

# 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

January 2020

Issue 169

- Sabina Castelfranco

## Pope Francis marks World Day of Peace

Pope Francis wished for peace in the world at the start of the New Year. Thousands of people packed Saint Peter's Square to hear his word on World Peace Day. The pope also used strong words during a morning mass in the Vatican Basilica to decry violence against women and called for an end to the exploitation of the female body.

and conversion." Earlier Pope Francis celebrated a solemn mass on New Year's Day in Saint Peter's Basilica. On

He added that while women are "the sources of life," they are continually offended, beaten, raped, forced into prostitution" or forced to have abortions.

Pope Francis said that our level of humanity is understood by the way we treat a woman's body. He also said that in order to make the world more united and at peace, women should become fully-associated with decision-making. In his homily, the pope also addressed the issue of immigration and mothers who undertake difficult voyages to improve the lives of their children.

He said: "There are mothers, who risk perilous journeys to desperately try to give the fruit of the womb a better future and are judged to be redundant by people whose bellies are full of things, but whose hearts are empty of love."

January 1, the Church celebrates Mary, mother of Jesus.

In his first homily of 2020, the pope spoke against violence inflicted on women in modern society. He said all violence against women is a desecration of God. He also called for an end to the exploitation of the female body saying it "must be freed from consumerism" and it "must be respected and honoured."

He said "how often is a woman's body sacrificed on the profane altar of advertising, profit, pornography, exploited as a surface to be used."

- Bp Rochus Tatamai MSC

## Bp Ambrose Kiapseni laid to rest

**Kavieng:** The longest serving Papua New Guinean Roman Catholic bishop, Bp Ambrose Kiapseni MSC, Bishop Emeritus of Kavieng, was laid to rest on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> December 2019. The Requiem mass was held at the Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Cathedral in the Diocese of Kavieng and was presided over by Cardinal Sir John Ribat MSC, Archbishop of Port Moresby.

Diocese of Kavieng on the 12<sup>th</sup> of May 1991 at the OLSH Cathedral, Kavieng.

His Grace Rev. Late Bishop Emeritus Ambrose Kiapseni was bishop of the OLSH Catholic Diocese of Kavieng for twenty-eight (28) years, two (2) months and fourteen (14) days at his official retirement on the 14<sup>th</sup> of August 2018. He had been a priest for thirteen (13) years. He was 74 years of age at his passing on the 20<sup>th</sup> of December 2019 at 09.30 AM at the MSC Centre, Kopkop.

Present at the Requiem mass was Hon. Sir Julius Chan, Governor of New Ireland Province, a long-time friend and colleague in the leadership of Bp Ambrose who represented the Government together with several others. Mr Robin Brown, First Secretary delivered the Governor's condolence message marking their long years and terms of collaboration throughout the State Church Partnership program in New Ireland Province.

Bp Rochus Josef Tatamai MSC delivered the homily and conducted the burial rites at Kopkop the MSC centre cemetery while Abp Francesco Panfilo SDB did the final commendation at the cathedral. Fr Clement Taulam, Dean of Manus delivered the Eulogy that was prepared by Fr Gerard Savian MSC.

Archbishop Francesco Panfilo sdb of the Archdiocese of Rabaul and Bishop Rochus Josef Tatamai MSC, Bishop of Kavieng Diocese were concelebrants together with Fr Siby and Gianni OFM, Vicar Generals of Vanimo and Aitape Dioceses and several other priests from the three deaneries of Manus, Kavieng and Namatanai.

Bishop Ambrose Kiapseni MSC was born on 16<sup>th</sup> October 1945. He was ordained a priest of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on the 7<sup>th</sup> January 1975. On 12<sup>th</sup> May 1991, he was ordained Bishop of Kavieng and resigned on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2018, making him the longest serving Papua New Guinean Roman Catholic bishop.

He passed away on the 20<sup>th</sup> December 2019. Late Bishop Emeritus Ambrose Kiapseni MSC was ordained the third Bishop of the Catholic OLSH



Abp Francesco Panfilo, Cardinal John Ribat and Bp Rochus Tatamai MSC carrying the casket of late Bp Ambrose

The Vicar General Fr Vincent Takin delivered the condolences messages from Cardinal Pietro Parolin on behalf of His Holiness Pope Francis and from Archbishop Kurian Mathew Vayalunkal, Apostolic Nuncio PNGSI as well as the message of condolence from Fernando Cardinal Filoni Prefect of the Congregation of the Evangelisation of Peoples.

