



# 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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## For to us a child is born, to us a son is given

On the eve of the Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord, Pope Francis presented in the Vatican Basilica. He spoke on the great prophecy of Isaiah that was fulfilled: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given" (Is 9:6).

**To us a son is given.** We often hear it said that the greatest joy in life is the birth of a child. It is something extraordinary and it changes everything. It brings an excitement that makes us think nothing of weariness, discomfort, and sleepless nights, for it fills us with indescribable and incomparable happiness. That is what Christmas is: the birth of Jesus is the "newness" that enables us to be reborn each year and to find, in him, the strength needed to face every trial. Why? Because his birth is for us – for me, for you, for everyone. Dear sister, dear brother, never be discouraged. Are you tempted to feel you were a mistake? God tells you, "No, you are my child!" Do you have a feeling of failure or inadequacy, the fear that you will never emerge from the dark tunnel of trial? God says to you, "Have courage, I am with you". He does this not in words, but by making himself a child with you and for you. In this way, he reminds you that the starting point of all rebirth is the recognition that we are children of God.

**To us a son is given.** The Father did not give us a thing, an object; he gave his own only begotten Son, who is all his joy. Yet if we look at our ingratitude towards God and our injustice towards so many of our brothers and sisters, a doubt can arise. Was the Lord right in giving us so much? Is he right

still to trust us? Does he not overestimate us? Of course, he overestimates us, and he does this because he is madly in love with us. He cannot help but love us. That is the way he is, so different from ourselves. God always loves us with a greater love than we have for ourselves. This is his secret for entering our hearts. God knows that we become better only by accepting his *unfailing love*, an unchanging love that changes us. Only the love of Jesus can transform our life, heal our deepest hurts, and set us free from the vicious circles of disappointment, anger, and constant complaint.

**To us a son is given.** In the lowly manger of a darkened stable, the Son of God is truly present. But this raises yet another question. Why was he born at night, without decent accommodation, in poverty and rejection, when he deserved to be born as the greatest of kings in the finest of palaces? Why? To make us understand the immensity of his love for our human condition: even to touching the depths of our poverty with his *concrete love*. The Son of God was born an outcast, in order to tell us that every outcast

is a child of God. He came into the world as each child comes into the world, weak and vulnerable so that we can learn to accept our weaknesses with tender love. And to discover something important. As he did in Bethlehem, so too with us, God loves to work wonders through our poverty. He placed the whole of our salvation in the manger of a stable. He is unafraid of our poverty, so let us allow his mercy to transform it completely!

**To us a son is given.** Parents of little children know how much love and patience they require. We have to feed them, look after them, bathe them, and care for their vulnerability and their needs, which are often difficult to understand. A child makes us feel loved but can also teach us how to love. God was born a child in order to encourage us to care for others. God came among us in poverty and need, to tell us that in serving the poor, we will show our love for him.



### God communicates with us

The Pope noted that "Saint John calls Him the *Logos*, that is, the *Word*." And the word, he added, serves to communicate: "one does not speak alone, one speaks with someone." The fact that Jesus was, from the very beginning, the Word, Pope Francis continued, "means that from the beginning God wants to communicate with us, He wants to talk to us." The Son of the Father, Pope Francis explained, "wants to tell us about the beauty of being children of God," he wants to remove the darkness of

## God loves us in all our frailty

Pope Francis on Sunday, 3rd January 2021, invited the faithful to invite God into their homes, their families, to share with Him their frailties and fears in order to allow Him to change their lives.

evil from us: "He is 'the life' who knows our lives and wants to tell us that He has always loved them."

### He became flesh to dwell for ever amongst us

The Pope explained that thus, as today's Gospel tells us, Jesus went beyond words, and indeed, "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us." Dear brother, dear sister, God became flesh to tell you that He loves you like that, in your frailty; right there, where you are most ashamed," he said. The Pope went on to detail how God did not turn back, "He did not put our humanity on like a garment that can be put on and taken off," He never again detached Himself from our flesh. And He will never be separated from it. He explained that, as the Gospel says, "He came to dwell among us. He did not come to visit us."

### Open your hearts to the Lord

"What, then, does He desire from us?" the Pope asked: "A great intimacy!" He wants us to share with

Him our joys and sufferings, he said, our desires and fears, hopes and sorrows, people and situations. The Pope concluded exhorting the faithful to do just this, to open their hearts to Him and to tell Him everything.

