



'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

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- Benedict Mayaki, SJ

## Pope prays for Ukraine as EU condemns attacks on civilian infrastructure

Pope Francis renews his prayers for 'martyred' Ukraine, on the same day the President of the European Commission denounces Russia's recent attacks on civilian infrastructure as war crimes.

As he has repeatedly done in recent times, Pope Francis once again reiterated his appeal for Ukraine during the Wednesday General Audience. "We turn our thoughts to martyred Ukraine," said the Pope, inviting prayers for an end to the "horrible things that are happening there, the torture, the deaths [and] the destruction."

### Ongoing fighting

The latest reports from Ukraine say that more than a thousand towns and villages remain without power after Russian attacks in recent days. Russian missiles crashed into Ukrainian energy facilities, as several explosions were heard in northern Kyiv, where there is a thermal power station. Kyiv says that in recent days, some 30 percent of Ukraine's power stations have been destroyed by Russia. The cities of Dnipro, Mykolaiv, and Zhytomyr were also targeted, adding to concerns the death toll will further rise following other deadly drone and missile strikes that have killed many people since Monday.

### European Commission condemns attacks

The President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, denounced Russia's attacks on Ukraine's infrastructure.



Photo above: Firefighters work to put out a fire in a thermal power plant damaged by a Russian missile strike in Zhytomyr

Speaking to the European Parliament, she said: "Russia's targeted attacks on civilian infrastructure are marking a new chapter in an already cruel war. The international order is clear. These are war crimes."

She stressed that the attacks "with the clear aim to cut off men, women, and children of water, electricity, and heating as winter approaches" are "acts of pure terror and we have to call it as such."



- Article: **Abigail Seta**; Photographs: **Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb**

## The Holy Trinity Cathedral consecrated by Cardinal Tagle



**Rebiamul, WHP:** His Eminence Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, Pro-Prefect of the Dicastery for Evangelization consecrated the newly built Holy Trinity Cathedral in the Archdiocese of Mt Hagen, a symbol of unity, prayer, and the sacraments. The cathedral was consecrated on Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> October 2022, at Rebiamul, Mt Hagen.

Present to witness this momentous occasion were Apostolic Nuncio to Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, His Excellency Most Reverend Fermín Emilio Sosa Rodriguez together with Archbishop of Port Moresby, Cardinal Sir John Ribat; Archbishop of Mt Hagen, Douglas Young SVD and Archbishop of Madang and president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of PNGSI, Anton Bal and Archbishop of Rabaul, Rochus Tatamai msc. Also present were 17 bishops from PNG and SI, priests, religious sisters and brothers and guests from all over the country. The governor of Western Highlands Province, Wai Rapa and business representatives also attended the occasion.

In his homily, Cardinal Tagle spoke on the significance of building a Church as he reflected on the readings of the day. "We have built a church. What does that mean? What does it mean to build a Church? We have three readings for today and all of them are teaching us about the significance of building a church. Look at the church, it is a beautiful church but how do we build a beautiful church?" he challenged the thousands in the congregation that were gathered for the celebration.

"A beautiful house should not be left empty. The beauty of this house is more pronounced when the children of God are in it. St Peter talks about the community, the church. I think this building, the church, will last for 500 years or maybe more but how about the community? How long will we last? How will we build a community over and over again?"

"St Peter says come to Jesus who is the cornerstone, and we are the living stones. We should not be dead stones. The community called the church is a living body. The people of God, the body of Christ, the pentacle of the spirit and each one of us is a stone but we should be a living stone," stated the Cardinal.

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- Reilly Kanamon, CPNG Advocacy & Research Coordinator

## Caritas PNG hosts Caritas Oceania Annual Forum



**Port Moresby:** Caritas Papua New Guinea was blessed to host the 2022 Caritas Oceania regional forum in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea from 3rd - 7th October 2022.

The forum comes after 3 years of absence from physical meetings due to Covid-19 and travel restrictions since the pandemic hit the region in 2019. Since then, most of the physical meetings and working collaborations by the Caritas confederation

were replaced by zoom meetings, phone calls, and email.

