to a hospital, where a battery of tests are run on her, and all of the tests come back negative. Other than a minor concussion, Anna is uninjured.

Sometime after the fall, Anna seems to no longer be affected by her illness. When Christy and Anna go to an appointment with Dr. Nurko, he tells Christy that Anna is miraculously cured. Anna then recounts with her parents the experience she had during the fall. She describes how her soul left her body during the fall, and God promised that she would be cured of her illness upon her return to Earth. At church, Christy shares the story of how God miraculously healed her daughter with His love. As Christy finishes her speech, one of the congregation protests, stating that he does not believe Christy. Ben, who has traveled from Boston upon hearing the story about Anna, believes her. He also shares that Haley died peacefully because Anna gave her faith when in the hospital (Anna is saddened by this news because she believes Haley was a dear friend).

In the end, the Beams spend some quality time together and in the opening scene Christy says to always believe in miracles.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

1. When faced with difficult situations that we cannot accept, what is our first reaction?
2. Examining ourselves, how deep is our faith?
3. We call ourselves Christians and say we follow Christ but are we really prepared to go all the way with him, even with similar situations as observed in the film?

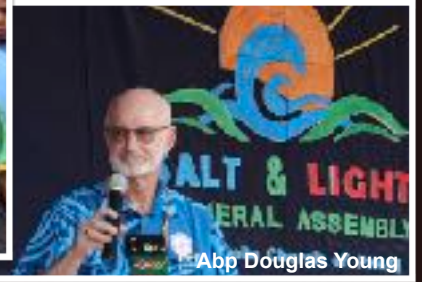


3rd General Assembly

Mingende, Simbu, 21st to 26th April 2022



Enthusiastic Welcome by the children



Abp Douglas Young



Bp Paul Sundu



Eucharistic celebration



Opening prayer service



Sessions at the General Assembly



Choir



Participants at the General Assembly