### Pope Francis' special greetings for the New Year

Following the Angelus prayer Pope Francis renewed his good wishes for the year that has just begun to all. He said that as Christians, we know that things will only improve, with God's help, if we work together for the common good, "putting the weakest and most disadvantaged at the centre."

"We do not know what 2021 will bring, but what each of us and all of us together can do, is to commit to taking care of each other and of creation, our common home," he said.

The Pope expressed his special greetings in particular to those "who begin the New Year with greater difficulties: the sick, the unemployed, those who live in situations of oppression or exploitation."

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**Daru-Kiunga:** On Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2020, Bp Gilles Joseph Côté, smm, Bishop of Daru-Kiunga celebrated his 75<sup>th</sup> birthday of which, 50 years was spent in Papua New Guinea as a priest and missionary and 25 years as Bishop.

In 1945, Reverend Gilles Joseph Côté, smm, was born on the 24<sup>th</sup> of November 1945. He is the second born of 8 children in the Côté family.



## Your character: An advantage

Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb,  
Secretary for Social Communication

As we strive to overcome the global pandemic, struggle to get to school and work, do our best to keep our jobs, our character will be our strength and will matter as much as our competence. In 2021, Servant Leadership will be to our personal and competitive advantage.

Psychologists tell us that when there is a threat to our lives and our jobs, we become more focused on our purpose. Each one of us are looking out for jobs that will boost our confidence. We are in search of something that will give us a feeling of contributing to something that is larger than ourselves.

As Catholics we believe that God has blessed us with life and we need to share this life with our brothers and sisters. No person is an island, and the COVID-19 pandemic has made us realize that despite the fear, we have reached out in self-giving. Over the months we have seen many expressions of kindness. The heroic commitment of health workers who have put their health at risk. The ones responsible for essential services who have worked hard for social coexistence. Priests and religious who have led their congregations through the difficult months inspiring them to trust, grow in faith and increase their hope. Sadly, however, there has been shameful situations that have been marked by selfishness, where personal gain at the expense of benefiting the community and the country has been evident. The lack of willingness to share is a clear indication that people do not understand that this global health and economic crisis demands a global response. We need to go beyond ourselves. It will be to the advantage of the ones we assist as well as be of great benefit to ourselves. This is 'Servant Leadership'.

It will give us an edge, keep us motivated, creative and constantly developing our own talent. Servant leaders are givers, not takers. They put our interests of people above their own. They realize that they are the most important resource in the company, team or group. They are ready to go beyond an office schedule. They are people with a vision and a mission. They create opportunities for growth of themselves and of others.

May 2021 be a year of reaching out and giving. May each one of us be Servant Leaders.



## 50 golden years as priest, bishop and missionary

- Fr Andrew Moses

**Brief history:** Born in the town of Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, he was lovingly nurtured and brought up in a Christian home by his loving parents. His hard-working father Mr. Léo Côté, was a great father, whom the Lord called to eternal rest in the year 2005 at the age of 87 years old. His loving and caring mother Mrs Alda Noël, is still alive today at the age of 95 years old. Her deepest longing, prayers and long awaited hope now, is to see the face of her loving priest son, bishop son and a missionary son back home to Canada.

After formal education, he responded to God's call and proceeded to the seminary to study to become a priest. With the prayers and support of his loving family, he completed his priesthood studies and was ordained a priest to the religious congregation of the Montfort Missionaries on the 19<sup>th</sup> of December 1970. The 19<sup>th</sup> of December 2020 marked his 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as a priest.

Inspired by the spirit of the founder Saint Louis Marie de Montfort and imbued with a personal missionary heart and zeal, he accepted his first mission to PNG as a Montfort Missionary on the 6<sup>th</sup> of November, 1971. Upon arrival, he lived a daring missionary life in many remote and underdeveloped parts of the Western Province, spreading the good news of Jesus Christ.