### In this Issue:

1. Pope Francis marks World Day of Peace; Bp Ambrose Kiapseni laid to rest
2. Our Catholic Laity: Holy and Formed for mission; Keep it clean. Go Green!; Importance of women
3. The new children of Enga; 51 years of service in PNG; Celebrating love and living faith; Vergil Narakobi appointed judge
4. Commission for New Evangelization; CPS Alotau-Sideia; Warm hearts reach out at Christmas

# Our Catholic Laity: Holy and formed for mission

*A Pastoral Letter for the Year of the Laity Part II, 2020*

The call to holiness requires that you, our lay men and women, truly encounter Jesus Christ and have continued careful spiritual and intellectual formation to enlighten your hearts and minds.

In previous times, it was thought that weekly homilies and devotions were enough "food for the soul." But thanks be to God and to the movement of the Holy Spirit, you are now hungry for more spiritual food.

You are ready to move from "milk" to "solid food" (1 Cor. 3:2). There is a great need for an educated and articulate laity who are ready to give an accounting for "the hope that is in them" (1 Peter 3:15b). You are ready for the discipline of a disciple, for listening and learning from Jesus.

The Scriptures, especially the Wisdom books, encourage everyone to pursue wisdom and the true knowledge of God. All genuine knowledge is knowledge of the truth, and therefore of the mystery of God (Rom 11:33). Knowledge of God is necessary for doing the justice of God (Prov. 2:6-15). You can draw from Scriptures, our

PNGSI Catechism, and the reflections of our Holy Father Pope Francis, especially in *Gaudete et Exsultate*, for example his reflection on the Beatitudes (Chapter 3).

What can we all do together for the education and formation of lay people? Our PNGSI dioceses have many resource people who can be tapped to offer courses, workshops and ongoing programs for God's people.

-Christian Family Life remains the key to an effective lay apostolate and must be nurtured in every way possible. Christian families, as the "domestic church", witness to the new life in Christ and enable their members to go out to evangelize and transform the world. Family prayer based on the Word of God can be especially supportive of the family members' engagement in the mission of their ordinary life. Clergy and laity can accompany those in irregular situations. Parents can mould and accompany your children as their first catechists. It is very important that your children find a safe place where they are nurtured in their faith, loved, cared for and protected.

-Associations, movements, and devotional groups can strengthen the dimension of formation by

arranging opportunities for members to grow in faith, especially knowledge of the special charism of the group to which you belong. Our Blessed Mother Mary has blessed our Catholic women and our PNGSI Church. Devotion to St. Joseph as physical and spiritual protector and provider will also encourage and animate our men's groups, which are often the weakest ministry in the Church.

-Lay men and women involved in professional apostolates such as education, health, communication, law and justice, the disciplined forces, care for the poor and public service, can acquire the necessary skills to go beyond professionalism so as to bring the gospel into your field of expertise.

-Teachers in our Catholic schools and teachers of religious instruction in other schools and for the unschooled, must mobilize to lay solid foundations for growth in the faith, including literacy. Tertiary institutions should consider having a missioning ceremony for their graduates so that they might fully realize that their skills are at the service of the mission of the church.

*To be continued in the next issue*

## Keep it clean. Go Green!

Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb  
CBC Social Communication Secretary

Dear friends,  
The New Year 2020 with amazing possibilities has just unfolded before us. What are the new avenues for creative and constructive work in 2020?



The Catholic Bishops Conference has as its theme Catholic Laity: Formed for the Mission. Perhaps each one of us can try to understand our Catholic Faith, what the Sacraments mean to us and how they can be translated into life and living. A possibility will be Scripture Sharing and Bible reflection. Getting people together to share on scripture so that 'God's Word' becomes alive in their lives.

