



A Catholic Church Family Magazine for Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands
Year of the Laity | Volume 2 | Issue 2 | April to June 2020

CHURCH *Alive*

Veritas in Caritate
Truth in Service

Pg 6 and 7



Closed for Maintenance, Pg 3

Church Alive Team

Editor:

Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb
CBC SOCOM Secretary

Contributors:

Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb, Social Communications
Archbishop Francesco Panfilo, Archbishop of Rabaul
Fr John Balele, Diocese of Kimbe
Lucy Lavu, Archdiocese of Port Moresby
Anne Delsorte, Brisbane, Australia
Patrick Matbob, Divine Word University
Dominic ToMar, Catholic Professionals Society
Emilie Ng, The Catholic Leader, Brisbane
Chris So'onwai, Diocese of Alotau
Elizabeth Merrill, ESPN Senior Writer
Devin Watkins, Vatican News

Proof Reading:

Abigail Seta
Rosemary Yambune

Cover photo:

Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb

Inner pages design and layout:

Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb and Abigail Seta
CBC SOCOM, Gordons, Port Moresby

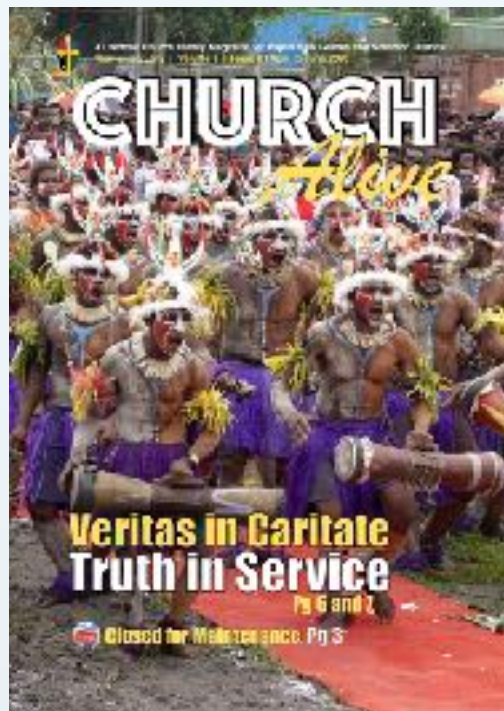
Printed at:

Star Printers
Port Moresby
Papua New Guinea

Produced by:

Catholic Bishops Conference
Section 100, Lot 28
Godwit Street, Gordon's
Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

Church Alive Cover



Tavopaitia a canoe dance performed during sea faring festivities. The purple, white and red painted on their bodies and bilas are their traditional colours of the Vitus Island people. The Bilas (grass skirts, headdresses, armbands) are made from the palm fronds, bird feathers, plants leaves, sea shells and bush vines. This dance was performed in Kimbe, West New Britain at the Episcopal Ordination of Bp John Bosco Aruam.

Contents

1.	Closed for Maintenance	- 3
2.	Just Land Agreements	- 4
3.	Veritas in Caritate	- 6
4.	Help me come close to God	- 8
5.	Holy Spirit sisters celebrate 120 years	- 10
6.	Blessed Petro ToRot	- 12
7.	A shining light for Alotau	- 14
8.	With gratitude to Bp Henk Kronenberg sm	- 15
9.	I made this deal with God	- 16
10.	God turns everything to our good	- 19
11.	News	- 20
12.	War Room	- 23

SOCOM Board

Bp Donald Lippert OFM Cap
Bishop Deputy
Bp Joseph Roszynski, SVD
Bishop Deputy
Fr. Ambrose Pereira sdb
SOCOM Secretary
Rosa Koian
WANTOK Editor
Frieda Kana
Digicel Media Ventures
Fr. Martin We-en
Radio Maria, Director
Mr. Joe Wafewa
NBC Deputy Managing Director

Church Alive Invitation

The Catholic Bishops Conference of PNGSI in this Year of Laity 2020 has as its theme:
Holy and Formed for Mission.

In the amidst of **COVID-19** 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.

Articles on the lives of priests, religious and more especially the laity who have led committed lives and inspired many can be sent for publication together with photographs. Reflections, inspirational stories and news items for the entire church are also welcome.

All material are to be sent to:
socom@catholic.org.pg or
ambrose.pereirasdb@gmail.com
on or before **10th June, 2020**.
Trust you will enjoy reading this issue.
With gratitude. God bless.
Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb, Editor

Closed for Maintenance



Dear friends,

It's amazing how an unseen enemy can shut down the entire world and bring us all to a standstill. Presently 1,340,456 cases, 74,4242 deaths in 209 countries and territories around the world and 2 international conveyances affected by a tiny virus. The curve is still rapidly rising. We are incapable of dealing with this crisis. The last few weeks have brought us to a standstill. Papua New Guinea has been protected by our loving God. He knows our limitations and has spared us from unprecedented disaster. We have two positive cases. Our response is one of listening, reflection and positive action that will propel us forward. Are we ready for the rhythm of discipline that this unique situation has taught us. Are we ready to learn from this irreplaceable experience?

