



'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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World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly

Theme: **In old age, they will still bear fruit (Psalm 92:15)**
Date: **July 23rd 2022**

Brief Background:

Institutionalized last year, Pope Francis decided that the World Day for Grandparents and the Elderly will be held on the fourth Sunday of July, close to the liturgical memorial of Saints Joachim and Anne, grandparents of Jesus.

This year's theme intends to emphasize how grandparents and the elderly are a value and a gift both for society and for ecclesial communities. The theme is also an invitation to reconsider and value grandparents and the elderly who are too often kept on the margins of families, civil and ecclesial communities. Their experience of life and faith can contribute, in fact, to building societies that are aware of their roots and capable of dreaming of a future based on greater solidarity.

The Dicastery for the Laity, Family and Life invites parishes, dioceses, associations and ecclesial communities throughout the world to find ways to celebrate the Day in their own pastoral context, and for this purpose it will later make available some appropriate pastoral tools.

Questions for reflection:

1. Are we taking care of the elderly members in our families, communities and society with love?
2. Do we commit the elderly in our prayers?
3. In what ways can we reach out to the elderly members of the society and show them that we care?

Pope Francis: Evangelisation is not 'personal activism' but a witness of love

Pope Francis reflects on the Sunday Gospel at the Angelus prayer, and said that evangelization should not be seen as "personal activism," but a witness of love in relationship with others.

Rome: In his Angelus address on July 3, the pope posed a question: "How do we bring the good news of the Gospel to others?"

"Do we do it with a fraternal spirit and style or in the manner of the world with prominence, competitiveness, and efficiency?" he asked.

Speaking from the window of the Apostolic Palace to pilgrims gathered in St. Peter's Square, the pope encouraged Catholics to work in collaboration with "the witness of fraternity."

"It is possible to develop perfect pastoral plans, implement well-made projects, organize down to the smallest details. You can summon crowds and have many means, but if there is no availability for one's brothers and sisters, the evangelical mission does not advance," the pope said.

Pope Francis reflected on how Jesus sent his disciples "two by two" in Sunday's Gospel (Luke 10:1-9).

"The disciples were sent two by two, not individually. Going on a mission two by two, from a practical point of view, would seem to have more disadvantages than advantages. There is a risk that the two do not get along, that they have a different pace, that one gets tired or gets sick along the way, forcing the other to stop too. On the other hand, when you are alone, it seems that the journey becomes faster and smoother. However, Jesus does not think so: in front of him he does not send lonely people, but disciples who go two by two," the pope said.

"Let us ask ourselves if we have the ability to collaborate, if we know how to make decisions together, sincerely respecting those around us and taking into account their point of view, if we do it in community, not alone. In fact, it is above all in this way that the life of the disciple reveals that of the Master, really announcing him to others," he said. After praying the Angelus with the crowd, Pope

Francis prayed for peace in Ukraine.

"I appeal to the leaders of nations and international organizations to react to the tendency to accentuate conflict and confrontation," he said.

The pope underlined that the world needs to move from focusing on political, economic, and military power strategies to a "global peace project," which says "no to a world divided among conflicting powers" and "yes to a world united among peoples and civilizations that respect each other."

He said: "The world needs peace — not a peace based on the balance of arms, on mutual fear. No, this will not do. This is turning history back seventy years."

"The Ukrainian crisis should have been, but — if you want it to be — can still become a challenge for wise statesmen, capable of building in dialogue a better world for new generations. With God's help, this is always possible!"



World Refugee Day

CBC commemorated World Refugee Day on 20th June 2022

[See Page 2](#)



75 years of God's Grace

History of the Franciscan Order of Friars Minor in PNG

[See Page 4](#)

IN THIS ISSUE:

1. Pope Francis: Evangelisation is not 'personal activism' but a witness of love
2. CBC commemorates World Refugee Day; Solemnity of the Pentecost; Young people speak with confidence; News in brief
3. Our liturgies must improve; West Papuan students supported with laptops; Communication Arts students on Media Training; Child Protection
4. Second Marian Dogma: The Immaculate Conception in the Bible; The Digital space and Holiness; 75 years of God's Grace

- Elizabeth Makis and Abigail Seta

CBC commemorates World Refugee Day



Port Moresby: The Catholic Bishops Conference of Papua New Guinea & Solomon Islands hosted a press conference on 20th June 2022 to commemorate World Refugee Day and highlight issues faced by refugees and Internally Displaced People (IDP) in the country.