This year's annual Caritas Oceania forum was attended by member countries including Chief Executive Officers and program leads from Caritas Australia, Aotearoa New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Secour Catholique de Nouvelle-Noumea, and Caritas Papua New Guinea.

President of Caritas Oceania Cardinal Soane

Patita Paini Mafi in his remarks, setting the scene for the week-long region Caritas forum said, Caritas as the charity arm of the church will continue to journey together and strengthening its solidarity by listening to the cry of the poor, the displaced and struggling because of climate change in the islands in the Pacific.

Cardinal Mafi reiterated that the forum was an opportunity for the Caritas family in Oceania to

reflect on the journey of charity, listen to themselves and each other, and perhaps how the confederation can journey together into the years ahead.

Caritas Archdiocese of Fiji was supposed to be the host for the 2022 annual forum, however, the Caritas Oceania confederation secretariate amicably agreed and requested Caritas PNG to host the 2022 forum.

"When we heard that our president of Caritas Internationalis Cardinal Tagle was visiting PNG at the request of CBCPNGSI, we thought this would be an opportunity for the Caritas family to meet his eminence here in Papua New Guinea as well".

The highlight of the week-long forum in PNG was face-to-face meetings and interaction with Caritas Internationalis president his eminence Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle on October 6<sup>th</sup> and the launching of the Caritas Oceania Twin Cloud on the horizon report: Adverting a combined climate debt crisis in the Pacific through locally delivered climate finance.

In a show of solidarity, the Caritas Oceania forum was blessed to have his eminence Cardinal Soane Paini Mafi from Samoa Archbishop Peter Loy Chong of the Archdiocese of Suva, Fr. Pesamino Victor and Fr. Fotutata Soane as participants during the weeklong forum in Port Moresby.

- Rosa Koian and Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb

## Cardinal Tagle: Lord increase my faith Catholics launch Family Life Pastoral Plan for 2022-2027

Photograph below:

Cardinal Tagle with Apostolic Nuncio and Bishops from PNG and Solomon Islands at the National Family Festival and Congress

**Boroko:** The Catholic Church in Papua New Guinea ended its Year of the Family with a two-day National Family Festival and Congress on a high note with the Pro-Prefect of the Office of Evangelization in Rome Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle celebrating the Episcopal Mass on Sunday October 2, at Caritas Technical Secondary School in Port Moresby.

The celebration was attended by nearly 3,000 married couples, young people, bishops and the religious from various dioceses in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands who came together to listen and to celebrate the day.

In a very humorous, interactive, and engaging homily Cardinal Tagle congratulated the PNG church on this colourful celebration and emphasized on how strong families built on love and thus make strong communities. He dwelt on: 'Lord increase my Faith', as he invited everyone present to be open, compassionate, and forgiving. Dwelling on the gospel, through practical examples, he invited husbands, wives, and children to reach out and serve as this is an essential response to God's will and a commitment to our Faith. In the words of the Holy Father, Pope Francis, he reminded the congregation that the family is, 'a place of encounter, a door of holiness, and that we need to be salt and light to everyone, never being a cause of scandal to little ones'.

At the end of the Eucharistic celebration, he blessed the families and gave them the mandate to be 'Missionary couples and families'. This was followed by the Launching of the five-year Conference Family Life Pastoral Plan (2022-2027) and the presentation of the *Amoris Laetitia*



Discussion Guides in Pidgin and English by Bp Rolando Santos, cm and Bp Peter Houhou, Bishop of Auki.

This National Family Festival also marked the end of a week-long annual PNG and Solomon Islands Catholic Bishops meeting held in Port Moresby. The much-appreciated program was organized and coordinated by Sr Lucy D'Souza msi, secretary for the Family Life Commission together with a dedicated team of religious, clergy and lay persons.

The theme of the festival and congress was: 'Family Love: a vocation and path to Holiness' is a call to Catholics to show the love of God in their families to build strong communities. It called for marriages to re-commit their families to their Christian Catholic values.