The one word on the lips of every person is, **LOCKDOWN**. The reverberating message is loud and clear: **Hygiene, Social distancing** and above all **'Stay Home'**. The Reset button on our lives and our world has been hit. We are all invited to **'Close for Maintenance'**. Once we reopen, we should be renewed.

Hygiene: We are encouraged to wash our hands with soap for 20 seconds. This is to destroy the fat-based viral envelop that holds the nucleic acid of lipids and proteins. Studies show that people touch their faces on an average of 23 times an hour. This includes contact points - eyes, nose or mouth, which are points of entry of the coronavirus. Once the protein spikes enter the human cell they replicate, hence the need to break down this envelop. Our personal hygiene and healthy habits has given us a dignity for ourselves.

Social Distancing: Maintain at least a 2-meter distance between anyone who is coughing or sneezing. This is so that you may not breathe in the droplets, including the COVID-19 that any person may be carrying. "We have learnt social distancing as primary school kids where we stood at arm's length from one another. Putting that into practice is essential", said Jelta Wong, Minister for Health and HIV/Aids, as he addressed a meeting of church leaders and health workers at the Catholic Bishops Conference on 23rd March 2020. We respect ourselves and are reminded to respect others. Give each one their personal space to live and act.

Stay at home: Schools, offices, institutions have been closed for the period of the lockdown and the State of Emergency. A wonderful opportunity for us to relax, renew ourselves, pick up a task and catch up on a number of pending activities. While we do this, nature has the wonderful possibility to renew itself. The streets are empty, the roads are clean, the air is fresh, the waters are devoid of choking plastic bags. The birds return, fish swim free and we feel a freshness as we once again breathe in clean air. With resources stretched to the limit, those on the frontline tell us, "We stay at work for you, you stay at home for us". It reminds us that we need each other. We need to respect each other, especially our elderly and the ones in danger.

This issue of Church Alive has been put together during the period of our lockdown. It brings you articles of our love for God, our commitment to humanity and our care for the environment. This season of Lent makes us look inward and renew ourselves, our habits, our relationships. May COVID-19 and our lockdown draw us one step closer to our God, awaken in us the need of reaching out to people around us and care for our planet.

I take this occasion to wish you the Radiance of the Risen Lord. May His Light dispel all darkness, especially the tiny ones only we can see. **Happy Easter!** May we be renewed during this time for maintenance. 🇵🇬

With blessings and prayers,

Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb Editor and SOCOM Secretary, 7th April, 2020



JUST LAND AGREEMENTS



Archbishop Francesco Panfilo sdb, Archbishop of Rabaul was appointed as Coadjutor Archbishop of Rabaul on 18th March 2010. On 11th August 2011, he was installed as the Archbishop of Rabaul. As shepherd of his flock he has travelled the length and breadth of his Archdiocese on foot, climbed steep mountains and sailed rough seas. Concerned for the welfare of his people and working together with his flock, he has put together a booklet entitled: **Just Land Agreements**. May it inspire us!

I have always believed that with good will and dialogue a solution for the common good could be possible.

During my visits to our communities of Pomio Deanery, individuals and groups of people repeatedly asked me to speak up for them, to speak on behalf of those with no voice. In other words, they asked the Archbishop to get involved in trying to solve their problems. The issue or issues at hand are not easy to solve, but I have always believed that **with good will and dialogue a solution for the common good could be possible**. Committing oneself to the common good means to make choices in solidarity based on "a preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters" (LS 158).

I tried my best. I wrote to some political leaders and have spoken to them; I have met individual and groups on both sides of the issue. In the end, I have come to the conclusion that the solution can be found in a new Lease Agreement that, even though it comes after the environmental impact has taken place, it could still bring about authentic development and an integral improvement in the quality of human life.

Chapter Five of "Laudato Si'" addresses the question of what we can do and must do, especially in regards to business ventures and large projects that affect the land. **For this to happen, dialogue and action which would involve individuals and groups is essential** (see, LS 146).

As regard to business propositions or agreements, Pope Francis has this to say: "Environmental impact assessment should not come after the drawing up of a business proposition or the proposal of a particular policy, plan or programme ... A consensus should always be reached between the different stakeholders, who can offer a variety of approaches, solutions and alternatives. **The local population should have a special place at the table**; they are concerned about their own future and that of their children ... The participation of the latter also entails being fully informed about such projects and their different risks and possibilities; this includes not just preliminary decisions but also various follow-up activities and continued monitoring" (LS 183).



A way forward would be for the government to oblige all large companies, associated with the SABL and other issues concerning land and resources, to renegotiate the existing agreements.

And Pope Francis adds: “In any discussion about a proposed venture, a number of questions need to be asked in order to discern whether or not it will contribute to genuine integral development. What will it accomplish? Why? Where? When? How? For whom? What are the risks? What are the costs? Who will pay those costs and how? In this discernment, some questions must have higher priority”. (LS 185).

Unfortunately, what Pope Francis is proposing did not happen in most of the Logging and Oil Palm Projects in the country. This has caused ill feelings, divisions within the communities and even within family units. Also some violence has taken place.