The United Nations has declared 2020 as the International Year of Plant Health (IYPH). The objective of the IYPH is to raise awareness of the importance and impacts of plant health in addressing global issues, including hunger, poverty, threats to the environment and economic development. Go Green. Keep it clean! is our theme for the Media Education Seminars and the International Film Festival. We need to look at ways to protect our planet for generations to come. It will be marvellous if we as a church can plant 100,000 fruit and hard wood trees. If each baptised catholic plants a tree, we will cross the figure stated.

It is in giving that we will receive. Reaching out to the marginalized, the poor, those in prisons, the refugees, the drug addicts and the street kids. It can be a year when we sensitize the eyes of our hearts to look not at ourselves, or want others to look at us, but we look at the ones who need us most, reach out to them, experience the joy of interaction and bring a smile to their faces.

Abuse and male domination are high in Papua New Guinea. Every young man can promise never to raise a hand, entertain any thought of violence or any form of abuse. Women on the other hand can bring in spirituality into their homes and ensure that they command and demand respect by all they interact with.

It is only then that we can say, that the ice has melted and spring is at hand. God bless all of you! Happy New Year 2020!

## Importance of women

In his Homily on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020, Pope Francis reflected on the significance of women, overall, in numerous ways, saying that women are givers and mediators of peace and should be fully included in the decision-making processes.



- Abigail Seta

He said that when women can share their gifts, the world finds itself more united, more peaceful. Hence, every step forward for women is a step forward for humanity. The Holy Father also said that violence toward women is equivalent to profaning God.

Sadly, according to the United Nations, the emerging global consensus is that despite some progress, real change has been agonizingly slow for the majority of women and girls in the world.

The UN says that multiple obstacles remain unchanged in law and in culture. Women and girls continue to be undervalued; they work more and earn less and have fewer choices; and experience multiple forms of violence at home and in public spaces.

These are all on a global level. So, what can we do on a national and local level? How do we stop the cycle of gender-based violence and include women in the decision-making processes in PNG?

The annual International Women's Day is set to be held on the 8<sup>th</sup> of March this year with the theme: #EachforEqual. The United Nation's theme is "I am Generation Equality: Realizing Women's Rights."

So let us strive to make a change in our country and follow these 'Generation Equality Resolutions for 2020':

- Take Action for equality.
- Believe in Yourself.
- Speak up for Human Rights.
- Hold leaders accountable.
- Learn from women role models.
- Defy gender stereotypes.
- Empower those around you.

### Media Education Seminar 2020

## Keep it Clean. Go Green!

Encouraging Young Creative Minds to Care for the Environment and Care for our Common Home.

For more information, contact CBC SOCOM Office on:  
Phone: +675 325 9577  
Email: [ambrose.pereirasdb@gmail.com](mailto:ambrose.pereirasdb@gmail.com) or [socom@catholic.org.pg](mailto:socom@catholic.org.pg)



### YEAR OF THE LAITY

2019 - Called to Holiness - 2021 - Sent to Serve

2020:

## Formed for Mission



**Catholic Bishops Conference**  
Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands  
Gordons, Waigani  
Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea



## The new children of Enga

Fr. Giorgio Licini, PIME  
CBC General Secretary

The stiff road up to the Kandep district in Enga province takes you first to the parish of Mang and after another forty-five minute drive to St. Martin de Porres at Mariant. It's cold there; and frost is the

permanent threat to crops and people's livelihoods. A small crowd is at the parish with Fr. Andrias Leo when we arrive on the 30<sup>th</sup> of December, the Monday after the Feast of the Holy Family. Fr. Thomas Waiaken is there with me from Wanepap with the purpose of presenting and extending to just another parish of the diocese of Wabag the new pastoral programs for the children and the youth: the Missionary Childhood and the Diocesan Vocation Club.

Having been appointed Youth Chaplain and Vocation Director by Bishop Arnold Orowae a few years ago, Fr. Thomas realized that he had to develop a strategy with pastoral and spiritual contents; a pattern that could be easily applied to all *Liklik Kristen Komuniti* (LKKs) in the mountainous diocese and make a real and

lasting impact on the minds and hearts of the young. This is now summarized on a signboard in front of the Cathedral in Wabag since the Missionary Childhood and the Diocesan Vocation Club were launched there on the 11<sup>th</sup> of September 2018. Motto: *Die to Self*. Patron: *Late Bishop Hermann Raich, SVD*. Mission: *Wabag Catholic Diocese Vocation Club will look after the Missionary Childhood*. Vision: *We like to produce Holy Families, Holy Priests, and Holy Religious when the Gospel reaches 100 years in Enga*. That will be in 2052. A long term project, therefore, centred on the idea that future youth and adults will only be different if as children they have received proper attention and care.

