



# 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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## The state of the NATIONAL ELECTIONS

- Bp Rochus Josef Tatamai MSC, President of the Catholic Bishops Conference of PNG and SI

**Port Moresby:** With much anticipation the Nation of Papua New Guinea for the last five (5) years, have waited on the Independent State of Papua New Guinea to deliver the much proclaimed of "a free, fair and safe election".

From what we have witnessed through the Media reports, there has been a disrespectful display of contempt against our humane citizenship. It is very embarrassing to the international community and a national disgrace to us as a people and a nation, more so, as an independent State, especially as a member State of the Commonwealth of Nations to which "Rule of Law" is the authoritative norm that sets the foundation of Democracy. It is truly frustrating to note that nearly in all districts and provinces at the 11th hour all polling booths have encountered overwhelming discrepancies in the following terms:

### 1. Numerous, eligible voter's names are not on the common roll.

Despite the assurance of the incumbent government, preparations and appropriate procedures necessary for the successful delivery of the 2017 election were not guaranteed. Much money was spent on a number of common roll updating exercises in anticipation of an accurate Common Roll. The use of the preliminary 2012 common roll which has been superseded by the current one, has proven unreliable due to the presence of deceased persons. Also, what about those who have since entered their eligible age for voting at 18?

### 2. Financial and Logistics problem

The lack of Logistics and funds to support the quest to deliver a free, fair and safe election is an exhibition of incompetency and lack of both management and administrative skills by those who are constitutionally charged with the duty to successfully deliver such an election. The question asked is: How far were the degrees of preparedness of those responsible people tasked with this constitutional duty. Were they really ready for such an important national

political event as National General Elections that happens every five years.

### 3. The overwhelming use of counterfeit or fake ballot papers.

These are very worrying and disturbing reports and observations as far as National Security Intelligence System and our Sovereign credibility as a Nation is concerned. What wisdom and common decency behind the printing of ballot papers outside of our jurisdiction. This may have prompted some people with evil intent to produce ballot papers of identical face. Such tendency and decision to print ballot papers for a constitutional election out and external of concerned jurisdiction is in itself an act that impeaches on our National Security Intelligence System and ridiculously undermines our Sovereignty. Such a decision with serious National implication would have been done with due care, pride and security consciousness. A ballot box filled with counterfeit ballot papers is simply a disaster, ridiculous, and saddening, and must be condemned in the strongest sense of the word.

### 4. The inconsistency in the supply of Ballot Papers.

There have been reported situations around the country where a number of polling booths have been either under-supplied with Ballot Papers or oversupplied. This again raises the issue of planning and management as to what has happened to the production of the ten (10) million ballot papers, or what is intended to happen, when we only have around four (4) million eligible voters.

### 5. The Irregular and unprofessional conduct of Electoral Officials.

- \* The refusal by the Electoral Commissioner to replace certain Electoral Officials.
- \* The boycotting of polling officials over non-payments of camping allowances which has disrupted the smooth flow of polling.
- \* Tampering with ballot box and ballot papers.
- \* Impersonating voters and underage voting.

- \* The conveying and transfer of Ballot boxes and Ballot papers without proper Police Escort and Scrutiny.
- \* The discovery of counterfeit and fake ballot papers which has resulted in a number of disposals by burning.
- \* The surprising and hasty decision to overturn or disrupt schedule election activities like polling even when the people are ready.
- \* Lack of fit and proper security for voters and the voting areas

All these have now brought public a discussion and debate on the constitutional impartiality which in most cases has triggered public scrutiny and criticism that the election process may have been rigged and the rule of law trampled on. Thus justice is compromised and the web of Democracy has been hosed down.

To deliver an election in such a disturbing manner as we're now experiencing so far is nothing more than an omission and absence of a statutory duty of care to the citizens, and the arrogant and careless way of doing it is nothing less than disregarding the national interest of Papua New Guinea and treating the citizens with disrespect and contempt.

These are substantial grounds to render this election unconstitutional and we join all concerned citizens as well as many other responsible and concerned leaders and with the general public express our utter frustration and disbelieve that such irregularities, discrepancies, inconsistencies and confusions are allowed to enter and ruin this democratic and constitutional process of the National General Election 2017. The office of the Electoral Commission and office holder had thus far demonstrated the inability to properly manage the delivery of a much anticipated successful Free, Fair and Safe election to the Nation of Papua New Guinea thus has in itself qualified him to disqualify himself.