The Church, in accordance with its Social Teaching, should be in the front line in ensuring equitable benefits for our landowners and appropriate environmental protection.

The way forward

The Marape – Davis Government is committed to “take back PNG”. **A way forward would be for government to oblige all large companies, associated with the SABL and other issues concerning land and resources, to renegotiate the existing agreements.**

This is the approach taken by the Archdiocese of Rabaul. We are asking that all large companies – foreign and

local - **renegotiate the existing agreements**, based on justice and according to the following points:

- that there has to be fair rental payment for the land;
- that there has to be fair royalties for the Oil Palm;
- that the environmental devastation is addressed;
- that policies are put in place to ensure sound environmental practices;
- that there is proper dialogue between the land owners and the companies with regards to the project and the landowners concerns are listened to;
- that sacred sites are respected;
- that there is an appropriate contribution to sustainable community services by the company;
- that there are provisions to ensure that the contract is implemented.

This explains the decision for **writing this small booklet**. It is meant to assist and guide land landowners when encountering such difficulties. In fact, one of the issues which is of great concern is the manner in which local landowners can be manipulated and exploited by foreign companies, even big local companies into entering into agreements with regards to land. Hopefully such a booklet will help people to become informed by the situation. 🇯🇵

Photo below:
Participants at the
Just Land Agreements
CBC Talk Series



Veritas in Caritate Truth in Service

Episcopal Ordination of Bishop John Bosco Auram

Bishop John Bosco Auram was the 2nd son of Francis Auram and Jacinta Seleime. His father, a teacher and Catechist by profession hailed from Kandoka village in the parish of Kaliai, and his mother a subsistence farmer came from Wasum village in the parish of Sara. These parishes are in the Diocese of Kimbe. God has called him in the 15th year of his priesthood to be the new bishop of the Diocese of Kimbe.

Kimbe: Colourful and vibrant cultural dances accompanied by melodious music and harmonious singing rent the air as Rev Fr John Bosco Auram was ordained the third Bishop of the Diocese of Kimbe. *Veritas in Caritate* – Truth in Service - is the motto of the new Bishop. The solemn celebration took place at the Bernard Vogae Memorial Park on the 25th of January 2020. Several thousand people witnessed the celebrations.

Archbishop Francesco Panfilo, Archbishop of Rabaul, Cardinal John Ribat, Archbishop of Port Moresby and Bishop Emeritus William Fey were the consecrators for the Ordination. Archbishop Kurian Mathew Vayalunkal, Apostolic Nuncio for Papua New Guinea

and Solomon Islands read out the Apostolic Bull from Pope Francis and preached a very fitting and well-articulated sermon. Bishops and representatives from different dioceses joined the priests, religious and lay faithful of the Diocese of Kimbe. Hon. Francis Galia Maneke, MP, Governor of West New Britain Province, Hon. Sasindran Muthuvel, MP, Minister for Public Enterprises and State Investments and several government and other well-wishers joined in the celebrations.

In his homily, the Apostolic Nuncio paid tribute to His Lordship William Regis Fey who had been shepherding the diocese for over nine years with untiring dedication even to the point of neglecting his

health. Addressing the new bishop on his big commitment, he reminded him of God's words to Jeremiah (Jer 1:4-10). He spoke of his 'yes' to God at his priestly ordination in 2004, and the new challenge as the Bishop of Kimbe. "It is your 'call within a call,'" said the Archbishop. "The task of the bishop is not of domination, but of humble

At the end of the Episcopal Ordination



Bp John Bosco receiving the Episcopal Cross from Abp Francisco Panfilo.

service, as he strives to be a pastor with the 'smell of the sheep'. Trust in God and Our Blessed Mother and pray for your people and your priests. Be the 'sacrament of closeness' for your priests and your people", said the Archbishop.

"I see hope in your eyes", said Bp John Bosco as he addressed the congregation. He thanked God, his parents, family and the people for the support of their

prayers. He encouraged all to be deeply spiritual and lift up their hearts and voices in prayer. He requested them to pray a decade of the rosary daily as a family for him and for the ministry in the diocese.

The entire celebration was organized by the Diocesan organizing committee. The St.

Francis Xavier Parish, Valoka choir sang under the baton of Herman Bareoa, while Allen Sauli

coordinated the musicians. The members of the choir were from the villages of Kololo, Gavaiva, Vovosi and Galewale. The entire choir sang with heartfelt emotion inviting the congregation to lift up their hearts and voices in petition, praise and thanksgiving. The hymns sung on the day were compositions of Bishop John Bosco Auram, Fr Boniface Kasate, Br Benedict Saua MSC and Mr Andrew Bubu.

After the liturgical celebration the Youth Ministry led by Herman Mou and Allan Sauli sang the African Creed, a composition from Uganda, Africa and this led the congregation to sing and dance to the very lively beat. A light drizzle followed while up in the sky a unique rainbow circled the sun, a sign that God is blessing the people of Kimbe.