Present as speakers were Fr Giorgio Licini PIME, General Secretary of the CBC-PNGSI, Jason Siwat, Director of Migrants and Refugees Desk and Mr. Paul Kosnan who represented his family and the refugees from West Papua living in PNG.

When addressing the media organizations, invited guests and other organizational heads, Fr. Licini said that there are refugees and several asylum seekers from several other countries including Pakistan, Bangladesh and Ecuador, West Papuans and others mainly from Middle East and Asian origin who came individually to seek safety in PNG.

For the West Papuans, he said that prolonged refugee processing,

lack of government-issued identity documentation, and importantly land concessions have become prolonged barriers that continue to obstruct them from meaningfully integrate into PNG society.

“There are about 12 thousand Melanesians from West Papua who live in Papua New Guinea that are displaced from their country of origin”, stated Fr. Licini.

According to the press release statement, in early November 2021 about 10 families arrived from West Papua seeking refuge on Papua New Guinean soil and are allowed to settle in temporarily.

The displaced West Papuans are now living in NCD, Western and Sandaun Provinces, and are still awaiting their documents to be processed so they can be given a proper land allocation and legal arrangements to be made.

He appealed to the government for prompt and decisive intervention because due to the prolonged processing of their necessary documents, they have been displaced more than five

times causing disruptions to their children’s schooling, no food for days and sleeping in open parks in the cold.

They are now settling on wasteland such as in Rainbow in the Gerehu Suburb in Port Moresby. More so, the Papua lowara refugee camp in Western province needs better roads to Kiunga town and other parts of the province.

Fr. Licini said that the CBC, respective dioceses, NGO and relevant state sectors are uniting to raise awareness so the responsible authorities should take appropriate and humane actions to bring an end to these people’s suffering and give them hope for better lives that all deserve.

Speaking on behalf of West Papuan refugees in PNG, Mr. Paul Kosnan, highlighted a few issues that they face such as status documentation, land, employment and current living conditions and daily livelihood.

He said that he was speaking to represent the voices that cannot be heard but are living in silence with their issues and struggles and acknowledged CBC for playing a major role in contributing to the welfare of the West Papuans.

The World Refugee Day is an international day designated by the United Nations to honour refugees around the globe every year on 20th June.

This year’s theme was ‘Whoever. Wherever. Whenever. Everyone has the right to seek safety.’

- Isabella Saleu

Solemnity of the Pentecost

Bomana: Over a hundred Catholic faithful joined the Priests, Brothers and Seminarians of the Holy Spirit Seminary to celebrate the Solemnity of the Pentecost and their Feast Day on 5th June 2022 at the Catholic Theological Institute Bomana. Celebrating Mass was the Apostolic Nuncio to Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, His Excellency, Archbishop Fermin Emilio Sosa Rodriguez. Concelebrating with him were seven other priests including the Rector of the Holy Spirit Seminary, Fr. Jacek Tendej CM. In his homily, the Nuncio encouraged the people to be open to the Spirit because each one had a mission. He said that sometimes it was frightening and confusing, but if we were open to the Spirit, we would be at peace to go where the Lord sends.

He added that those who were filled with the Spirit not only evangelized through words but also through the way they lived their lives. He emphasized that it was the true fulfilment of our life’s mission on earth. Following mass, the celebrations saw entertainment from different groups and refreshments.

Pentecost is celebrated on the 50th day from Easter Sunday, commemorating the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the frightened Apostles gathered in the cenacle together with the Blessed Mother. Filled with the



Spirit, they went out to proclaim the ‘Good News’ to all nations.

Amongst those in attendance were representatives from the Catholic Bishops Conference of PNGSI, the President of CTI, Fr. Martin Wallace OP and his staff, the different CTI Houses, priests and religious from other congregations together with laity from as far as the Diocese of Bereina and the UPNG Catholic Students Association.