It was tough and hard but he loved his priesthood, his mission work and the people very much. He survived a mission plane crash at Membok village on 19<sup>th</sup> January

1990 that killed the pilot priest, one sister and one small boy and after a period of healing at home, he did not give up his vocation. He stood up, took courage and was ready again to proclaim and witness to Jesus even more boldly to the Melanesians who have become his brothers and sisters. Subsequently, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April 1995, he was called and ordained as Auxiliary bishop of Daru-Kiunga Diocese and on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March 1999 was appointed as the Ordinary of the Diocese. On 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2020, he celebrated his 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

Under his leadership as priest and later as Bishop, he richly contributed to the spiritual, social, physical and economic development of the people of the Western Province. Currently, he is the last Montfort Canadian missionary left in the Western Province and hopes to return to Canada as a retired bishop and missionary.

Bishop Gilles, has been a good and faithful priest to the people of Daru-Kiunga Diocese. He has been a real shepherd to the people with a strong vision, mission and focus for the Church, and inviting the people to journey as one people.

Fulfilling his motto "Unity in Diversity" he has created a stronger sense of church communion, unity and fraternity in the diocese. The people are very grateful for his strong, exemplary and model leadership as bishop.

## 40 years of priesthood of Fr Victor Roche SVD

Fr. Victor Roche SVD celebrated his 40 years of priesthood on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2020 in Ruqust, Jiwaka. He chose this Shrine as it is his favorite church. The journey from Mt. Hagen to Ruqust took almost 1 hour and 30 mins through a rough and muddy road.

The Divine Mercy Catholic Church was full to capacity for the celebration. Cardinal Sir John Ribat was the main celebrant in the presence of Archbishop Douglas Young of Mount Hagen, Bishop Otto Separi of Bereina, Bishop Rozario Menezes of Lae, Fr. Jose Orathinkal SVD, the Provincial Superior of SVDs in PNG, Fr. Bogdan Swierczewski, the Rector of the Divine Mercy Shrine, many priests, Religious, parishioners and visitors from different parts of the country.

The parishioners in traditional dress welcomed the Cardinal, the Bishops and the visitors from the entrance to the Shrine till the church as they entered the premises of the Shrine with their vehicles. The Eucharistic celebration started at 10 am with a colourful procession to the altar. Beautiful singing of the local choir was very heavenly. Fr. Victor Roche gave the homily in which he shared how he became a priest of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) and how he came to PNG as a Missionary.

### Brief history:

He was born in 1952 in a village in India; joined the SVDs in 1965; was ordained a priest on 20 April 1980. He chose to come to PNG as a missionary and was appointed to the Diocese of Wewak, ESP. He said that his parents were very strict with the discipline and daily family prayers. These were the main reasons for his vocation to become a missionary priest. He arrived in PNG on 2nd March 1981 and served as a Parish Priest in Yangoru and Wewak till 1991 (10 years). After finishing his studies



in the Franciscan University, in USA he worked as the Mission Secretary of the SVDs for 8 years.

He was involved in a car accident on 11 July 2002 in which he almost died. He survived the accident miraculously and returned to PNG. Then he worked as the Director of the Catholic Radio Station (Trinit FM) of Mount Hagen for 8 years. He then worked as the General Secretary of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands for 8 years. He said that God has guided him in all the ups and downs of his life and ministry. He is very grateful to the Bishops and the people of PNG for his life and ministry as a missionary.

At the end of the Mass, Cardinal John Ribat, Abp. Douglas Young, Mr. Paul Kodor of Air Niugini representing different sections of the people gave speeches. The parishioners gave gifts to the Dignitaries. Then there were refreshments for the visitors.

Fr. Victor has served in PNG for almost 40 years and is a permanent resident (PR) of PNG. He is now the Secretary for the Catholic New Evangelization and the Director of Pontifical Mission Societies for CBC- PNGSI. He lives and works from Rebiambil, Mt. Hagen.

- Fr. Tomás Ravaioli IVE



## The Creed: And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord

It is not only necessary for Christians to believe in one God who is the Creator of heaven and earth, but also we must believe that God is the Father and that Christ is the true Son of God. In the New Testament, this Divine sonship is declared since the very moment of the Annunciation, when the Angel said to Mary that she would conceive in her womb and bear "the Son of the Most High" (Lk 1:32). Also during the Baptism of Jesus the Father said: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Mt 3:3). And the same happened during the Transfiguration, in which the Father affirmed: "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Mt 17:5) Also Christ Jesus Himself in many places called God His Father, and Himself the Son of God.

