

The Catholic Reporter

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- Abigail Seta

Highlighting the plight of Manus Refugees

several people who are mentally affected and have no control on their lives. Seven have died. All their deaths were preventable by proper mental and physical health care which haven't been provided in the past 5 years," he said.

government and the possible way forward. He stated that he was trying to understand the government's decision to accept the arrangement.

"From the side of the government it's probably based on compassion in terms of trying to have a process in which people don't get onto risky boats and get to Australia. But perhaps there can be a proper way by which they can be processed".

"Secondly, it is based on respect for one's neighbour, Australia. Being close neighbours and having a history with Australia, the government looked at the bigger picture in terms of a relationship with Australia. Our Constitution and our own value system accommodates our friend, Australia."

"Everyone can agree that we helped Australia but Australia took us for granted and left the problem with us, now it seems like they are washing their hands and they're saying that it is our problem. Australia needs a more ethical outcome that is good for everyone. It is good for Australia, it is good for PNG and most importantly, it is good for the asylum seekers," said Hon. Powes Parkop.

Nearly 100 persons attended the event which included an interesting mix of participants from students and teachers; professionals and lay people; government, church personnel and media outlets. The time for questions and discussions gave the audience the occasion to clarify and ask questions concerning the many issues surrounding the refugees on Manus.

An outcome of the Panel Discussion was a 'Christmas present' statement issued and voted upon by the participants at the Panel Discussion.

The program was coordinated by Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb, Social Communication and Youth Secretary and Paul Harricknen with the assistance of many at various levels.

Question and Answer session between the audience and the panellists



Guest speakers at the panel discussion

Gordons, Port Moresby: The Catholic Bishops Conference (CBC) together with the Catholic Professionals Society (CPS) hosted a panel discussion on the Manus Refugees on Thursday, 01st November 2018.

Held at CBC, the program had as its guests and panellists, Benham Satah, a Kurdish Asylum Seeker, Fr Clement Taulam, Kavieng Lorengau Diocese, Hon. Powes Parkop, MP, Governor of NCD, Ms Esther Gaegaming, Deputy Chief Migration Officer, Ms Alithia Barampataz, United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR), Mr. Paul Harricknen, Human Rights Lawyer and President of Catholic Professionals Society of PNG.

Kurdish refugee, Benham Satah, has been living in PNG for 5 years as a refugee on Manus island and has been in Port Moresby for the last seven months. He spoke on the health problems and medical care the refugees needed. "We have

Fr. Clement Taulam, priest from the Kavieng Lorengau diocese has been in contact with the refugees and has dealt with many of their issues, pastorally, morally and culturally. Highlighting human rights was Alithia Barampataz, the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR). She spoke on the standard human rights and the understanding of what a refugee is. Esther Gaegaming, Deputy Chief Migration Officer, then spoke on her role as an immigration officer.

Paul Harricknen, Human Rights Lawyer and President of Catholic Professionals Society of PNG challenged the present arrangement for the refugees. He spoke on his involvement with the asylum seekers issue on Manus as a lawyer and his concern for the rights of every human person.

"We have always maintained that the detention of the asylum seekers was and is unconstitutional, unlawful and inhumane and to this day, that argument stands," Mr Harricknen said. He added that this is the stand of the Catholic Church as well.

Governor of NCD, Hon. Powes Parkop shared his personal conviction on the arrangement of refugees from the perspective of the PNG and Australian



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Statement from the Manus Refugee panel discussion

Port Moresby, 1st November, 2018:

Participants at the Manus Refugee Panel Discussion hosted by the Catholic Bishops Conference and Catholic Professionals Society voted overwhelmingly to support the following statement:

- Australia has a moral obligation to look after ALL refugees and Asylum Seekers.
- Australia MUST take ALL refugees and asylum seekers to Australia by 25 December 2018. This is our Christmas present from Papua New Guineans and Manusians to the refugees and asylum seekers.
- Papua New Guineans, including Manusians have said we no longer support the 'chequebook diplomacy'.
- We are deeply concerned that the human rights of the refugees and asylum seekers have been breached as they were forcibly sent to PNG; and Australia's policies has caused us reputational damage.
- We, the participants are speaking on behalf of the women and children on Manus who are the victims of Australia's policies.

- The men have suffered enough from prolonged detention. Enough is enough. The time has come to let them go.



Young people

Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb, CBC SOCOM and Youth Secretary

Dear Young people,

2018 has been the Year of Youth and had as its theme: Called to the fullness of Life and Love. Different dioceses, congregations, schools and institutions have held several programs highlighting 'Life' and 'Love'.