Celebrations continued with lunch and speeches of gratitude and support from Maria Ante, laity representative; Hon. Francis Galia Maneke, Hon. Sasindran Muthuvel, MP, Archbishop Kurian Mathew Vayalunkal, Bp William Fey and the new Bishop John Bosco Auram. Prominent was the solidarity and the willingness to work together with the church for the good of the people. Celebrations continued the next day with a thanksgiving mass with choirs, dances and presentations that drew to a close as the heavens opened and watered the earth. 🌈



Choir for the celebration

Coat of Arms

The coat of arms "VERITAS IN CARITATE" or "Truth in Charity" is the motto on his coat of arms. In his own words the Bishop-elect explains:

"Truth is what we all seek, and in seeking this TRUTH we must be motivated by LOVE. Truth is not something but Truth is a Person, Jesus Christ who is the fullness of Love. In seeking the Truth through Love, we are building the Church, which is actually the Body of this same Christ". The Scriptural basis of his motto is a command that can be found in Ephesians 4:15 entitled 'building the Body of Christ'. For him this is a command, as a bishop he must carry out with prudence and vigilance. Bp Bosco Auram has the insight that his vision and mission will build up the Diocese of Kimbe, and fully reflect the Body of Christ. To

achieve this, he believes that, there must be first and foremost, collaboration with all his brother priests, who are his co-workers and helpers within the Diocese of Kimbe. No surprises here with his strong devotion to Mama Mary, and following her example, he knows the importance of working together, like God collaborating with Mother Mary in nurturing the child Jesus Christ.



Bp John Bosco Auram sees the Church as a living entity, a body with a soul, according to him Truth is the Body and Love is the Soul, and without a soul a body is lifeless.

VOX POP



It is a new beginning for the church in Kimbe. It is a blessing that will accompany us as we go through our lives experiencing new and good things as well as the struggles and difficulties that are part of every beginning –
Dn Sylvester Satu.

The episcopal ordination was a very enriching and spirit-filled. It brought the catholic faithful together. Meeting different people was a very enjoyable experience for me.

- Lucy Lavu, Port Moresby



It has been a very well organized and colourful ceremony. The culture was reflected in the different processions. The choir sang very well. –
Maria Uruaka, Port Moresby

We have experienced the blessings of the Lord in abundance. It has been a good dry day and travel was smooth.

- Sara Mulua, Pomio, Vanapope



Help me come Close to God

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd



- Anne Delsorte

Anne Delsorte, resides in Australia and has been a catechist for 23 years. She is engaged in the lives of young men and women. “What excites me most is the privilege of standing on holy ground as I observe the encounter between God and child”, she said.

“After nine or ten years in the atrium*, they are young men and women ready to go out and serve the church in the world. It makes my heart soar to have five who have joined the seminary, countless serve as readers, in the music ministry and some even as missionaries on Thursday Island. A cancer survivor now raises money for this disease and one has already brought his first child to the atrium”, said Anne. She shares with us her insights of the program.

Arranging flowers, watering plants, dusting, sweeping or preparing the cruets are just some of the exercises of daily life available. They are repeated over and over with great joy developing the inner child and preparing them for longer periods of prayer and meditation. Artwork is also a valuable expression of prayer chosen by the child. A gentle hum of activity emanates from the atrium, but mostly the children are absorbed in their own chosen activity

freely moving from one to another as the Spirit leads. Each and every work is either a passage to prayer or prayer itself.

The Good Shepherd is the central work that invites the child into relationship with Jesus. Sixty years of research has gone into the creation of materials, that are designed to meet the vital

religious exigencies of the child at each level. The first level is for children aged 3-6 years. It forms in them a discipline for things around them. In the second level for children aged 6-9 years the central parable is the True Vine but the overarching theme is the History of the Kingdom of God. The centrepiece of this age is the celebration of the Sacraments. In the third level, age 9-12, groups of children will be scattered around the room. Some may be working on various prayers of the Mass or on the Structure of the Mass itself - one great prayer made up of many prayers. Others with the Plan of God timelines, the typology studies, the call and the struggles of the prophets, the miracles, the moral parables, the qualities of Parousia, the Bible and the Sacraments, the Memorial, and more. The final work in the atrium is the Kingdom of God and the Place each child has in it.

Over the period of six years, the children are invited to consider in a myriad of different ways, the many amazing works. They are now ready to really go and shine forth their light to the world, to respond by giving their whole lives into the service of the king, bringing forth His Kingdom and making a difference in the world.

* **The atrium:** is a retreat centre for children to come into the Lord's presence.

Photos below:
Books of the Bible; Looking at the
Liturgical colours and chasubles





Anne Delsorte and Veronika Metcalf animators of the seminar

Twenty-six sisters of the Missionaries of Charity spent a week, from 9th to 16th January, 2020, at the Pastoral Centre, Tokarara, on a seminar training and updating themselves on the Good Shepherd Catechesis. Veronika Metcalf, President for Australian Association for Catechesis of Good Shepherd and Anne Delsorte, Vice president for Association were the animators of the Seminar.

parable of the Kingdom of God and the leaven. Others might be working with Liturgical Calendar or the models of the City of Jerusalem, the Cenacle or the Empty Tomb. "We sit with the child knowing that the word of God will speak to the child," Vice president for Australian Association of The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, Anne Delsorte, told the Sisters.