Young people speak with confidence

The Chatroom program on Tribe FM held in the past two months, May to June, has seen young people confidently address issues faced by many Papua New Guineans with a strong call to action to citizens and the government of the day.

With World Press Freedom Day celebrated on 3rd May, students of St Charles Lwanga Secondary School took to Chat Room on 4th May to discuss *Critical Thinking of Media-Importance of Media Freedom in PNG*. The 5 lively grade 11 students stressed on the importance of being critical thinkers and always question the credibility of the news you receive. It was an intense discussion that had the students call on the public especially the young people to be curious as well as critical thinkers of the news that they get, whether it be from the traditional media platforms, digital, or in social media because they have the right to information.

The next Chat Room session on May 11th had the Don Bosco Technological Institute speak on ‘Confidence Building essential for students’ where they emphasised that self-confidence is vital for advocacy and good decision making. They called on parents and guardians to be involved in their children’s lives to guide and help them build their self-confidence and to positively influence others later in life.

St Josephs International Catholic College on 25th May had five dynamic grade 12 students with the message that young people must harness the skill of being self-reliant at a young age so that they grow up to be independent members of society. Their topic of discussion was ‘Importance of self-reliance for students and youths.’

On 1st June, five students from Don Bosco Technical School on the Chat Room sent out a strong reminder to their peers that teamwork is essential for personal growth and policy change. The students all in year eleven, spoke on the topic: ‘Importance of Teamwork.’

Speaking at the Chat Room Program on 8th June 2022, 5 students from La Salle Technical Secondary School discussed on the topic “Freedom of Expression” and have urged students and young people to express themselves.

June 15th saw 4 vibrant Marianville Secondary School girls speak on the topic ‘Women in Journalism’. The grade 12 students emphasized that journalism is important as it educates, informs and makes the society be aware of what is going in other parts of a country. They also spoke about the impacts that women have had in the journalism industry both around the world and in PNG saying that they have transformed lives through documenting success stories or reporting issues that concern the society.

The Chat Room has given young people the opportunity to critically and constructively discuss issues while making sure the discussion is positive and inspiring for their peers. It is enabling them to be aware of situations around them and be confident to speak about it.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Students create films on social issues

The fourth Media Education Seminar was held at the St. Charles Lwanga Secondary School, Gerehu, on 2nd July 2022, and focused on Longer Films.

The theme was, “LISTEN. Do everything with Love.” This seminar was a build-up of the short films from MES 3.

During MES 4, the students were given a session on Storyboards after which each school was asked to create their own storyboards that dwelt on creating a new film on themes addressing different social issues, or to continue with the films they created in the previous seminar.

The seminar was facilitated by the Social Communications Commission of CBC

Bishop blesses new learning centre

A new building for Early Childhood Learning in Wewak, East Sepik province was blessed by Bishop Josef Rozynski of the Diocese of Wewak on 1st July 2022.

The building was funded and erected by the Sisters of the Holy Rosary in East Sepik. The school takes its name as the Holy Rosary Early Childhood Learning Centre and will open in the following academic year with new intakes.

A few Catholic faithful expressed their gratitude to the Sisters and said this was a milestone achievement for their community, especially their children who would now have the opportunity to be schooled at an agency centre.

First Holy Communion for parishioners

On the Solemnity of Corpus Christi about 50 young parishioners from St. Charles Lwanga received their first Holy Communion on Sunday 19th June 2022 at the St. Charles Lwanga Parish, Gerehu.

Celebrating the mass and giving the sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ was Parish Priest Fr. Patrick Bai MSC, co-celebrated by Fr. Hendry Natowosi OP and Chaplain for the University of Papua New Guinea Catholic Students.

In his homily, Fr. Patrick Bai encouraged the young people and said that they must not receive the Holy Eucharist now and then to never go back again for church service but must take this as a start of the many communions to be received in their lives.