Our highlight for the year is the National Youth Convention, to be held from the 8th to the 12th of December, in the Archdiocese of Rabaul. The Convention opens on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, a wonderful occasion for our young people to entrust their lives to our Blessed Mother. She was the one who said her 'Yes' to God.

The highlights of the program include: celebrating the Sacrament of the Eucharist and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. The day of our Pilgrimage will give us the opportunity to visit the important sites of the birth, martyrdom and death of Bl. Peter ToRot. A unique occasion to reflect on this man of our soil and be inspired by his life and commitment to our Catholic Faith. Reaching out to the patients of the Vunapope Hospital, is celebrating our faith as Christ did. A very important session will be the challenge to take on the pledge to 'live pure' until the celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage and remain chaste thereafter.

At the convention you will have the opportunity to meet with other committed and like-minded young people and interact with them during the sessions, welcome ceremony, the campfire and the concluding celebration.

The convention is only for representatives from the different dioceses. These in turn will share what they have learnt with the members of their youth groups.

My thanks to all the Bishops, Youth Coordinators and animators for believing in our young people and supporting them through your animated presence as well as through your generous financial support. They are at an important crossroad in their young lives.

Don't miss out on this wonderful opportunity. Young people it's going to be a celebration you will remember for the rest of your lives. Welcome to the Archdiocese of Rabaul! Welcome to the National Youth Convention!

Ending violence against women

The 25th of November 2018 marked the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (EVAW). With the theme: 'Orange the World: #HearMeToo,' the United Nations in different countries celebrated the event.



- Abigail Seta

For PNG, the Sanap Wantaim Campaign commemorated the event in Port Moresby on Friday, 23rd of November with a walkathon from Jack Pidik Park to Tabari place to make a statement. There they hosted a concert to attract Papua New Guineans to spread the overall message.

Also, the 29th of November 2018 was set for an event for young women called 'Girls Take over Parliament' day to be held as part of the 16 days of activism. The 16 days of activism commenced on the 25th of November and concludes on the 10th of December. The initiative is hosted by the Young Women's Christian Association of Papua New Guinea (YWCA PNG) in partnership with the Commonwealth Youth Council and Jasiri Australia, it gives young women and girls in Port Moresby the opportunity to voice their perspectives on matters of national interest in a Parliament setting.

However, the initiative has been moved to 2019 due to the recent rampage of the National Parliament. The YWCA team posted on their Facebook page saying: "Due to the recent rampage of the National Parliament by police and correctional officers, the GTP Steering Committee have been advised to move the event toward the end of the first quarter of 2019."

Marking this day internationally, the United Nations have highlighted that any kind of physical, sexual or psychological form of behaviour toward a woman or girl can be considered violence against women.

According to the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women issued by the UN General Assembly in 1993, violence against women is defined as "any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life."

According to the United Nations, this can consist of: Intimate partner violence (battering, psychological abuse, marital rape, femicide); Sexual violence and harassment (rape, forced sexual acts, unwanted sexual advances, child sexual abuse, forced marriage, street harassment, stalking, cyber-harassment); human trafficking (slavery, sexual exploitation); female genital mutilation; and child marriage.

National Youth Convention 2018 Program

Archdiocese of Rabaul - 8th to 12th December, 2018

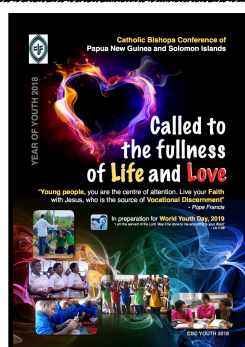
Feast of the Immaculate Conception
8th December
Opening Eucharist Celebration
Welcome ceremony

Sacrament of the Eucharist
9th December
Eucharistic celebration
Synod on Youth
The Eucharist in your Life
Motivational Activity
Living Rosary
Campfire

Pilgrimage and Reconciliation
10th December
Visitation of important sites of Blessed Peter ToRot
Sacrament of Reconciliation
Eucharistic celebration
Eucharistic Adoration

Sacrament of Marriage
11th December
Marriage as a sacrament
Celebrating life as a couple
Rosary, Pledge to 'Live Pure'

Thanksgiving
12th December
Thanksgiving
Eucharistic celebration
Closing ceremony



a time of prayer, celebration and commitment

WORLD YOUTH DAY 2019

During World Youth Day, 2019, Omar Park will become a place for young people from across the world will find the path God is asking of them for their lives. It will be the site of the "Follow Me" Vocations Fair and the "Renew Me" Garden of Forgiveness.