The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is a form of catechesis that invites young children to fall in love with God. The many hands-on materials speak to all ages, all levels of education and all cultures. Based on the pillars of Bible and Liturgy, every work or presentation is centred around the words of the Scriptures or the prayers of the Church. The activities are repeated over and over with great joy developing the inner child and preparing them for longer periods of prayer and meditation.

Framed by the pedagogical principles of Maria Montessori, this work enables the child to grow in dignity, self-esteem and independence preparing them for the second stage in this formation for the older child. The primary sources of the Bible and the Liturgy are used. This time they invite and empower the child to make a response to this God of Love.

Longing to understand the world and their place in it, they are invited into an understanding of the Plan of God that surpasses the boundaries of space and time. They marvel over the wonders of God at work in our history and His promise of a future where His Light and Love transforms the whole of the earth, discovering that they have a part to play in this plan. Their own personal story is part of this great story. Having drawn near to God, having savoured the sweetness of His presence and the wonders of His love they too are called to follow, called to be transformed, called to holiness, called to mission, called to be collaborators with God in the bringing forth of His Kingdom.

Materials are designed to draw the child/adult into an encounter with God. They respond to the cry of the child's heart "Help me to come close to God by myself!" An authentic and personal relationship with God is formed. The pure joy of being in God's presence is experienced.

The space or the atrium, is a retreat centre for children to come into the Lord's presence. Here they are called by name, fed and nourished, cared for and protected. Here they discover the many wonderful secrets hidden in the Bible about God and His Kingdom, that He wants us all to know.

In the atrium children are invited to work at their own pace, each journeying their own journey. Visiting a 3-6 atrium, you might find one child setting the model altar, another sitting with the diorama of Mary's house and the figures of the angel and Mary. Another might be kneading dough, reflecting on the

The Catechesis originated in Rome, in 1954, by two women Sofia Cavalletti, a Hebrew Scripture scholar and Gianna Gobbi, a Montessorian. Sofia says that they began without even knowing they had begun. They were amazed at the joy of the children as they shared with them the Scriptures. Today atria of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd can be found in over a hundred countries throughout the world. 🇮🇹



The cry of a child



God's Time line



Group photo with the animators



In prayer with children



Holy Spirit Sisters celebrate 120 years

-Patrick Matbob

The **Holy Spirit Sisters** have provided invaluable service to Papua New Guineans over 120 years in health, education, religion and in other social services contributing to the development of Papua New Guinea.

"A crowd of children gathered at the harbour, all very happy about our arrival. They were not afraid of us. We made our entry here in a manner that reminded us of the Lord's entry into Jerusalem"

On December 8, 1889 in Steyl in the Netherlands, a missionary congregation for women called Missionary Sisters Servants of the Holy Spirit (SSpS) was founded. The founders were Fr Arnold Janssen and Maria Helena Stollenwerk and Josepha Hendrina Stenmanns. Fr Arnold Janssen had earlier in 1875 established another male congregation which he called the Society of the Divine Word (SVD).

The SVD and Holy Spirit Sisters were founded in response to the command of Jesus Christ which is to bring the good news to the ends of the earth. At that time, the island of New Guinea was the 'end of the earth'.

Just ten years after being founded, the first Holy Spirit Sisters arrived on Tumleo Island in Sandaun province. There were four of them, Sisters Ursula Sensen, Fridolina Voekt (superior), Valeria Dietzen and Martha Sieferding all from Germany. They were all teachers.

They came in response to a call for help from the first six Divine Word missionaries (SVD) to the South Seas, who arrived on Tumleo island three years earlier. The SVD needed

help to bring the Good News to the local women.

Sr Valeria wrote: *"On 26 March at 12 o'clock (1899), we arrived in Berlinhafen (Tumleo), the goal of our journey".* It was Palm Sunday.

"A crowd of children from neighboring villages had gathered at the harbour, all very happy about our arrival. They were not afraid of us, they pressed around us and took us by the hand and so, accompanied by the little ones, we made our entry here in a manner that reminded us of the Lord's entry into Jerusalem . . ." (from the letter of Sr. Ursula Sensen of June 4, 1899.)

On December 8, 2019, the SSpS congregation in Madang celebrated 130 years of the founding of their order, and 120 years of their establishment in PNG. The occasion was celebrated with a Holy Mass at the St Michaels' parish church at Alexishafen which was followed by lunch and entertainment.

The mission of the Holy Spirit sisters has not been without challenges. In WWII more than half of the sisters lost their lives. The sisters had been given



Archbishop of Madang, Anton Bal with his gift - a bilum.