Our liturgies must improve

Fr. Giorgio Licini, PIME, CBC General Secretary

On 29 June, Feast of Saints Peter and Paul, Pope Francis issued an Apostolic Letter (*Desiderio desideravi*) to remind us of the need to properly understand, prepare and participate into the liturgical celebrations. Nobody in Papua New Guinea, unlike other countries especially of ancient evangelization in the West, questions the liturgical books and rites inspired by the theology and the reforms of Vatican Council II (1962-'65). However, a proper liturgical celebration only arises from constant scrutiny and vigilance towards a practice that can never be allowed to descend into banality and superficiality.

Pope Francis takes inspiration for his letter from the words of Jesus approaching Jerusalem for the last time and thus reported in the Latin translation of St. Jerome: "*Desiderio desideravi hoc Pascha manducare vobiscum, antequam patiar*" (I have earnestly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer) [Lk 22:15]. That Easter and that Supper, which liturgically anticipate the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Christ, is the spring of all divine gifts that we need not only to share but to celebrate. The sacred action of the Eucharistic celebration occupies central stage and defines our Christian identity. We do not only recall words,

deeds, and events of the life of Jesus Christ, but we celebrate a "memorial". The mysteries of Christ are renewed in the liturgical celebration, and it is with wonder and amazement that we constantly open up to his work of transformation and conversion in our hearts.

The liturgy is rich in symbols: bread, wine, water, oil, garments and vestments, colors, actions such as the sign of the cross, bowing, genuflecting, standing, praising by songs, dances, musical instruments, flowers, incense, dialogue between the presider and the assembly, proclamation (not only reading) of the Word of God, etc. Our modern culture runs increasingly practical, functional, and materialistic with the risk of losing much of the meaning and effects of symbols on our psychological and spiritual component.

Contrary to past centuries, the liturgy that we know and we practice, inspired by the Vatican Council II, strongly focuses on the "people of God" as its actor while Christ remains the main character. We are all "active" celebrants in our different roles, not only the priest or the presider as it was amply thought in the past with the assembly as mere "spectators" and beneficiaries. This development, however, has brought with it a monumental task for formation and preparation that we tend to underestimate or even neglect.

It is under everybody's eyes, that we frequently approach the liturgy poorly equipped to understand its meaning and grasp its benefits. Much worse is the preparation when the songs are not well practiced, the readings are found in the lectionary at the last minute and read without personal understanding and intonation, the microphones and the musical instruments malfunction and are a source of distraction rather than enhanced participation.

Improprieties are also noticed on the part of the presider in several instances: when the liturgical action is not preceded by private prayer and reflection and the heart and mind are not focused on the rites; when extravagant actions alien to the approved liturgical gestures are proposed; when the personal comments during the celebration exceed a reasonable amount of instruction and guidance; in the frequent case in which the homilies do not connect the Scriptures to the daily life of the people and the struggle to increasingly conform it to Christ.

These and other shortcomings and "abuses" provide fuel to the critics of the Vatican II liturgical practices and books; but also reveal that a genuine and respectful liturgical action requires an amount of attention and effort certainly greater than what we are currently supplying.

- Abigail Seta

West Papuan students supported with laptops



Port Moresby: The Migrants and Refugees Desk of the Catholic Bishops Conference have provided two laptops to support West Papuan students with their studies at the Don Bosco Technological Institute.

Officially handing over the laptops were Jason Siwat, Director for Migrants and Refugees desk and Gabriel Wake, Migrants Officer in a brief ceremony on Thursday, 23rd June 2022. Present to receive the

laptops were three West Papuan students of DBTI, Aloisus Kaoksen, a final year student in IT, Jerry Koka, 2nd year in Maintenance Fitting and Machining and Mark Mathew, 1st year in Maintenance Fitting and Machining. All three students are from the lowara Refugee Camp in Western Province.

To mark the occasion, there was a signing of the agreement between Mr Siwat and Mr Kaoksen on behalf of the West Papuan students at DBTI.

Mr Kaoksen expressed sincere gratitude to the CBC M&R Desk in supporting the students with the two laptops. He stated that studying was quite difficult for them when they do not have laptops to do their research, assignments and projects for their academic programs.

With the two laptops now gifted to them, Mr Siwat encouraged the students to take advantage of this support and perform better in their studies.