*The above is an abridged version of the entire text.*

Media Statement on the National Elections

### Inside this Issue:

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# Care, Protection and Catechesis of Children

The Catholic bishops are concerned about the behaviour of children and young people. Below is a continuation of the Pastoral Letter:



## 4. Lukautim Pikinini Act 2015 for Child Protection

Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands have good child protection laws on the books. The

Catholic Bishops Conference recommends that **Lukautim Pikinini Act 2015** be studied by all students at the Divine Word University, in all Catholic teachers' colleges, seminaries and health training institutions, as well as at catechist training schools and diocesan pastoral centres. Parish priests and Catholic lay leaders, are able to teach and guide families and the general public concerning this issue so that child abuse in its many forms is fully recognized and stopped. All the dioceses are to set up a child protection office with trained personnel, whose task it is to inform families and communities about child abuse and

the laws that have been enacted to protect children.

## 5. The Challenges of Living in a Rapidly Changing World

Culture in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands is rapidly changing, not only in urban areas, but also in village societies as well. As already mentioned, some customs and methods of rearing children, common in traditional times, are not necessarily appropriate in today's world. Catholic families need to talk about this issue in light of what they believe as Christians, what they have learned from the teaching of Jesus Christ and his Church.

and daughters in the faith, proclaiming to them by word and example the Good News of Jesus.

Loving parents teach their children Christian values, which have helped them gain happiness in life, in both good and in challenging times.

Parents are reminded that they have a solemn responsibility to educate their children. Schools assist the parents to fulfil their obligation to educate and form their children for a happy and successful life, thus sharing in this common and sacred vocation. Parents are reminded that, over the past five years, educational levels are declining at an alarming rate in PNG and Solomon Islands.

- to be continued in the next issue.

## 6. Positive Parenting and the Education of Children

Sound methods of positive parenting go hand-in-hand with catechesis of children. Good parents love their children dearly and create a joyful and loving family environment in the home, in which the children can thrive. They instruct their sons



## Election Matters with Fr. Roger Purcell MSC Leadership

Some years ago when I was in Bereina Diocese I worked closely with a number of Chiefs, encouraging them not only to stand up as Chief to improve their villages, but also to stand up as a Catholic/Christian Chief. In this I learned many things about culture and leadership, which are good lessons for all walks of life.

A leader who does what he or she should do in that role as leader, who gives service to the community according to the leadership role, is recognized as leader, by the people. When the Chief acts for the good of his people, they will say, "Now we have a Chief, now we know who we are!". The same can be said for any leader, church or civil; "now we have a parish priest", "now we have a Councillor". Can this be said also for our Members of Parliament: "now we have a Member", meaning that this member is a true representative of the people, now he/she serves us properly, to develop our area, to bring services to us.

At the time of nomination one candidate arrived in town with a convoy of 30+ vehicles, overloaded with shouting young men, travelling at high speed in two lanes of the highway, forcing people off the road. This showed total disregard for the public, and the law. The police escorted him. Out of this show of disregard he is asking people to make him a representative of the people. What does this say about our situation.

Now the Writs have been returned, the counting is in progress and formation of Government will happen soon. Those who become Members will be the leaders of the country, our leaders, our representatives. They are called on to do the work of the Parliament, to represent the people, to develop the country, to care for the people, to bring services. If they do this then we can say, "now we have leaders, now we have a Parliament".

In this way it is the people that give the leadership, the people who give the moral authority to the leader. In one case I asked the people that if the Chief was not a leader, could not lead, then what happens? They said, "Then we do not listen to him".



## Justice for Mr Douglas Tennent

- Elizabeth Gavuri

Peace, justice, unity and fairness must prevail in the government system for this is the cry of the people of East New Britain and the Archdiocese of Rabaul. The unjust deportation of Mr Doug Tennent on the 12<sup>th</sup> of June 2017 has been an issue that has raised many concerns from the people of East New Britain specifically the people of West Pomio.

According to His Excellency Archbishop Francisco Panfilo SDB, Archbishop of Rabaul, we as a church are committed to disposing of land, especially large plantations, starting a housing project for low income earners and helping achieve a broad consensus in the Sigite Mukus Oil Palm project in West Pomio. The Archdiocese is committed to these very challenging goals and so are its workers who also serve in response to the call of his holiness Pope Francis to his Encyclical Letter, "LAUDATO SI" Care of our Common Home.

As the administrator of the Archdiocese of Rabaul, Mr Tennent was trying to solve the many land issues in ENB and was served the "Notice of Cancellation of Entry Permit" and "Direction as to Custody and Removal Order" on Friday the 9<sup>th</sup> of June 2017. His Excellency stated that Mr Tennent did not commit any crime and did not blatantly abuse the conditions of his Visa as a Religious Worker. He worked tirelessly to help the people of West Pomio under the Archdiocese of Rabaul to come up with agreements regarding land issues.