Above: Sr. Heline Senft, Austria and Sr. Maria Gertrudis Bilasi, Indonesia.

a choice by the Australian government to leave New Guinea. But they chose to stay with the people. The first to die were 18 sisters amongst the missionaries from East Sepik who were with 62 prisoners executed on the Japanese Destroyer *Akikaze* on March 17, 1943 while enroute from Kavieng to Rabaul. The missionaries included Bishop Loerks, six priests, 14 brothers, and three lay people. Another five sisters were lucky to join other missionaries to walk from Sepik to the highlands and were later evacuated to Port Moresby and then to Australia. Later 37 sisters were killed on the Japanese ship *Yorishime Maru* when it was strafed by American warplanes while sailing from Madang to Wewak. One of the survivors Sr Siglinde Poboss kept a diary of the experience which has since been published under the title "My Captivity Experiences" by Emeritus Archbishop of Madang, Archbishop Stephen Reichert.



Sr Florence Utah SSpS, Provincial

After the war, the sisters returned to Madang on September 22, 1946 and their missionary work continued. The sisters were instrumental in setting up two local congregations, the Rosary sisters of Wewak in 1952 and the St Therese Sisters of Madang in 1954. They also moved into the Highlands starting at Minj in 1956, Par in 1957 then took over the government leprosarium at Yampu in 1958. In 1962, a convent was opened in Mount Hagen.

The sisters were also involved in developing PNG's education system. In 1961 Sr Jane Francis Millane represented the missions on the Syllabus Development Committee of the National Education Department and helped prepare the National Grade Six exams, and produced the Maths Laboratory. In 1968, they were involved with the SVDS in starting the Catholic High School in Madang, where many PNG leaders were educated. The high school has since developed into the Divine Word University and the SSpS sisters are still on the staff of the University. The sisters were also involved in the development of Malala Secondary School in Madang.

The first Papua New Guineans to be professed SSpS sisters are Sr Alma Kawaly and Sr Agnes Terese Lisban of East Sepik. Since then more PNG women have joined the congregation and are now serving as missionaries in countries around the world. 🇩🇪

Sr Marina and Sr Genevieve professing their vows.



Group photo of the sisters with Archbishop Anton Bal, Archbishop of Madang





Blessed Petro ToRot

Celebrating 25 years of his beatification

“Blessed Peter ToRot was beatified especially because of his defence of the Sacrament of Marriage,” said Bishop Rochus Tatamai MSC, Bishop of Kavieng–Lorengau and President of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands in his homily at the Silver Jubilee Anniversary Mass of the Beatification of Blessed Peter ToRot. The Bishop is a grand nephew of Blessed Peter ToRot. He spoke at length about the life and martyrdom of Blessed Peter ToRot from which he drew lessons for the work of catechists, the Sacrament of Marriage and family life, relationship of our faith and culture.



- Dominic ToMar

Blessed Peter ToRot a catechist in Rakunai Village in the Gazelle Peninsula of East New Britain Province was killed by the Japanese in 1945 toward the end of the second World War. He was killed for refusing to cease carrying out his duty as a catechist in leading his people in praying, instructing the children in the faith, witnessing and blessing marriages and above all defying the order of the Japanese allowing polygamy by defending the sanctity of Marriage. He was officially declared by Pope St John Paul II a Martyr for the faith during the Beatification Ceremony at Sir John Guise Stadium, Port Moresby on 17 January 1995.

The main Anniversary celebrations were held in Rakunai on Friday 17 January 2020. The Anniversary celebrations in Port Moresby were coordinated by the Blessed Peter ToRot Foundation Inc. a lay organization established in 1996 to promote the life and work of Blessed Peter ToRot and support the Archbishop of Rabaul in the Cause for the Canonization of Blessed Peter ToRot. The celebrations were held

at St Joseph’s Parish Boroko. Cardinal Ribat blessed the chapel dedicated to Bl Peter ToRot in the Marian Valley, Brisbane on 19th January. Bl Peter ToRot stands as a fitting model for us.

The celebrations included a Eucharistic celebration with Bishop Rochus Tatamai MSC as the main celebrant. Concelebrating with him were Fr John Willio MSC the Provincial Superior of the PNG MSC Province, Fr Urban Kalimet MSC the Deputy Provincial, Fr Ambrose Pereira SDB, Fr Reynold Caigoy and Fr Victor Roche. The Friends of Blessed Peter ToRot led the choir and a group of young ladies lead the offertory procession with a traditional dance and tune from the Duke of York Islands in East New Britain Province. A sizeable group of the faithful from parishes in the Archdiocese of Port Moresby and members of various Religious Congregations attended the celebrations. Light refreshments were served to all after the mass to conclude the celebrations. 🇯🇵

Silver Jubilee celebrations at Rakunai, Archdiocese of Rabaul





Something Good for humankind

Emilie Ng

The Catholic Leader, Brisbane

Brisbane: Ms Kolita-Payne was among 800 people who gathered at Marian Valley on 19th January, for a Mass to honour Blessed Peter To Rot, and to witness the opening and blessing of the first chapel outside Papua New Guinea, dedicated to BI Peter ToRot. She was in charge of creating a traditional necklace made of Tolai shell money for Sir John Cardinal Ribat, who celebrated the Mass and blessed the chapel.