- Isabella Saleu

Communication Arts students on media training

Madang: A three-day Media Education Seminar facilitated by the Social Communications Commission of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands was held at the Divine Word University from 21st -23rd June 2022.

It had the participation of seventeen dynamic students from all year levels and one animator from the Department of Communication Arts. The seminar had as its theme, "LISTEN. Do everything with Love."

During the program, the facilitators, Fr. Ambrose Pereira sdb, SOCOM secretary, and media officers, Jessica Oata and Isabella Saleu, took the participants through sessions on posters, photography and videos. Insights on the theme of the program and Theology of Communication was also dwelt upon by Fr. Ambrose.

This Media Seminar has been possible through the support of CARITAS Australia, MISSIO, SIGNIS, the



Salesians of Don Bosco and the Catholic Bishops Conference. Gratitude to Fr Philip Gibbs sdb, President of Divine Word University, Dr Alphonso Aime, Head of the Communications Arts Department and the staff of Divine Word University, Madang for making available the facilities and the equipment needed for the program.

- Sr Ancy John SCSA

'Protect our children, Save Our Simbu, A Child Safe PNG'



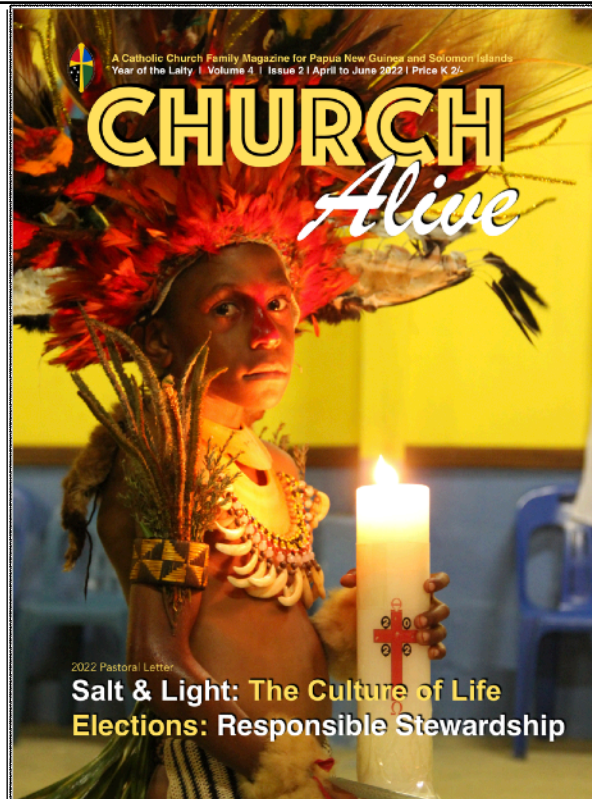
Mingende, Simbu Province: A three-day Child Protection Workshop was held at Mingende Pastoral Center in the Catholic Diocese of Kundiawa from 30th May to 1st June 2022. The theme of the training was "Protect Our Children. Save Our Simbu, A Child Safe PNG."

A total of 40 Religious Instruction teachers, Early Childhood Development teachers and Sunday school teachers attended the workshop.

The purpose of the workshop was to reach out to many people at the grass root level with awareness on child protection. The 40 participants who attended the workshop represented the 18 parishes coming together from the four deaneries of the diocese.

Sr. Ancy John SCSA, CBC Director of the Right Relationships Ministry and Child Protection, talked to the participants about the Child Protection Policy of the Catholic Church in PNGSI and love of parents towards the children.

The sessions also included Juvenile Justice Act, Family Protection Act and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted under the PNG National Child Protection Policy. The Simbu Provincial Principal Advisor of Child and Family Services Ms. Katrina Aiwa, also spoke on the Lukautim Pikinini Act.



Church Alive Magazine is a Catholic Family magazine for Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands.

The theme for the 2nd Issue of 2022 is based on the Pastoral Letter 'Salt and Light: The Culture of Life' and 'Elections: Responsible Stewardship.'

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.