The vocations fair will give young people the opportunity to learn about different charisms, movements and vocations. The 150 booths will display the various options open to young people. "It is a path to the happiness to be found in vocations, whether it is a vocation to marriage, the religious life, the priesthood, or the laity involved in the Church."

"Renew Me" will be the name given to the Garden of Forgiveness, where there will be confessionals for pilgrims to take a moment to be close to Jesus. In addition, alongside this will be the "Virgin's Grotto", a waiting area for examination of conscience.



PNG Council of Churches heads

The Papua New Guinea Council of Churches (PNGCC) has taken a stand to voice people's concerns against experimental seabed mining in PNG.

PNGCC is led by Reverend Roger Joseph of the United Church as the General Secretary, Bishop Rochus Tatamai MSC of the Catholic Church as the Chairman and His Eminence

Cardinal Sir John Ribat as the Vice Chairman. Representing over 5 million Papua New Guineans, the heads of churches recently had a series of discussions and conferences surrounding seabed mining and its likely effect on maritime communities.

The meetings included heads of churches workshops, a public forum at the University of Papua New Guinea and a civil society roundtable event during the APEC week in Port Moresby.

Recently prominent citizen and former Chief Justice of Papua New Guinea, Sir Arnold Amet, took up the fight for maritime communities and offered voluntary legal assistance to the PNGCC.

Sir Arnold said he was invited by the heads of churches to speak on several social issues including the campaign against deep-sea mining.

- Aileen Baretta, Freelance journalist

"As we know the PNG Council of Churches, both nationally and through its member churches in the Bismarck Sea region, have been vocal against deep sea mining and issuing statements since 2016," Sir Arnold stated.

"The PNGCC should now join forces with the maritime communities throughout the country."

The campaign against seabed mining has landed the council funding from international donor agencies Bread For The World and EMW Germany.

Apart from the seabed mining campaign, the PNGCC is also taking part in dialogues surrounding the Bougainville Referendum and other platforms to raise the concerns of its followers.



The Catholic Church and APEC



On Wednesday, 7th November 2018, the Catholic Bishops Conference held a press conference to discuss the Catholic Church and their position on the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

"We share the concern of many about the huge amount of our limited resources being expended on this event which seems designed to entertain and impress the rich and powerful," Bp. Rochus Tatamai, President of Catholic Bishops Conference stated.

"Given its inevitability, we can only hope for its "success", which can only mean that the welfare of the poorest people of PNG will somehow indirectly be improved. Although we all would like to make a good impression on our visitors, this cannot be at the expense of the truth."

"As the whole of PNG watches billions being spent on appearances in Port Moresby, we experience teachers and health workers without pay and health centres without medicine, while all departments may expect less than 60% of their official budgeted allocations. It is a fact that many people in the remote areas of Papua New Guinea, including those in the cities who are still economically remote, are suffering and dying in order to make APEC a success," Bp. Rochus said.

He concluded that the show of APEC is not the experience of the majority of Papua New Guineans. He said: "Though they may rightly hope to make a good impression on visitors, they also rightly hope for a return to true normality when it is all over and we will be able to count the cost, start repaying our debts, and re-establish our priorities, that is to prioritise the rural poor and not the urban rich."

Missionary receives OBE Award

Fr. Michal Tomaszewski, SVD



Fr Philip Gibbs SVD

A solemn royal ceremony of Investiture took place at the Governor General's Place in Port Moresby on the 29th of November 2018.

The event saw Divine Word Missionary, Fr. Philip Gibbs, recognized and appreciated for his "service to the Enga Province community and the Catholic Church". He has been honoured with the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire and was invested with the Insignia of An Officer of the Civil Division ("OBE").

"It is a humbling experience to receive this kind of award but also very joyful since years of doing the right things are recognised by the country as a whole," Fr. Philip stated.

Present to witness the event was Fr. Fredy Jehadin, SVD, Fr. Michal Tomaszewski, SVD, together with representatives from the Catholic Bishops Conference, Marie Mondu, Secretary for Development and Fr. Ambrose Pereira, SDB, Secretary for Social Communication and Youth.

Every year, there are people of all ranks and occupations who are rewarded for their extraordinary service to the country which is a part of the larger British Empire.

Commentary

Fr. Giorgio Licini, PIME
CBC General Secretary



The year 2018 draws to a close with little improvement on the conditions of life for most Papua New Guineans. Poverty remains widespread in the countryside with a lack of services, roads and market opportunities for agricultural products. Tens of thousands of youth can only avail of primary education and never dream of going through the secondary and tertiary level. In urban centres, settlements keep on mushrooming.