I was surprised at how in the parish of Wanepap, during the Christmas season children as young as eight could take to the lectern and not only proclaim the Word of God with clarity and confidence in front of a large liturgical assembly, but also share the prayers of the faithful without reading from a piece of paper. It is the fruit of hard and enthusiastic work by young volunteers, teachers and parents helping with the program and leading

the children on a daily basis towards confidence and community engagement; that way building up stronger and independent personalities.

"By caring for the children, we reach the parents," Fr. Thomas says - "We tell the children that chewing betel nut is a threat to personal health and family budget. Inevitably they carry the message home. It becomes more difficult for the adults to order the young ones out to the market to buy more betel nuts". The aim is to raise a new generation willing to question the local traditional and ordinary practices of socialization based on chewing, smoking, drinking, and gambling.

There is clearly a need for an idea, a strategy, and dedicated persons to take the children of today, who are the adults of tomorrow back from the wasting time attitude of the market place and the street, from the widespread Engan tendency to retaliation and fight, and from the debilitating dependence from smoke, alcohol and betel nut. But the families and the communities of the diocese of Wabag are on the right track for change.

## 51 years of service in PNG

"I will miss Papua New Guinea," said Sr Raymond Von Tils, MSC as she prepared to board her flight to return back to her native country, Germany. Sr Raymond has spent 51 years in Papua New Guinea, the majority of which was spent in Rabaul.

Christened Anna Elisabeth Katarina Vontils, she was born on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1940 at Steden Jetzt Holste in a small village in North Germany. She is the eldest of ten children in her family. She completed her schooling and qualified herself in dentistry. While in school, she heard about the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. She was inspired by their work in faraway mission lands in Oceania. At the age of 21 in 1961, she joined the congregation of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

It was in 1968 that she was appointed to Papua New Guinea as a Dental Technician was needed in the Dentistry in Vunapope Hospital, East New Britain Province. Sr. Raymond spent 12 years in the dentistry working with the young women in the hospital known as Nursing Aids as they did not have any training at the time. According to Sr Raymond, it was the start of training of professional Nursing Aids which has now

developed in the Community Health Worker Training Centre that is based in Lemakot, New Ireland Province. She then went on to handle the finances of the MSC Sisters in the province. Having no experience in the field, she managed to do some studies by correspondence through Australia.

"This would not mean a job behind a desk in the office with paperwork," said Sr Raymond. She added that part of her responsibility and duty was attending to the needs of the Sisters and staff in the outstations. For 10 years, she worked in the office in Rabaul then 3 years in Gerehu, Port Moresby and went on to spend another 6 years in Vunapope.

With all her experience in the different fields, Sr Raymond was then asked to start a new community station in Gerehu in 1978 as the community leader. Joining her at that time were three PNG sisters. Then in 1986, she was appointed to start a new station in Lorengau, Manus Province. Unfortunately, the work in Manus lasted for only a year.

"My time and ministry work here in Papua New Guinea was interesting and challenging. I



enjoyed working with the young ladies and interacting with them. I developed a close relationship with businesses, friends and people I met. I return home thanking God for the years of ministry, the enjoyable experience I have had and the many people I have interacted with in Papua New Guinea," said Sr. Raymond.

Sr Raymond and Sr Mechthild Schnieder MSC, Provincial of the German province left Port Moresby on 16<sup>th</sup> December carrying with them their *bilums* filled with fond memories of the wonderful years in Papua New Guinea.