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Second Marian Dogma: The Immaculate Conception in the Bible



That Mary was preserved from original sin from the first instant of her conception is the third dogma of Mary. Our Lady owed her freedom from original sin entirely to the redemptive merits of her Divine Son. Like all other human beings, she had need of a redeemer, though the manner of her redemption differed from that of the common run. She was preserved from original sin by a special and altogether unique privilege.

There are three important texts, among others, in the Bible that we should remember:

1) **Genesis 3:14-16:** "And the Lord God said to the serpent: I will put enmity between thee and the

woman, and thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel." God Himself has "put enmity" between these two pairs, Christ and His mother on the one side and Satan and his followers on the other. It is an enmity which will ultimately end in victory for the former and destruction for the latter. Mary, being on the side of Christ with the same enmity between her and Satan as that which exists between the latter and her Divine Son, must also share in His triumph. This would not be the case had she, even for a single moment, been tainted by original sin. For in that hypothesis, Satan would have triumphed over her at least temporarily.

2) **Luke 1:28-38.** During the Annunciation, the angel called Mary "Full of grace." Gabriel's greeting

represents the divine favor enjoyed by the Blessed Virgin as the highest form of grace consistent with her state: He calls Our Lady "Full of grace," which would be impossible if he had original sin. She would have lacked the fullness of grace had she not, from the first instant of her existence, been entirely exempt from sin.

3) **Luke 1:39-56.** During the visitation, Elizabeth was "filled with the Holy Ghost" and greeted Mary as the "mother of my Lord." It's important to note here that Elizabeth didn't say these words out of her own will, but she talked "filled with the Holy Ghost." In other words, the Holy Spirit Himself called Mary "mother of my Lord," and she



The digital space and Holiness

Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb,
Secretary for Social Communication

Technological advancement be it in the economic, social, or religious domains has dominated our landscape. "Man's genius has with God's help produced marvellous technical inventions from creation, especially in our times" (Inter Mirifica no. 1). Media communication with its objective of education, entertainment, information, and inspiration is part of our ecosystem. The electronic media and particularly the social media revolution has an impact on society our value systems, our faith, and our beliefs.

Social media has opened for individuals and for the Church enormous opportunities as well as challenges.

The question is: How can the church reshape and reformulate pastoral ministries that will be effective in evangelization and faith-building? In simple terms, what can parish priests do church do to use digital technology to keep regular contact with their parishioners. How do principals dialogue with their students and offer them guidelines on the use of social media? Are doctors and health professionals able to work with telemedicine and assist those that are in the far-flung parts of the country with little access to health care and medication? Are parents able to guide their teenage sons and daughters into the right use of this wonderful technology? And, are priests, religious and sisters able to present the dangers lurking behind the image, the post, the video, or the emoji?

Several of our parishes project hymns and prayers through the services and liturgical celebrations they conduct. Parishioners can join in the prayers and hymns. Learning institutions have limited the presence of mobile phones, enabling teachers and students to focus on their studies. Tele medicine has immense potential, but it has yet to be tapped. Parents seem lost in their smartphones, thus leaving their children vulnerable to the net. Some religious are offering Media Awareness, Media Education and Media Literacy programs to students and young people. However, much more needs to be done.

Our young people are creative and with a little guidance and direction can harness their talent and energy and use this immense technology to produce inspiring videos with powerful messages. Youth Alive, the one-minute videos and the Chat Room have given young people a platform to share their thoughts and reflections. 'Bilum', a one-minute film, recently produced at the Media Seminar at Divine Word University portrayed women and life. 'A Click of Hope', produced by the students at La Salle Technical Secondary School, a year ago, creatively offered possibilities for using technology to send a message of Hope.

In different ways technology and social media offer us immense possibilities for good. We cannot ignore the fact that formation in Social Communication has become an inevitable part of preparing ourselves for the mission.

May we allow ourselves to be guided by the Holy Spirit, that we may understand the digital space and its relation to holiness.