The two-day festival had the following objectives:

1. to place families at the centre of pastoral attention and evangelization;
2. to deepen the synodal conviction that the family is a vocation and a path to holiness and that they have been called to communion, participation and mission according to the call of Pope Francis in his apostolic letter, *Amoris Laetitia* and
3. to celebrate and thank God for the grace and the gift of families in Papua New Guinea and around the world.

The year of the Family, which was established by Pope Francis on March 19, 2021, the day of the Solemnity of St Joseph was to promote the joy of love and to explore and see the beauty of joy in family life. The Catholic Bishops of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands recognize and uphold families as the domestic institution of the church.

- Migrants & Refugees Desk of CBCPNGSI

WYD Lisbon 2023



### WYD 2023 LOGO

The logo of the World Youth Day Lisbon 2023, inspired by the theme «Mary arose and went with haste» (Lk 1, 39) has the Cross as a central element. Beatriz Roque Antunes, the designer responsible for developing the logo, also presents the Cross crossed by a path where the Espírito Santo emerges.

The logo is intended to be an invitation to young people not to settle down and be protagonists in the construction of a more just and fraternal world.

The colors (green, red and yellow) evoke the Portuguese flag.

## Mobile Clinic visit Refugee Camp

**Port Moresby:** Over fifty West Papua Refugee families residing at the Rainbow West Papua Refugee Camp received vital health information, children's immunizations and injections, general treatments, medical check-ups and gift packs courtesy of St. Paul's Clinic mobile outreach team on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022.

It was part of a joint initiative between the Migrants & Refugees Desk of CBCPNGSI and St. Paul's Clinic for West Papuan Refugees in Port Moresby. Present were family and friends in the camp as well as some West Papua refugees from other camps in the city. The program had awareness talks on pregnancy, childcare, child abuse, gender-based violence (GBV), Tuberculosis (TB), HIV/AIDS, using herbal plants for treating common diseases, general health; and hygiene practices, followed by injections

and immunization for children, general medical check-ups, and treatments with the distribution of small gift packs to the families. Sr. Gracey, MCSA, Clinical Supervisor of the St. Paul's Clinic imparted useful and meaningful information to those present. She stressed the need to promote good and safe hygiene practices and avoid high health risks.





## November, a prayer for all souls and ourselves

**Fr. Giorgio Licini, PIME, CBC General Secretary**

The month of November is one of mourning and prayer for the souls of all departed brothers and sisters. In the north hemisphere it is the first month of cold and freezing. The visit to the graves somehow suggests participation in the stillness and the apparent hopelessness of death. It elicits unavoidable questions on the purpose of life and its meaning. One of my sharpest childhood memories refers to the constant comment of the simple village people at the lowering of caskets into the ground, "See what happens to all our pride!". It was being said regardless of the attitude in life of the specific deceased person.

Humility is probably what death teaches us. Generosity as well. We do not take anything to the afterlife. Naked but warm we come, well dressed but cold and stiff we go. What matters is rather what we leave behind: a small contribution to humanity, a world slightly better than the one we found, people who worked or studied or changed or converted

thanks to our small efforts and the grace of God; or troubles and desperation, debts and failure at every step, depending on the way we spent our time and our energies, or resources and our intelligence, our relationships and our love. For good or for bad, for the others or for us, for God or the devil.

Our dear ones are those for whom we pray in the first place in November. We still miss them after years. We feel them still alive when we see where they used to sit, to walk, to sleep, to pray. But this is a month to open our heart and share our prayers also for those who do not have the chance to die peacefully surrounded by their loved ones. They are not few. Some of them perish in battle. Real wars are distant from us. But we have our own small ones and particularly cruel: tribal fights, sorcery accusations, alcoholism, sexual violence, vehicular accidents, young people committing suicide due to lack of support in facing the challenges of life.