- Fr. Ambrose Pereira sdb

## Celebrating love and living faith



Fr Roger speaking to the couple

**Gabutu, Port Moresby:** The Sacrament of Marriage is a lasting commitment of a man and a woman to a lifelong partnership, established for the good of each other and for the procreation of marriage. Cecilia Amala and Victor So-on, a young couple, celebrated the Sacrament of Marriage on 28<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at the chapel of Don Bosco, Gabutu. Fr Roger Miranda sdb was the main celebrant while Fr Shoji Mathew sdb and Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb concelebrated at the Eucharistic celebration.

"You stand as a witness of God's love to other young people", said Fr Roger in the homily. "There are no perfect husbands, wives or families, but only a perfect God, under whose guidance and blessings may you strive to build a happy Catholic family", he said. The celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage for this young God-fearing couple was a very special event.

"We are delighted to receive the Sacrament of Marriage" said a smiling Cecilia. "God is a necessary partner in our lives as we go through the ups and downs and the challenges of life", said Victor. Present were parents, loved ones, family and friends. At a very lively and joyous celebration the young couple joyfully pronounced their vows before their parents, guardians, family and friends. The St Mary's Cathedral choir led the congregation in harmonious singing.

## Vergil Narakobi appointed as judge

Dr Vergil Narakobi was appointed as a judge of the National and Supreme Courts of Papua New Guinea on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

He has been appointed by the Judicial & Legal Services Commission (JLSC) while the announcement was made by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Justice and Attorney-General, Davis Steven. The appointment is for 10 years.

Dr Narakobi said it was a momentous occasion for him and his family and that he is humbled by the appointment.

He said he accepts the appointment with a sense of awe, fear and joy at the same time as he is in a position to determine the rights and interests of the citizens of PNG.

He is a Catholic Professional and prior to the appointment, he was the President of the PNG Law Society and Legal Counsel to the Ombudsman Commission.

He is now serving as the 41<sup>st</sup> judge in the National and Supreme Courts of PNG.



# Commission for New Evangelization

I am happy to be back again in PNG after a long sabbatical leave of almost a year. I will be serving as the Secretary of the Commission for New Evangelization for the Catholic Bishops Conference of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. This Commission includes what was known as 'Conference Pastoral Plan' for both the countries. I will stay in Mount Hagen of the Western Highlands Province and serve from there.

In this article I would like to give a brief summary of the origin and the status of this Commission in the Vatican.

The Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization (PCPNE) is a Dicastery of the Roman Curia whose creation was announced by Pope Benedict XVI on 28 June 2010 to carry out the New Evangelization. The Pope said that "the process of secularization has produced a serious crisis of the sense of the Christian Faith and the role of the church" and the new Pontifical council would "promote a renewed evangelization" in countries where the church

has long existed "but which are living a progressive secularization of society and a sort of 'eclipse of the sense of God'".

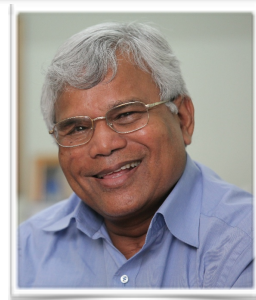
The idea for a Council for the New Evangelization was first floated by Fr. Luigi Guissani, founder of the Communion and Liberation movement in the early 1980s. The term 'New Evangelization' was popularized by Pope John Paul II with reference to efforts to reawaken the faith in traditionally Christian parts of the world, particularly Europe, first 'evangelised' or converted to Christianity, many centuries earlier, but then standing in need of a 'new evangelization'. More recently, Cardinal Angelo Scola of Venice presented the idea to Pope Benedict XVI.

Pope Francis is showing keen interest on reorganising the structure of the Roman Curia with a strong focus on the new evangelization. According to a brief Vatican press release on 4 December 2019, Pope Francis' council of Cardinals continue to evaluate the text of the New Apostolic Constitution, provisionally titled,

'*Praedicate evangelium*' (Preach the Goodnews). The now six-member advisory council of Cardinals will continue its "reading and evaluation" of the draft at its next meeting, which will take place in February 2020.

'*Praedicate evangelium*' will replace *Pastor bonus*, the current apostolic constitution on the Roman Curia promulgated by Pope John Paul II on June 28, 1988, and subsequently modified by both popes Benedict and Francis.

The new document is expected to place renewed emphasis on evangelization as the structural priority of the Church's mission, with some predicting the merger of the Vatican's Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples and the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization into a single larger department.