75 years of God's Grace

In 1944 the OFM Holy Spirit Province of Australia decided to send friars to a foreign mission. On 6th November 1946 a group of six Franciscan friars left Sydney by ship destined for the Sepik District in Papua New Guinea. Passing through Brisbane another brother joined them, becoming 7. Those were the friars: Ignatius Doggett, Michael Beven, Denis Dobson, Matthew Darby, James O'Meara, Raymond Quirk, Martin Shumach and Anselm Stoner. All these friars, except the regular superior Fr. Ignatius Doggett, were under 35 years of age. They were selected based on age, fitness, pragmatic in outlook, and relatively free of any academic inclination. Friars' preparation for the venture was minimal: a course in tropical medicine, an annual Retreat. This were the comments of James O'Meara: "With little individual experience, but with 700 years' experience of the greatest missionary Order of the Church behind us, we have come here to share in the restoration of the Missions. In keeping with our age-old traditions, we have no further ambition than to bring every individual soul we possibly can into the loving heart of Christ".

On 6th December, 1946, the friars arrived in Alexishafen, Madang for a 6 month training under the SVD. The Franciscans then left for Aitape in May 1947. The Aitape area was devastated by the war. Many villages abandoned, all European buildings from Wewak to the border were destroyed. The SVD recommended the Franciscan to build on a 60 mt above sea level hill, St. Anna. There were some stores in the east bank of Aitape river, erected by Hunter Kirk, a recruiter. No transport.

But the reality of the Western Sepik was not to be compromised. The friars were immediately presented with three fundamental obstructions to their Franciscanism when they arrived: the self-assertiveness of the people, everyday economics and the treat of protestants missionaries. All were destined to interfere with and shape the Franciscans approach and outlook. Following Van Baar's advice, selected Malol, Sissano and Vanimo as mission stations and Franciscan communities. Two or three friars were posted to each station where the intention was to commence schools and medical clinics, generally to make an impression on the children and to train young man as catechists. Children the hope, catechist the backbone of the mission.

In January 1949 Fr. Ferdinand Parer and Denis Dobson established a mission station in Miwaute. In 1952 the friars shifted their station to the vacant hamlet site of Inibe. In 1951 the station of Yemnu, Au region, was open. Yili 1952. Wati 1953. Karaitem 1954. Kafle, Yanungen, Monandin and Wassisi during 1956/58. Ningil 1959. Mukili

1962. Laingim 1965. After 5 years the previous emphasis on living the Franciscan life in the Sepik was gradually disregarded. The Franciscan approach became more concerned with developing relationships with villagers according to the needs, demands and preferences villagers brought to the friars. There was a tendency for the friars to become individuals. Paradoxically the friars tended to translate these needs and preferences into projects or schemes which the friars themselves saw as being valuable and to the people-s benefit. In 1952 the Franciscans mission achieved autonomy from the Divine Word vicariate of Central New Guinea through being raised to a prefecture. Now called the Prefecture Apostolic of Aitape. Fr. Ignatius Doggett had vigorously campaigned since 1947. In 1952 a group of Italian Franciscan expelled from China arrived. In 1952 there were 12 friars and 7 Franciscan sisters. By 1954 they were 26 friars serving 20 stations.

In 1956 Doggett became the Bishop of Aitape, in spite requesting some one more expert to take over the new Prefecture. A group of five Italian friars, expelled from China, arrived in Aitape in 1952. Two of them worked in a Leprosarium in China and became a great blessing for Aitape. From 1953 until today the Franciscan in Aitape are still working with the lepers and other people with disabilities.

The now called Fr. Antonine Centre offers different assistance to those people:

Special Education program, with 6 teachers carrying out Early Intervention program, Inclusive Education for children in mainstream schools and our reach in Aitape – Lumi – Nuku Districts.

Prosthetic – Orthotic workshop serving people from East and West Sepik, under the National Orthotic and Prosthetic Services.

Community Base Rehabilitation (CBR) that provide assistance for a better living for PWD. The Centre was providential during the time of Tsunami.

Today the community of the OFM Minor includes 24 brothers, 8 of them priests. 22 are PNG brothers and only 2 missionaries from Italy and Poland. Living among the people is our trademark in the Dioceses of Aitape, Kimbe, Port Moresby and Vanimo.

The Leprosarium in Aitape, built by the Franciscan, now the Rahiu Health Centre.



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 on or before **20th of the month, 2022.**

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