And if we believe that Jesus is the Son of God, we must also acknowledge his Divine nature, because a son always has the same nature of his

father. Saint John wrote: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (Jn 1:1). This Word of God, we know, is Jesus Christ himself. Jesus is God incarnate, the Second Divine person that became man for us and died for our salvation. The Incarnation of Jesus is the most sublime mystery of our faith! Although being God and eternal, he decided to become man and dwell among us. This is what Saint Paul wrote to the Philippians: "Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not consider equality with God something to be seized. Instead, he emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men, and accepting the state of a man." (2:5-7) Jesus is true God and true man. Both natures (Divine and human) are united in his only Divine person, and for this reason, all the things he did, can be truly said to have been done by God himself.

All this we believe now through faith, but we shall know it with a perfect vision in the life eternal.



## Apostolic Nuncio Kurian M. Vayalunkal transferred to Algeria

Fr. Giorgio Licini, PIME, CBC General Secretary

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2021, the press office of the Holy See in Rome announced that Pope Francis had appointed Archbishop Kurian Mathew Vayalunkal to be Apostolic Nuncio to Algeria. But he will still serve a few months in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands before taking up his new post in North Africa. He has been with us since the year 2016.

In five years, Abp. Kurian has visited all dioceses of our two countries, some more than once, mingling not only with the local clergy, but very well also with the Catholic faithful and the common people. He has given countless suggestions and inputs to Catholic organizations and institutions, to individual Bishops and to the Bishops Conference on pastoral and canonical matters. Apostolic Nuncios normally rotate every three years. But our request in 2019 for Abp. Vayalunkal to stay longer, and speedily pursue the selection of new Bishop candidates for several vacant dioceses, was quietly agreed upon by the Holy See for further two years.

Facilitating the appointment of new Bishops by the Pope is in fact one of the main tasks of an Apostolic Nuncio. Under the tenure of Abp. Kurian, the dioceses of Auki, Bereina, Bougainville, Kavieng, Kerema, Kimbe, Lae, Madang, Rabaul, and Vanimo welcomed a new Bishop. Hope that those more recently made vacant (Aitape, Daru-Kiunga, Goroka, Kavieng, Kundiawa) may also have a new shepherd some time during this year 2021.

The Apostolic Nuncio is also in most cases the Vatican Ambassador to the hosting country. In the year 2018 Papua New Guinea welcomed Vatican Secretary of State, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, on the occasion of the general assembly of the Catholic Bishops Conferences of Oceania. The following year the then Prime Minister Peter O'Neill extended a formal invitation to Pope Francis to travel to Port Moresby. The outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic unfortunately put on hold a plan that could have eventuated in the year 2020.

The relationships between the two governments of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands with the Catholic Church continue to be cordial and constructive, looking forward to social and spiritual

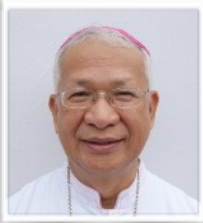
enhancement, increased level of services to the people, especially in the health and education sectors, reduced corrupt practices, etc.

The COVID-19 emergency has also forced the indefinite postponement of the Visit Ad Limina Apostolorum (Visit to the tomb of the apostle) scheduled for April 2021. This is when the Bishops of a certain part of the world travel together to Rome to pray at the burial sites of the Apostles Peter and Paul. They will also meet and converse with the Pope; and then examine and evaluate their pastoral activities and plans with the central offices of the Catholic Church based on prior reports and communication.

This could have been the last very relevant activity facilitated by Abp. Kurian Mathew Vayalunkal in his generous service to Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.

We deeply thank him for the big work done also during this final year under the COVID-19 restrictions. And wish him all the best in his new assignment. His successor in Port Moresby will pick-up from where he has left sometime later this year.

- Sr Anna Pigozzo



## Promoting Christian Unity

- Bp Rolando Santos, Bishop of Alotau

Following are teachings and directives from the Second Vatican Council's Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis redintegratio* that can guide us in promoting Christian unity.

1. Vatican II recognized that those who believe in Christ and are baptised with water in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, are truly our brothers and sisters in Christ. Through baptism they "are incorporated into Christ" and reborn to a sharing of the divine life" (UR §22).