The National Court in Kokopo on Monday 12 June 2017 issued orders staying the deportation order and forbid any airline to transport Mr Tennent, however, the immigration officers did not take any action on the court order. In protest for the justice of Mr Tennent a peace rally was held at the Vunapope grounds of the Archdiocese of Rabaul on Friday the 16<sup>th</sup> of June 2017 which saw catholic faithfuls, catholic agency schools and government officials gather to fight for the justice of Mr Tennent. The people of West Pomio through the Archdiocese of Rabaul petitioned the Governor of East New Britain province of their concern for their land in relation to the issue.

In response to the petition by the people of West Pomio, the Deputy Governor for East New Britain Mr Cosmas Bauk said that the deportation of Mr Tennent was unjust and that he must be returned. Mr Bauk stated that they will work together with the church for righteousness, truth and justice for the people of ENB. He questioned the Immigrations and Foreign Affairs Office as to why they deported Mr Tennent a lay missionary fighting for the people of ENB when there are foreigners illegally residing in the province doing business on indigenous land. Therefore, His Excellency Archbishop Francesco Panfilo left for Port Moresby on the 27<sup>th</sup> of June to meet with the Chief Immigrations Officer Mr Solomon Kantha to re-apply for Mr Tennent's visa. A new journey has begun.





# Big Frieda mine, small Sepik River

- Aileen Baretta, Freelance journalist



May 2017, a group of eight people flew over to the Western Province to understand the impact of mining on the Fly River, the biggest River in Papua New Guinea.

"The group had come from the Sepik River communities in the East Sepik Province. They are leaders representing the communities in the Upper, Middle and Lower Sepik and one strong woman represented the Wewak Urban Local Level Government. In fact, there were three women in that group. The Sepik River

communities are mostly Catholic dominated." What they saw in their ten-day experience brought about so much disappointment and grief.

The Sepik River is about to take on one of the most disastrous human imposed pollution on the planet if the government of Papua New Guinea gives a go ahead to the Frieda Mine. The Sepik River communities are not letting this happen after the walk through the Fly River and communities affected by pollution from the current Ok Tedi Mine.

Sepik group on the way to Membok village after visiting Karemgo village.



The Frieda Mine is estimated to be three times more than Ok Tedi. But the Sepik River is three times smaller than the Fly River. The communities in the Sepik have now come up with a frame in *tok pisin* "Liklik Ok Tedi, bikipela Fly. Bikipela Frieda, liklik Sepik." This frame compared how much damage Ok Tedi has caused the biggest river in PNG and how much more damage Frieda mine will

cause to the Sepik River and its communities now proposed to be the biggest mining project ever in the history of PNG. Frieda Mine is also 2 and a half times more than Panguna in Bougainville.

While villages along the Fly are scattered, the Sepik River villages are closer and connected from the headwaters all the way to the coast. The Sepik group was speechless when they found empty villages and even fish so scarce.

They also found out that people have to be in Kiunga to hitch an opportunity to have food on the table. Others would travel so many kilometres to cleaner waterways to find food that takes up to three months at a time. Most villages are almost empty. But those left behind in the villages do not sell food to visitors. All food items are consumed wisely because of scarcity.

Ok Tedi's careless waste disposal has resulted in over two billion

tonnes of cyanide laced toxic discharge into the Fly devastating over one thousand kilometres of what used to be pristine and virgin jungle.

This caused the Fly people their water, food, livelihood, health and life.

Will the Sepiks allow that to happen to their livelihood?

The trip to the Fly by the Sepik group has been an eye opener especially being emotional, upset, angry and shocked at the possible effect the Frieda mine will cause the Sepik River.

Within days of returning to Wewak, the Sepik group have strategised to make awareness in all six districts of East Sepik Province and mobilise people to stand together against the coming catastrophe of the Frieda Mine.

## Promoting Stories of Hope

- Fr Sebastian Koladiyil sdb and Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb

**Quebec, Canada:** The SIGNIS World Congress 2017 took place at Laval University, Quebec City, Canada from June 19<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>th</sup> 2017. The theme of the Congress was, "Promoting Stories of Hope". Among the 250 participants from across the world, there were delegates from five Pacific countries.