The country for the first time, however, successfully hosted a major international event in November when Asia-Pacific leaders came to Port Moresby for an economic cooperation forum which saw the United States and Australia on the defence against a new superpower. China does not expand into the Pacific by means of military hardware but through economic enterprise and investments. The Chinese are natural entrepreneurs. With their little stores, they are becoming a constant presence in the remotest villages of Papua New Guinea. No doubt that Port Moresby and Lae, but also Mt. Hagen, Madang, Buka, and other cities are more and more international centres with a large presence of Asians from China, Malaysia, the Philippines, India, and others.

This poses a challenge to young Papua New Guineans. Will the country remain Melanesian and controlled by Melanesians or will a new racial, political and financial blend emerge and shape the future? There is probably a need not to shut the doors to external cooperation, while the control of resources firmly remains in local hands and nurtures the growth of a better educated and better organized modern society. To avoid our future being stolen we cannot rely on outsiders' sense of honesty and respect. Papua New Guinea assets and resources now need to be actively protected and defended. How? It certainly begins with us and those we elect in Parliament every five years. Their concern and sincerity in making deals that favour the people and not their inner circle are paramount. But discipline and sense of responsibility need to grow at all levels. A country that is largely drunk (*spak*) three days a week, from Friday to Sunday can easily be taken. No need for an army. Industriousness and small business initiative are sufficient.

The festive season of the birth of Jesus will certainly give us inspiration. The child born in poverty in a manger never wanted to be rich. However, he filled himself with wisdom. He gave glory to the Father while embracing the leper, consoling the widow, returning sight to the blind and calling for social justice rather than sacrifices and offerings in the Temple. He proved that progress and change can only take place by living for a larger purpose than our own personal interest.

Merry Christmas and a Prosperous New Year to everybody from the Catholic Bishops Conference of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands!

Yumi Yet Sios

Long mun Novemba 2018, yumi lukim ol gutpela program bilong ol yut i kamap gut insait long olgeta daiosis. Yumi lukim olsem isisi ol yangpela manmeri yet i luksave olsem ol i gat bikpela wok long strongim ol program bilong ol yut na long dispela pasin, ol i ken kisim planti ekspiriens na training na gro ap moa yet olsem ol gutpela sitisen na strongpela bilip manmeri.

Long wankain taim tu, Sios i wok long strongim lukluk insait long ol lei manmeri o leiti. Bikpela program long indaksen bilong ol kodineta bilong ol leiti insait long ol daiosis i bin kamap long nupela konferens senta long CBC long Port Moresby yet. Dispela program i bin helpim ol leiti kodineta long kisim sampela skul long helpim ol long bungim ol leiti insait long ol daiosis insait long PNGSI insait long dispela yia 2019 bilong ol leiti wantaim astingting olsem "Ol lei manmeri - ol tu i kisim singaut bilong God long kamap holi na santu tudei long plesdaun." Dispela lukluk long wokabaut wantaim ol yut insait long yia 2018 i bin kamap gut pinis na taim Sios i laik go insait long yia 2019 wantaim ol Leiti, dispela luksave olsem ol yut ol i stap pas tru wantaim ol leiti igo strong

moa yet. Askim i kam long planti manmeri ol i askim olsem; "wonem samting bai ol manmeri i mekim bilong kamap ol leiti?" Dispela askim ino gutpela askim bikos olgeta manmeri, olgeta pikinini na olgeta yut olgeta wantaim ol i kamap leiti insait long sakramen bilong baptais. Taim olgeta pikinini na manmeri i save kisim sakramen bilong baptais, wantu long dispela sakramen yumi olgeta i save kamap brata tru bilong Jisas na kisim wok bilong en na pas tru wantaim Kraist olsem ol pris, profet na king. Dispela tripela lukluk na wok yumi olgeta i save kisim long sakramen bilong baptais (pris, profet na king) ol i mekim yumi olsem yumi ken pas tru wantaim Kraist na inapim olgeta laip bilong Kraist insait long laip bilong yumi.

Dispela lukluk long wokabaut wantaim ol yut insait long yia 2018 i bin kamap gut pinis na taim Sios i laik go insait long yia 2019 wantaim ol Leiti, dispela luksave olsem ol yut ol i stap pas tru wantaim ol leiti igo strong moa yet. Pasin bilong stap holi na stap santu i kamap insait long laip bilong yumi wanwan taim yumi stap laip insait long Kraist long ol pasin na wei bilong mekim, inapim olgeta liklik wok na laip long pasin i stret na i gutpela. Yumi lukluk na

- Bp Rochus Tatamai MSC



strongim ol stretpela na gutpela toktok insait long komuniti long kirapim ol gutpela lukluk na stretpela pasin wantaim gutpela sindaun. Olgeta dispela pasin na laip bilong kamapim ol wei na pasin bilong God insait long olgeta laip bilong yumi, long ol dispela pasin yumi kirapim pasin gutpela na holi na dispela i mekim yumi stap sambai long bildim kingdom bilong God hia long graun.