2. Moreover, the Council recognised that the communities to which these brothers and sisters belong are endowed with many essential elements Christ wills for his Church, are used by the Spirit as "means of salvation," and have a real, though incomplete, communion with the Catholic Church (see UR §3)

3. The Second Vatican Council stressed that division among Christian communities "openly contradicts the will of Christ, scandalizes the world, and damages the holy cause of preaching the Gospel to every creature" [UR] §1). Insofar as Christians fail to be the visible sign of this unity they fail in their missionary duty to be the instrument bringing all people into the saving unity which is the communion of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

4. The work of unity is fundamental to our identity as Church. The real, though incomplete, communion that already exists between Catholics and other baptised Christians can and must be deepened at a number of levels simultaneously. As Pope Francis says, we do this by "walking together, praying together and working together" with other Christians. Thus, we grow into the unity which is the Lord's desire for his Church.

5. While it is important to relate and dialogue with other Christians, we should remember that it is our "primary duty" as Catholics "to make a careful and honest appraisal of whatever needs to be done or renewed in the Catholic household itself". For this reason, it is necessary for us Catholics to first examine our own faithfulness to Christ's will for the Church and accordingly to undertake with vigour the task of renewal and reform".

6. In our relationship with non-Catholics, we should promote both the "Dialogue of Love" and the "Dialogue of Truth": to act with humanity and charity toward the brothers and sisters who are not in full communion with the Catholic Church" and "to foster ecumenism as it is understood by the Church.

7. Ecumenism is not premised on compromise as if unity should be achieved at the expense of truth. On the contrary, the search for unity leads us into a fuller appreciation of God's revealed truth. The Catholic faith must be explained more profoundly and precisely, in such a way and in such terms as our separated brethren can also really understand" (UR §11). In Catholic doctrine there exists a 'hierarchy' of truths, since they vary in their relation to the fundamental Christian faith" (UR §11).

8. The virtue of charity demands that Catholics avoid controversial presentations of Christian history and theology and, in particular, that they avoid misrepresenting the positions of other Christians (see UR §4 & §10). We will always seek to emphasise the Christian faith that we share with others and to present the theological differences that divide us with balance and accuracy. An appropriately humble attitude enables us Catholics to appreciate "what God is bringing about in the members of other Churches and Ecclesial Communities" which in turn opens the way for us to learn and receive gifts from these brothers and sisters.



We use our eyes to see and we are able to see in the light. We use our voices to speak and share our feelings and our experiences. Each of us perceives things differently and it is in sharing and in dialogue that we are able to see with the eyes of another and understand reality through their eyes.

From the 26<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup> December 2020, the sisters of the Cavanis Jesus the Good Shepherd Community had the opportunity to live a moment of prayer, reflection and silence.

The days were spent atop the hills amidst the beauty and serenity of nature at the Nazareth House of Prayer, just outside Port Moresby. We were accompanied by Fr Ambrose Pereira, sdb.

- Simon Mokot

## 40 years of Peace Covenant

**Komkui, Mt. Hagen:** His Eminence Sir John Cardinal Ribat, MSC, DD, MBE, celebrated Holy Eucharist with Komkui people of Mt. Hagen, in commemoration of the 40 years of Peace Covenant.

The people of Moge Komonka and Moge Kuipi Tribes (Komkui) of Western Highlands celebrated 40 years anniversary of the Peace Covenant their fathers and grandfathers had made on 18th December 1980.

On Friday December 18, 2020 marked 40 years and had educated elites, the leaders, and prominent business men and women of Komkui gathered for the celebration. They all stood together and pledged to maintain peace and avoid fighting, now and into the future.

They sincerely acknowledged and appreciated what their fathers and grandfathers had done for them and what they are now greatly benefiting from. It was for this peace covenant that they have had a peaceful life, and witnessed tremendous successes in education, spiritual growth, health and social development, prosperity and many more. In their preparation for the week long celebration, they also built a monument to help them remember this very special peace covenant.

The community stood united with one vision

## To tell people about the Light

At Christmas, when "a great Light has shone upon us". Fr. Ambrose has helped us return to the source of light, to our invitation and our calling and follow God in our consecrated lives, to acknowledge the true thirst and to persevere in the search, recognizing the presence of pointers in our life and our vocation. We spent time in the silence of our heart to meet and encounter Christ, together with the Samaritan woman at the well and to feel the healing embrace like the prodigal Son.