The main topics dealt with during the Congress were: Communicating Hope, Hope in the Future, Building Hope and Peace in a world of Cultural and Religious diversity and the New Generation of Catholic Communicators: Experiences and Challenges. After the presentation of these topics there were breakout sessions and panel discussions. Fr. Ambrose facilitated session on "Voices of Hope from the Traditional Culture." It highlighted the need to use the means of communications and keep alive the traditions and customs of the different cultures. "Listening to participants share passionately about their work with indigenous people has invigorated me to do the same", said Fr. Ambrose Pereira sdb.

The Congress explored the prophetic power of story and helped the participants to imagine the world afresh. It has been a place to recognise the creativity of Catholic Communicators and to acknowledge and highlight the value of their stories. It was a time of sharing and renewing the bonds of fraternity. A time of recognising that the issues of justice and peace have to be reinforced ever more through the media. An area much explored was the use, abuse and the need to create a solid program of education for Social Media. With a world in their hand through their smart phones, we are concerned about the direction that Social media is taking our new generation, and the way relationships have taken a new twist.

A highlight of the whole event was the presence of renowned Catholic filmmaker Martin Scorsese and the viewing of his latest movie "Silence", which took him 27 years to make.

**SIGNIS Pacific participants at the World Congress**



Participants at the Workshop

## Pastoral Management and Project Proposal Writing Workshop

Bp Rolando Santos CM

**Alotau:** A workshop on Pastoral Management and Project Proposal Writing was held at Alotau from 12 to 17<sup>th</sup> June, 2017. 52 participants participated actively during the sessions.

Fr. Andrew Moses explained the meaning of Pastoral Management and the spirituality behind it according to the teachings of Vatican II. He pointed out some of the present-day challenges to Pastoral Management and how to respond to them and explained to them the use of the Prospective Method. Bp. Rolando Santos CM presented the two recent Church documents of Pope Francis: *Laudato Si*, on care of the environment, and *Amoris Laetitia*, on Family and Marriage. Jeffrey Kaka explained the meaning and the five stages of Project Management: communicating and defining of the project; project planning; implementation; monitoring and evaluation; and completion. He also engaged the participants in doing actual project design/planning in groups.

Mr. Dennis Uba, Caritas Australia director, was present at the workshop and added depth to the discussion with his valuable comments and contribution. "The participants were very animated and responsive. They found the workshop 'very helpful'" commented Dennis Uba.



# Yumi Yet Sios

- Bp Rochus Tatamai MSC



**“Yu em sol bilong graun” (Mt 5:13) na “Yu em lait bilong olgeta plesdaun” (Mt 5:14)** dispela tupela hap tok bilong Jisas yumi painim long Gudnius bilong Matthew. Jisas em yet ilaik bai yumi olgeta manmeri husat ikamap disaipel bilong em pinis insait long sakramen bilong baptais, yumi mas givim gutpela teist na mining insait long laip bilong yumi olsem ol gutpela witness long laik pasin bilong Jisas Kraist. Yumi mas lait long ai bilong ol manmeri ol brata na susa bilong yumi insait long olgeta ples olsem bai oli ken luksave long plan bilong God long laip bilong ol yet.

Nau long dispela taim yumi ol pipel bilong PNG igat bikpela wok long mekim bilong soim trupela laik tru na wari bilong yumi olsem ol gutpela sitisen tru bilong dispela naispela kantri bilong yumi. Taim bilong National General Ileksen isave kamap insait long olgeta faivpela yia. Dispela taim ibilong yumi husat ikisim pinis 18pela krismas imas mekim mak bilong votim ol nupela lida long makim yumi insait long haus Paliament.

Singaut bilong Jisas Kraist long yumi olgeta wanwan husat inap long mekim dispela mak long votim ol lida emi olsem yumi mas kamap tru tru sol bilong graun na lait bilong olgeta plesdaun taim yumi sanap strong na respektim dispela namba istap long han bilong yumi. Yumi mas lukaut gut na yumi ino ken pilai nating na weistim dispela bikpela pawa na bikpela namba istap long han bilong yumi wanwan. Yumi ino salim nating or tromoi nating olsem pipia nating dispel spesel mak bilong votim ol lida o mekim nating nating wantaim dispela han mak na pawa bilong yumi.

Yumi mas askim yumi yet pastaim olsem wonem tru em ol dispel bikpela hevi mipela save bungim o painim na stap wantaim long en, na women kinkain ol gutpela senis imas kamap insait long laip nap les bilong yumi.