These are the deaths God didn't want. Wrong to think, when it happens, that "em taim blong ol". No, it's not the time God had prepared for them. They

were supposed to stay much longer with us. But we have killed them with our carelessness, recklessness, ignorance, and violent attitude. We do not hunt wild pigs and wallabies anymore. But some of us do not hesitate to still cut and slash people like animals. These are great sins. As life is expected to be meaningful, dignified and constructive, so is death.

Not desperation but inspiration is the true nature of death. While the separation from our loved ones is a reason of great suffering, a sense of fulfillment accompanies the end of a life well spent, a spiritual and moral legacy that survives in the family and the community, a memory that endures and challenges us every day to greater things and higher achievements.

We pray in November not only for those who already passed, but also for ourselves and those still journeying with us. We still have to complete our task and finish the race. *Wok I mas go yet.* Before we rest.

## A time to discover God's Gift

**Jiwaka:** Spirit filled voices with joy and happiness sang and danced as they welcomed, Cardinal Luis Antonio Tagle, Pro-prefect of the Dicastery of the Evangelization of Peoples, on 3<sup>rd</sup> October at 1.30pm. The professors, students and religious of the area were then present to listen to the words of His Eminence and ask questions.

Cardinal John Ribat, Archbishop of Port Moresby; Archbishop Fermin Emilio Sosa Rodriguez, Apostolic Nuncio to Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, Archbishop Douglas Young, Archbishop of Mt Hagen, together with several bishops were also present on the occasion. Fr Philemon, expressed his joy and welcomed the dignitaries to Good Shepherd Seminary.

Addressing the gathering, Fr Clement Papa, Rector of the Seminary, thanked the Cardinal for his contribution to the work of seminary formation during his Apostolic Visitation in 2010. "This has triggered the work of our national *Ratio*, something necessary and relevant to the pastoral needs of the PNG local church", he said. "The whole intention was to bring the formation of priest right to the doorsteps of a flourishing parish community. The seminary's pastoral programs are to be integrated in the pastoral programs of the parish community, something clearly pointed out by Vatican II and repeated by John Paul II's encyclical letter *Pastores Dabo Vobis*", he continued.

He then made mention of the addition of the Spiritual year (34 seminarians) to the existing Philosophy program (46 seminarians) that commenced 30 years ago. The 9 full time staff members consists of lay (2), religious (2), diocesan priests (4), and a brother. He highlighted the fact that the work of formation is in the hands of the local clergy who are now preparing the future PNG priests to

– Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb

minister to the PNG church.

In a very engaging and interactive session with the seminarians, Cardinal Tagle dwelt on the fact that seminary formation is a time to discover God's gift and respond to his calling. He encouraged the seminarians to open to the 'God of Surprises', be honest with their superiors and be ready to follow Gods call in their lives. He reminded them of the need to be truthful, sincere and honest and listen to the voice of God through their superiors who are their spiritual guides.

During the question time, discussions revolved around human and emotional formation and the call to celibacy. The cultural issues of power, abuse, and domination were also dealt with. The seminarians were reminded that human formation depends on our ability to relate respectfully and lovingly to all persons.

The program concluded with appreciation and thanks for an insightful encounter. All then gathered around their eminent guests to seal smiles on a photograph.



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1:

## A symbol of unity, prayer and sacraments

The eucharist celebration consisted of five rites of dedication which began with the procession of the bishops to the cathedral led by the Sinsibai parish in Hagen and parishioners from Madang. This was followed by the handing over of the building at the threshold where the architect, Mr John O'Brien handed over the drawings. The doors to the cathedral were then opened by the descendants of the Big Men who first welcomed the missionaries to Mount Hagen. The procession was led by a Madang singsing group, many of whom were descendants of the carriers and catechists who accompanied the missionaries on their first patrol to Mt Hagen.

The Cardinal blessed water and sprinkled it on the people to signify repentance and a reminder of their baptism and to purify the walls and altar of the church.

The eucharist continued with the prayer of dedication and the anointing of the altar and columns of the church. The altar was then incensed.