It was also a time of gratitude to recognize the gift of life together with the transformations and conversions that God realized in each of our lives. Experiencing the presence of Christ through the Sacraments we cannot but share Him with others. This is our mission, in particular with the children and the youth, here in Papua New Guinea.

"We are grateful for the spiritual guidance of Fr Ambrose, who was a voice sharing with us his experience of 'Christ the Light'."

"His pastoral ministry of many years in this Melanesian culture opened the eyes of our hearts to experience God's grace and see His Light in our brothers and sisters, in our Community, in the children and youth we are called to serve," said Sr Anna.



Faith and the act of forgiveness, maintain the Covenant with God, and live by His Word and their pillars. The pillars are; Strong Family, Leadership, Integrity, Hard Work, Love and Peace, Education, Prosperity, and Globalisation.

This anniversary celebration reminded them of the dawn of a new era of life. It was until February 22, 1942, when their fathers decided to forgive their enemies, end violent tribal conflicts and work for peace. After these forty years, they openly declared to maintain peace and remain this way following what their fathers have envisioned for them.

Sir John Cardinal Ribat, Archbishop of Port Moresby Archdiocese was accompanied by Archbishop Douglas Young, SVD, Bishop of Mt. Hagen Archdiocese, at the event. Following the Eucharistic celebration, the Cardinal blessed and unveiled the monument.



**Catholic Professionals Society PNG**  
**A Light and a Voice of Catholic Faith**

## Catholic Professionals on resource sector and sand mining

impact on the environment, rivers, waters, and land." We are required to share and care for one another as one people, one nation, one country, and to avoid attitudes and practices of individualism, selfishness, and greed. We are to promote the idea that "there is enough for everyone's need, but not enough for everyone's greed". They called on the leaders in government, business and industry to ensure a responsible approach to the development of the nation's natural resources and economic development.

not environmentally viable and sustainable especially with their proposed tailings, never mind their economic viability.

The proponent for the proposed sand mining in Madang has lodged with the Mineral Resources Authority (MRA) an application for an exploration license. Majority of landowners have expressed concerns of lack of their informed consent, there is absence of policy and law of sand mining in PNG, the proposed tenement area conflicts with the Karkum conservation areas already approved by the Conservation Environment Protection Authority (CEPA), as well the tenement stretches into the sea which could end up in another seabed mining, and conflicts with the relevant environmental treaties and initiatives which PNG is a signatory to. We oppose sand mining in PNG until there is clear policy and specific law for it. The people in the project areas will still suffer the worst of any negative environmental consequences and impacts. The National Government must take heed of these serious concerns.

We join the opponents of these three projects and express our opposition to the projects for their environmental concerns.

The Society went on to express their caution to the proposed development of Wafi Gold mine, Frieda River gold mine, and Madang Sand Mine. They stated that the people in the project areas will still suffer the worst of any negative environmental consequences and impacts. The National Government must take heed of these serious concerns. The landowners and the Morobe Provincial Governments have already made their intentions known on the Wafi mine. The landowners and the East and West Sepik Governments have already expressed their positions on Frieda. Both projects pose serious environmental risks. Both are opposed to the proposed tailings. Both projects are

In a media statement released on 29<sup>th</sup> December 2020, the Catholic Professionals Society (CPS) are supporting the resource sector reform and have cautioned and opposed the Wafi and Frieda mine and sand mining.

CPS has supported the reform saying that "Our founding fathers have envisaged and advocated for PNG to take full and responsible control of the development of its natural resources to ensure a just and sustainable return to the nation and its people."

"National Goal No. 4 of the Constitution also calls for wise use of the natural resources such as timber, fisheries, minerals, oil and gas, for the present and future generations. Any development and extraction of these resources has to be mindful of the environment from pollution and destruction. Natural resources can be harvested but with less or minimal

## Press conference highlights topics of national interest - Nigel Akuani

**Port Moresby:** Burning issues of national interest were highlighted by Fr Giorgio Licini PIME, General Secretary of the Catholic Bishops Conference of PNGSI, in a press conference held on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> December, at the CBC Headquarters in Waigani.

The conference had the presence of CBC staff and media personnel, and was an opportunity to spread awareness on COVID-19, reflect on the establishment of the Independent Commission Against Corruption and the ongoing political crisis, resettlement of refugees, priorities of CBC's various commissions, and to share the Christmas message for 2020 despite all the hardships.