Angie Kolita-Payne, is the niece of Blessed Peter ToRot. Her aunt on her mother's side Paula la Varpit married Blessed Peter ToRot on November 11, 1936, when she was just 16. Angie who lives in Brisbane, was not born when her uncle was killed, but lived with Blessed Peter ToRot's daughter Rufina at the time of his beatification.

"Peter was killed in the Second World War and we are living his legacy today", said the 56 year old visibly moved niece. She said she was proud to represent BI Peter ToRot and her family in Brisbane, which she has called home for eight years. "This simple man brought life and peace to East New Britain. He is honoured today, because of his faith", she said.

Blessed Peter ToRot is the first martyr and blessed from PNG, having been killed by a lethal injection for his staunch Catholic beliefs. A trained catechist, Peter ToRot became the sole spiritual guide for Catholics in Rakunai in 1943, when the occupying Japanese military prohibited Christians to worship or participate in any religious gatherings.

When the Japanese military suggested to recover an old Tolai practice of polygamy, Blessed Peter ToRot publicly disagreed with the directive. He was threatened and eventually imprisoned for his defence of traditional, monogamous marriage.

In mid-1945, while imprisoned in a cave, a member of the Japanese military posing as a doctor gave Peter an injection that eventually killed him at the age of 33. One prisoner witnessed the tragic murder, and news spread that Peter was killed for his faith.

Mrs Kolita-Payne said she knew little about the details of her uncle's death until she and her family moved to Rakunai. "I knew that Auntie Paula's husband was killed by the Japanese and that he was given an injection. I was told at that time, that he died because he was preaching, teaching and baptising children," she said. She finally realised the international acclaim for her uncle, when Pope John Paul II beatified Blessed Peter ToRot in Port Moresby on January 17, 1995. She witnessed pilgrim after pilgrim visit the site where her uncle was killed. "What really opened my eyes were the pilgrims as you realise that he has done something good for humankind," she said.

Mrs Kolita-Payne said she thought of Blessed Peter To Rot whenever she read the biblical account of the betrayal of Jesus. "You read the Bible and there's persecution right there for you and I know a good example", she said. 🇵🇬

BI Peter ToRot stands out as a model to be imitated as we move ahead in our task of New Evangelization. Our response to the invocation: **BI Peter ToRot - Pray for us and Renew our Faith**, is indeed unique said Fr Joaquim D'Souza sdb, intrigued by his life. "As a first generation Catholic in Papua New Guinea, he fully understood his commitment to the faith. No other saint has this response", he said. "I try to conclude every workshop and session with this invocation. Family and friends are now part of my prayer as I have personally experienced healing and health through his intercession," said Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb.

In this post COVID-19 time, we need to thank him for protecting and guarding Papua New Guinea. All around us our neighbours are experiencing hardship with positive cases and even death. Papua New Guinea has been spared thus far. It's an invitation for us to turn to BI Peter ToRot, implore his intercession and follow in his footsteps. He challenges us to live our faith, celebrate the sacraments and prepare ourselves for our committed love in the Sacrament of Marriage. Papua New Guinea will be blessed if we follow his ideals, faith and commitment.



Prayer To Blessed Petro ToRot

Blessed Petro ToRot,
God called you to serve Him
among your own people,
as a catechist.

You loved your work and
you were faithful to the Divine call.

Your heroic witness to serve your creator
strengthened them in the faith.

We rejoice and thank God,
for exalting you to be the
first Beatified Martyr of our country.

Pray for us,
that we may remain faithful
to our vocations and stand firmly committed
to God and his people,
especially in times of trials and difficulties.

Amen.

Please send us your favours, graces and miracles received through the intercession of BI Petro ToRot, together with photographs and documents that you may possess. These will support the cause of his canonisation.



Photo:
Maria Tokala with the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Alotau in the background

A Shining Light for Alotau

Chris So'onwai is the Deputy Director, Alotau-Sidea Catholic Professional Chapter. He shares with us a glimpse into the life of **Maria Tokala**, a 67 year old, who strives to put into practice the words of Christ.

'Whatever you do to the least of my brothers and sisters, you do unto me'
(Mt 25: 31-46)

'Love your neighbour as yourself' (Mk 12:31), 'Whatever you do to the least of my brothers and sisters, you do unto me', (Mt 25: 31-46) are familiar words for all of us. Yet, the practice to reach out and show love for needy men and women around us is no easy task.

Who would undauntedly walk up to a filthy looking person, a foul-smelling woman, take her by the hand, lead her for a bath and then clothe her? Only someone who has a heart overflowing with kindness and a life filled with God's spirit. The life of Maria Tokala has stood out and I want to share a glimpse of her life with you.

Maria Tokala, a 67-year-old Catholic lives in a settlement in Alotau. A former teacher, she is at present the President of the Alotau Urban Catholic Womens' Association. Her friends admire her warmth and tenderness and appreciate her leadership as the AUCWA chairlady. She is a jovial person wears a smile and does what she can to help others.

Maria was born on the 30th December 1953 at the Samarai Island health centre. She was baptized the next day and given the name Maria Litiyeli. She spent most of her childhood years living with her parents on Basilaki Island. When she was old enough she began her primary education

at St Joseph Primary School. In 1964 she enrolled as a boarding student at St. Anne Primary School Sidea and completed Form 1-3.