Olsem na pasin bilong stap holi na santu i kamap ples klia taim yumi olgeta yet i strongim ol gutpela pasin long ai bilong God. Yumi ken tok tu olsem yumi yet ino gat laip. Laip yumi stap laip long em bilong God olsem na yumi mas larim laip bilong God i kamap ples klia long laip na wokabaut bilong yumi. Yumi ken prei na pasim tingting wantaim olsem bai olgeta tingting na wok yumi laik mekim long laip bilong yumi i mas oltaim sut stret bihainim wei na pasin bilong God Papa, God Pikinini na God Holi Spirit husat i origin na pinis bilong olgeta laip na wokabaut yumi gat long dispela graun.



Diocesan laity coordinators at the workshop

Port Moresby: In preparation for the Year of the Laity 2019, a workshop for diocesan laity coordinators was held from 3rd to 10th November 2018 at the Catholic Bishops Conference (CBC), Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea.

Hosted by CBC, it took its theme from the 2019 Pastoral Letter: 'A call to Holiness in today's World.' The aim was to look at the role and mission of the laity in the PNG and SI Church. It was a preparation for next year's pastoral activities that commenced on the Feast of Christ

A call to Holiness in today's world

Fr Valentine Gryk, SVD

the King, 25th of November 2018. Twenty-four participants from the dioceses in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands attended the workshop. The program focused on challenges and ministry of lay leaders; the Laity in the Church and around the World, the Culture of the Media, Lay women and many other sectors of life. All the inputs and discussions dwelt on enabling the laity to fulfil the role of their baptism: proclaiming as prophets, sanctifying as priests and servings as kings in the Church.

"The workshop has opened up a new chapter for all the participants to really know our roles and responsibilities in the light of our baptism and to be witnesses of Christ. We need to make His Good News known and continue His Mission as lay evangelizers actively involved in the Church," said Joseph Nuabi, a participant from the Archdiocese of Rabaul.

"It was indeed, a worthwhile get together of people of like-minded commitment who are passionate about the Church and faith. It was a real eye-opener and should be replicated at diocesan levels," Augustine Meti from the diocese of Auki, Solomon Islands stated.

'Go and rebuild my Church' were the words heard by St. Francis of Assisi. This was the message given to the participants of the Laity Workshop, by Archbishop Kurian Mathew Vayalunkal, Apostolic Nuncio, who celebrated the closing Eucharist of the workshop on 9th November, 2018.

The laity, which makes up more than 98% of the Body of Christ, the Church, have an important role to play in the growth and running of the Church. St. Francis changed the face of the Church by showing the love of God, through his example of love. All the lay faithful (laity) should follow the footsteps of St. Francis and Bl. Peter ToRot and imitate them in their lives.

Be it done according to your word

Fr. Ambrose Pereira sdb

On Saturday, December 1st 2018, a Thanksgiving Eucharist celebration was held to mark the Congregation of the Handmaids of our Lord's Centenary of Foundation.

The Centenary celebration was held at the Shrine of Mary Help of Christians, Boroko where Archbishop of Port Moresby, John Cardinal Ribat MSC was the main celebrant.

"The Lord calls us and brings out the best in each one of us. Your lives have inspired and evoked a response in all of us", said the Cardinal in his homily as he thanked and congratulated the AD sisters for giving generously to the people of Papua New Guinea for the past century. Known as the Ancilla Domini (AD) sisters, they are the second local congregation in the country and was founded in PNG by Archbishop Alain Marie Guynot de Boismenu MSC, Vicar Apostolic of Papua on the 8th of April, 1918. The Congregation was founded to provide support for the priests working in remote and isolated areas. Their ministry includes teaching, nursing, pastoral work, child care and health awareness in the villages. They are working in six dioceses in PNG and in Australia. Currently, there are 35 sisters in the congregation and of these, three sisters are doing pastoral work in Australia.



The AD sisters cutting cake

Marking this important ceremony, the AD sisters renewed their vows after which they sang their beautiful 'Ecce Ancilla Domini' which expressed their total gift of self as Handmaids of the Lord, as Mary did in response to the angel's message.

Sr Mary Garner AD, Mother Superior thanked all who were present for the centenary celebrations.

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:

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on or before **20th December, 2018**

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