In his address, Fr Giorgio told of the devastating impact caused by the havoc of the coronavirus around the world, and urged citizens to take a moment to realize the gravity of its destruction to humanity. "Though PNG and countries of the Pacific have been least affected in terms of infections compared to other parts of the world, the disruption still has been significant. Though it prospers in many other developed countries, the risk is not over yet, and it can still catch up with the Pacific," he said.

He recalled the ongoing political crisis endured by the country and its people and said it was a disappointment to see the nation descend into a political play during such a health and economic crisis. "There is nothing wrong with political ambitions and political moves by the people's representatives. But the motivations should be strong and evident, not pretentious, debated in Parliament and not in remote and isolated locations with occasional and precarious political allies," he said.

The growing concern of the 95 refugees and 42 asylum seekers brought to PNG by Australia in 2013, was also raised and he said plans were now underway to directly engage with the Australian High Commission. "We expect to work with the AU High Commission on the matter early next year because working with the Australian government for development in PNG is becoming increasingly hard for us for the ethical and moral implications," he added.

He mentioned Pope Francis encyclical, Fratelli Tutti, and stressed that universal brotherhood was



the key to combating social issues and standing firmly united as a family. "The pandemic has been a warning that nature is still in control and is unpredictable. We have been told to pause, to think, and not to proceed with business as usual," he urged.

"The smile we share can be more contagious than the virus haunting us, and may the new year 2021 be more desired than ever, bringing to an end our sufferings and a renewed sense of unity and service," he said.

## Training for regional assessors of the Right Relationships in Ministry - Abigail Seta



15<sup>th</sup> December and had 13 representatives from the different dioceses in the four Regions of PNG.

Present to facilitate the trainings were Bishop of Daru-Kiunga and Bishop Deputy for Right Relationships in Ministry Most Rev. Gilles Côté SMM, Bishop of Lae, Most Rev. Rozario Menezes SMM, Right Relationships in Ministry Secretary, Sr Ancy John SCSA, CBC Lawyer Mr. Paul Harricknen, Deputy Executive Director of PNG Centre for Judicial Excellence Mr. Sam Kaipu and Ms. Esther Igo.

According to facilitator, Esther Igo, assessors are called on by the RR Director when a case of abuse or misconduct occurs in the church and needs an in-depth investigation. The assessor further investigates the case to get more evidence for a report.

The sessions were based on the Right Relationship protocols, processes and best practices to follow. It also focused on the experiences of current assessors and role plays on possible cases and how to assess them.

Child Protection officer from the Archdiocese of Madang, Scholastica Bogg, was grateful to be a part of the training and understand the role of the contact persons and assessors.

"This has helped me as a Child Protection officer to raise awareness for the public to be informed, educated and make informed decisions," she stated.

Sr Cristi Banas from the Archdiocese of Mount Hagen said, "the role of the assessors in dealing with cases of sexual misconduct has given me a deeper understanding of compassion both for the victim and the accused. Thus, enabling me to bring back the image of Christ to the victim and the accused."

The training concluded with a prayer service of commissioning and blessing of the assessors.

**Port Moresby:** A two-day training focused on dealing with cases of abuse and misconduct in the catholic church was held to induct and train assessors.

Coordinated by the Right Relationships (RR) in Ministry Commission of the Catholic Bishops Conference, the training was held on 14<sup>th</sup> and

### Catholic Reporter

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

Editor: **Fr. Ambrose Pereira sdb**

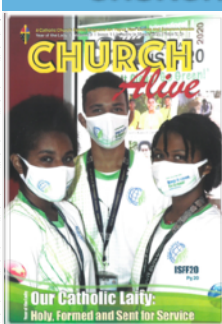
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Please send in your material to:  
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on or before **20th of the month, 2021**

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### CHURCH ALIVE MAGAZINE



Church Alive Magazine a Catholic Family magazine for Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands. Volume 3, Issue 1, January to March.

Price: **K2/**

**Bulk purchase of 50 copies and more are priced at K1.50 a copy**

### WORLD COMMUNICATION DAY 2021

**"Come and see" (Jn 1,46)**

**Communicating, encountering people as and where they are.**

**"In the call of the first disciples, with Jesus who went to encounter them and to invite them to follow Him, we also see the invitation to use all media, in all their forms, to reach people as they are and where they live."**

**WCD | May 2021**