Yumi yet olsem Sios iken sanap wantaim wanpela narapela na skelim gud ol pasin bilong ol manmeri husat ilaik resis long dispel ileksen. Yumi bai inapim tru singaut bilong Jisas long yumi mas kamap trupela na switpela sol long givim mining na namba long laip God yet igivim yumi na yumi bai kamap strongpela lait irausim tudak na pasin bilong olgeta kinkain tudak taim yumi glasim gut na skelim gut husat tru em ol manmeri iken pait strong olsem memba bilong haus Paliament. Yumi mas pre oltaim long gutpela lida isait long wok gavmen na tu insait long Sios.

# OLSH Jubilees celebrated

- Bp Rolando Santos CM

Alotau: Sr. Brenda Nash celebrated the diamond jubilee of her profession, and Sr. Emma Lapun her silver jubilee on 25th June, 2017 at the Sacred Heart Cathedral, Alotau. Both the sisters are members of the Daughters of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart.



Sr. Brenda Nash, an Australian, spent almost all of her 60 years of religious life serving at the diocese of Alotau. She worked first as a school teacher at Rossel, Sideia, Nimoa and Fergusson islands in the Milne Bay Province, and then as trainer of parish animators at St. Paul Pastoral Centre in Hagita. Considering the shortage of priests in the diocese, her work of training lay parish animators is a big help in keeping the Church alive especially in the more remote villages. Parish animators train other lay leaders in the parish and various communities so that they will help do the urgent and valuable work of evangelization and catechesis.

Sr. Emma Lapun comes from Manus Island. After taking the vows, 25 years ago, she was assigned as a teacher in the dioceses of Bereina, Kerema, and presently, Alotau. She is presently the Religious Education coordinator of the diocese of Alotau. She trains school teachers and Sunday school teachers to catechize children.

In his homily, Bishop Rolando said that a jubilee is a time to give thanks and praise to God not so much for our achievements and faithfulness to God but rather to praise God’s own faithfulness to us. Religious life is not easy. It is full of trials and hardships. But God is faithful. He comes to our aid as a “mighty champion” who will not allow us to fall or be destroyed by our enemies provided we put our trust in Him.

Bishop Rolando challenged the two jubilarians and all those present at the Eucharist to heed the appeal of Pope Francis and join the “revolution of tenderness”. Tenderness is one of the characteristics of the Sacred Heart of Jesus: “Learn from Me for I am gentle and humble of heart, and I will give rest for your souls.” There is so much violence in our world today not just in the Middle East, but also around us and in our family. The home, where we are supposed to feel safe and secure, has become a place where much violence is committed against women and children. We must totally change this kind of culture. We must undertake a revolution of love, kindness, forgiveness, mercy and compassion.

# Skills displayed

- Rellysdom A Malakana

**Gizo:** Students of St. Peter’s Urban Training Centre, Gizo showcased their talents in the centre, on 22nd June, in a bid to get parents motivated and involved in the education of their children. Each department – carpentry, mechanics, life-skills and electrical – had the opportunity to present what they have learnt. After the presentations the students answered questions with confidence. The kindergarten students had the opportunity to recite poems and sing action songs.



A close look at the products

“Receiving a certificate on Graduation Day is essential, but presenting progress is a big motivation to support our children” said one of the parents during the program. Principal Fr. Stephen Te’e, proudly congratulated the students and thanked the audience for their support. He moves on to the Nila Catholic mission to continue to serve the Catholic diocese of Gizo.



# Revising the Pastoral Plan

-Elizabeth Gavuri

**Rabaul:** The Boards and the heads of the Offices of the Archdiocese of Rabaul held a meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> of June 2017 to revise the pastoral plan of the Archdiocese of Rabaul 2013-2017.

Fr John Cabrido, the Chair for the Liturgy and Biblical Apostolate Board who also was the facilitator of the meeting said that effective planning requires a process, it is important that the process be the simplest process consistent with achieving results. “Planning must take place from the bottom up where the communities must define their needs, the parishes will outline their objectives and goals and pass them on to the deaneries. Then the archdiocese will come up with the objectives and goals based on what the communities, parishes, and deaneries have outlined.

The meeting included an open forum where the different boards and heads of offices did SWOT analysis on their respective offices to see the Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that they will face and also that might be a hindrance to the operation of their offices. Revising the AOR Pastoral Plan was conducted to enlighten and encourage the boards and heads of the offices to look into their offices and properly follow the pastoral plan that has been put in place.

## Share your Stories

Send in your articles, photograph and reflections on events and happenings in your parish, community and diocese.

All articles and photographs are to be sent to: [ambrose.pereirasdb@gmail.com](mailto:ambrose.pereirasdb@gmail.com) on or before 20th July, 2017