- Fr. Victor Roche SVD

# CPS Alotau-Sideia Diocesan Chapter launched

- Simon Alberic



Social Communication Secretary of CBC and Spiritual Director of CPS.

The Bishop welcomed the establishment of the chapter in his diocese and challenged the members to carry their 'Cross of Courage' and be the light of Christ and voice of the Catholic Faith. "You are to live and witness to your Catholic faith and be the voice of the voiceless for those who cannot speak for themselves", he said. He referred to the parable

of the talents saying, "At the final judgement, each one will account for what one has done with his or her talents". He highlighted the many social issues of injustices, human rights abuses, HIV and Aids, corruption, and violence facing the province and the country and challenged the Catholic Professionals to take courage in facing those issues.

After the homily, 8-year old Sharon Alberic, dressed in traditional attire led the procession of

intending Catholic Professional members. She carried the CPS Constitution and the Instrument of Approval and handed the documents over to the Bishop. The pioneer members then made their Oath of Membership and Pledged their Commitment before the Bishop. He blessed and commissioned them, saying: "Jesus sent forth his disciples in pairs on mission (Luke 10). May you also receive God's blessing of your Oath of Membership and the Pledge of Commitment to live, profess and practise your Catholic faith supported by the gifts, talents, knowledge and skills you possess for the good of all and more especially for those in need. (Jn 13:12-15, CCC 1266-1270)". The Bishop then gave each member a cross and a miraculous medal to be worn by the members in their mission. The Alotau-Sideia Diocesan Chapter is the first Diocesan Chapter to be established under the Constitution of the CPS. The twelve members commissioned as the first members of the Chapter are Chris So'onwai, Shirley Kolohei, Sharlyne Tomiyavau, Philip Diudi, Simon Alberic, Simeon E'ebo, Philip Tauleboda, Dickson Lige, Lawrence Koibi, James Tomiyavau, Patrick Alberic and Rosemary E'ebo.

The Alotau-Sideia Diocesan Chapter of the Catholic Professionals Society (CPS) was launched on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2019 during the Eucharistic celebration, at the Sacred Heart of Jesus Cathedral, Alotau.

The Eucharistic celebration was presided over by Most Rev. Bishop Rolando Santos, CM, Bishop of the Diocese of Alotau-Sideia and concelebrated by Fr. Thomas Losema, Parish Priest of Alotau, and Fr. Ambrose Pereira sdb,

- Sr Mary McCarthy PBVM

# Warm hearts reach out at Christmas

**Port Moresby:** Warm hearts around the city responded to a call from the Port Moresby General Hospital Voluntary Chaplains to host a Christmas Lunch for patients and their Guardians on Christmas Eve.

The PMGH Christmas celebration for the mothers and babies began with a sharing of the story of the birth of Jesus. Christmas carols which beautifully filled everyone present with wonder and awe. Communities from the

churches brought much joy with their singing and action songs.

Mothers from the Special Care Nursery, after morning feeds, left their sleeping infants in the care of nurses and came out of the ward to sit on the grass outside. They were invited to join in the singing and reflections on the Christmas Story. They listened as the story told of Mary and Joseph and the unborn Child rejected over and over again. There was no room in the inn.

Later, they listened to the story of the shepherds visited by a heavenly chorus singing: Glory to God in the highest heaven.

Today your Saviour is born. The shepherds hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and saw the baby lying in a manger. The shepherds went back singing praises to God.

"The hospital is big, and the Chaplains are few! But, with the strong backing of many



Voluntary Chaplains presenting a Christmas Carol

churches the impossible was achieved," stated Sr Mary McCarthy PBVM, Volunteer Chaplain.

To celebrate God's Gift, we give gifts at Christmas time. The name of each mother whose baby was in the Special Care Nursery was called forward to receive her gift. When each mother had received her gift, the visitors from the Churches and Port Moresby Religious Sisters, candidates, and friends visited the Post-natal ward to share the joy of the many mothers in the ward rejoicing in the birth of their babies.

## Catholic Reporter

Invites you to send in your articles, photograph and reflections on events and happenings in your parish, community, institution and diocese.

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