The congregation outside were amazed by a flaming circle that appeared in the sky just over the cathedral. They raised their voices in glory, and thanked God for his presence and blessings.

26 parishes in the Archdiocese participated in the occasion bringing food and cultural dances to commemorate the new cathedral. According to a report by Trinity FM, the Archdiocesan radio station, the Cathedral has been a dream for many years.

There were two major phases of construction. Phase one was getting the building on the ground. Setting the foundation, the frames, roof, the slabs, and the walls. These were completed in 2018. The second phase was the



Photo above: Cardinal Tagle presides at the Eucharistic Celebration

completion of the inner works of the cathedral.

"It took eight years to get to this stage where we have now witnessed its consecration, since the initial ground-breaking ceremony on September 04th, 2014."

Speaking of the cost, Abp Douglas said that the archdiocese budgeted for about K15 million, but at this stage, the total cost of the whole project is not known as there are works yet to be done.

"As it is now, we are happy that we have a better infrastructure, a more suitable venue for worship. There are other things that are needed. We appreciate the work done and we are looking forward to working together to get it fully completed and to the stage and level we want," he said.

The celebrations concluded with a grand agape and entertainment.

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- Fr. Tomás Ravaoli IVE

## Fourth Marian Dogma: The Assumption in the Tradition



The most reliable source of Catholic belief in the bodily Assumption of Mary is ecclesiastical Tradition, which became crystallized as early as the sixth century. The tradition that Our Lady was assumed bodily into Heaven emerged into broad daylight in the sixth century and manifested itself practically in the liturgical celebration of the festival of her Assumption, and theoretically in the homiletic teaching of the Fathers in connection with this festival.

The Fathers of the Church used different names for this feast, but all of these had for its object the assumption of our Lady, with soul and body, into heaven. Simultaneously, with the introduction of the

feast of the Assumption, the later Fathers testified in favor of the doctrine upon which it was based. The earliest testimony we know of in the Western Church is this utterance of Saint Gregory of Tours (+596), "The Lord commanded the holy body [of Mary after her death] to be borne on a cloud to Paradise, where, reunited to its soul, and exulting with the Elect, it enjoys the never-ending bliss of eternity." The most important advocates of this doctrine are St. Andrew of Crete (+720), St. Germanus (+733), St. John of Damascus (+ 754 circa), among others. St. John of Damascus wrote three homilies for the Feast of the Assumption, in which he presented the bodily Assumption of the Mother of God into Heaven as an ancient heirloom of the Catholic faith.

The arguments of the Fathers can be summarized as follows: according to the general rule, God does not will to grant to the just the full effect of the victory over death until the end of time has come. And so it is that the bodies of even the just are corrupted after death, and only on the last day will they be joined, each to its own glorious soul. Now, God has willed that the Blessed Virgin Mary should be exempted from this general rule. She, by an entirely unique privilege, completely overcame sin by her Immaculate Conception, and as a result, she was not subject to the law of remaining in the corruption of the grave. She did not have to wait until the end of time for the redemption of her body.

- Kenny Romanus

## Dealing with Online Hate Speech

Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb, Secretary for Social Communication



**Digital natives**, digital immigrants and the digital tourists are constantly glued to their digital devices in frenzied engagement with family, friends, and acquaintances. As the digital footprint increases so does in a very subtle nature a threat to our digital universe and a degrading of our humanity. Hate speech is rearing its ugly head in different ways and it poses a threat to the digital universe. Above all, it precedes different types of violence especially against minorities. No continent on earth is free from the impact of hate speech.

In an online presentation Fr Mariano Naing sdb, dealt with the issue, that it is now so extensive that it has gained global attention. He highlighted different aspects, which reveal the seriousness of the issue. Below are important aspects for us:-

Despite hate speech being a global concern there is no legal definition of it. Moreover, there is confusion between **free speech** and **hate speech** and it is still widely disputed. In common language, "**hate speech**" loosely refer to offensive discourse targeting a group, or an individual based on inherent characteristics - such as race, religion, or gender- that may threaten social peace. United Nations Strategy and Plan of Action on Hate Speech defines hate speech as "**any kind of communication** in speech, writing or behaviour, that **attacks** or uses **pejorative** or **discriminatory** language with reference to a person or a group on the basis of **who they are**, in other words, based on their religion, ethnicity, nationality, race, colour, descent, gender or other identity factor." It is an incitement to discrimination, hostility and violence. All internet platforms can become the agents of hate speech. However, since much of the world communicates on Social media, it plays a prominent and convenient role in spreading online hate.

A study demonstrates that a significant number of adolescents and young adults are targeted by online hate speech. The effect of such hateful utterances can involve severe psychological harm, especially for young people who must master developmental tasks. We can duly state that online hate speech has become another field of "mission to the poor young" for priests, religious, educators, animators, and our young people.

Significant efforts are being made to counter hate speech by the governments, religious groups, and other organizations. Nonetheless, each of us is being challenged to immerse into the digital universe and counter the online hate speech for the young and it can only be accomplished with the young.



## Middle Fly Catholic Youth Convention



**Daru-Kiunga:** 200 young people of St. Bertila Parish of Daru-Kiunga Diocese participated at a 5-day youth convention held at St. Bertila Parish lowara Station, from 26th to 30th September. The theme was: "Young People be open and responsible."

Young people from St. John's Parish, Matkomnai; St. Paul's, Nomad; St. Peter's, Bosset; and the Kiunga town parishes, St. Brigid's and St. Gerard's were welcomed by the St. Bertila young people.

The objective of the convention was to bring young people from the three parishes to participate

in spiritual, intellectual and social activities. This will help them gain confidence and take responsibilities in church, community and country as a whole.

Among the young people attending the convention were 15 invited youths from other denominations (New Apostolic Church, Lutheran, CRC and ECPNG).

The young women and men were placed in four Groups for activities and presentations. Spirituality and prayer was an important element. The day commenced with the Eucharistic celebration and concluded with the rosary at night.

Present for the convention were: Mr. Ambie James, Diocesan Youth Coordinator, Mr. Gills Ken, Diocesan Child Protection Officer, Mr. Raphael Dalsep, Diocesan Men's Coordinator and Parish Priest for St. Bertila & Diocesan Priest, Fr. Hubert Nekiri.

Mr. Ambie James explained the policies and guidelines of being a Catholic Youth under the Catholic Bishops Conference (CBC) of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands to hold a position in the youth ministry. He further explained the age group of young people needs to be between 14 and 25 years of age.

Youths are taught the role of being a Catholic young person, the responsibility of being parents and the need to care for their children and their family.

## Priests Meet

- Rellysdom Aaron Malakana

**Gizo:** Eleven priests from the Diocese of Gizo, attended a meeting at Betania, Gizo, from the 27<sup>th</sup> to the 29<sup>th</sup> September 2022. The meeting was coordinated by the diocesan pastoral coordinator Mr. Jerome Kuibatu, and the bishop of the Diocese of Gizo Bishop Luciano Capelli sdb.

It was an effort to prepare the diocese for the Synod on Synodality to be held in Rome in 2023. The meeting evaluated the diocesan programs and activities carried out during the past sixteen years.

The eight parishes within Western and Choiseul province, shared highlights from their reports in the light of their understanding the Holy Fathers thrust to contribution and planning. They also had the opportunity to reflect and share on their pastoral ministry.



## Sewing Center Opened

- Sr Catherine DMI

**Port Moresby:** On 21<sup>st</sup> September the skill training centre for sewing and catering was opened in Gorobe, by Archbishop Fermin Emilio, Apostolic Nuncio for Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. 70 mothers participated in the programme. Mrs. Rose Hagua, women representative for Moresby South, Mrs. Jane Chairlady of Talai and community leader from Gorobe, Sr Catherine and other sisters, together with women group leaders and members of the self-help group and the trainees were present.

All the dignitaries spoke well about the work done and pledged their constant support.

## 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, 2022.**

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