1970 she completed Form 4 (equivalent to Gr.10) at Hagita High School and then went on to OLSH Kabaleu Teachers College in East New Britain to complete her teaching certificate course. From 1972 she taught at various primary schools before joining the International Education Agency (IEA) as an Assistant Teacher in 1979. All through her teaching years, Maria was filled with passion, did her best to care for the hopeless, the poor and the needy.

In 1975 Maria and Alexious Tokala were united in the Sacrament of Matrimony. They were blessed with four children - Tarcisious, Joel, Joylyn and Peter. All are now married and have families of their own.

After 28 years of committed service to education she resigned in 2000. The next 15 years saw her at the helm of the Urban Catholic Women Association. Over the recent months she has reached out to bathe, clean and clothe two differently abled persons, Delilah and Cesley. She has reached out to them with food and money. Since 2005, Maria strives to put into practice the Lords words: 'Whatever



With gratitude to Bp Henk Kronenberg sm

Bp Henk Kronenberg, SM was born on 29th September 1934, in Enschede, Netherlands and baptised Hermannus Hendrikus Michael Kronenberg.

A committed Marist missionary, he was ordained priest on the 18th October 1961 at Lievelede in the Netherlands. He worked as a teacher in Hulst until 1964. Like many of his brothers, he traveled to Oceania as a missionary and worked on the island of Bougainville from 1965 to 1990. During the civil war in Bougainville (1988 to 1998) he initially remained in Bougainville, then moved to Port Moresby and from 1991 to 1995, and served at the seminary in Bomana. From 1995 to 1999, he was the secretary of the Episcopal Conference of Papua New Guinea.

Pope John Paul II appointed him Bishop of Bougainville on April 19, 1999. It was on July 14th, 1999 in Tsiroge that he was ordained as Bishop of Bougainville where he served for 10 years.

Following his retirement in 2009, he received the highest honor that was awarded on Papua New Guinea's Independence Day. He was honored with the title "Chief" and awarded the "Great Order of Logohu".

He returned to his brothers in the Netherlands and lived in the Marist community in Enschede until shortly before his death. He died at 85 years of age, on March 25, 2020 in a nursing home in Enschede, Holland.

"Your life has inspired a lot of people in Bougainville", said Fr Polycarp Kaviak, caretaker of the Diocese of Bougainville. "Due to the present State of Emergency, a requiem mass will be held with the priests and a small number of people", he said.



Continued from pg. 14

you do to the least of my brethren, you do unto me". (Mt 25:40-45).

She writes:

"I see Christ in these people, so I started giving them a little money, food and clothes for their personal needs, whenever I see them. I willingly reach out to them with tenderness and love".

"My heart cries out for these people. If I happen to meet any one of them at the church ground on a Sunday, I try to support them in little ways. I don't like to see or hear people like them being mistreated and I argue with people who abuse them".

"Visiting a number of helpless people, the sick, the old and the blind, I share with them passages from the Bible.

"Little things like this are necessary to enlighten their spirits. It does not have to be big".

"I am thankful for the missionaries and particularly my parents for planting the seed of love, mercy and compassion. If only every person gives openly to the needy surely God's grace will always be present".

Maria was nominated as a recipient of Prestigious British Knighthood for the OBE award in 2012 for her service to the community.

"But I am not here for a fanfare. Let me do what I love passionately as a true Christians" she smilingly stated. 🇬🇧



'Creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay' Rom 8:21

**'In the silence of our cities, the Easter Gospel will resound
In the Risen Jesus, life has conquered death.**

Hope is nourished by our Pascal faith.

Hope does not disappoint us.

**It's a time of hope as we are freed from evil
and from this pandemic'. - Pope Francis**

Happy Easter!

May the radiance of Christ, dispel the darkness.



Elizabeth Merrill, ESPN Senior Writer
Adapted with permission

'I made this deal with God'

- Shelly Pennefather



Villanova basketball star, **Shelly Pennefather** left home to become **Sister Rose Marie** of the Queen of Angels. In June, 2019, she completed 25 years of her solemn profession and renewed her vows. On that occasion she was granted the rare privilege of hugging her beloved family. Her vocation story will touch your heart and invite you to respond to Gods mysterious call.



Photo above:
Shelly Pennefather flanked by her mother and father pose together with the rest of the family in front for their tidy brick home.



She has a cheerfulness and a confidence that there is nothing to fear.

On June 8, 1991, a Saturday morning, Shelly Pennefather commenced a new life. She posed for a group photo in front of her parents' tidy brick home in northern Virginia, together with her loving family. Accompanied by the entire family, she left for her new home, wearing a long blue dress and a pair of shoes she'd never wear again. Twenty-five years old, young, beautiful, dynamic and talented, Pennefather was in her prime. A talented basketball player, she was offered \$200,000 to play basketball in Japan. At that time, she would have been one of the richest players in women's basketball.

She had lots of friends and was exceptionally good with children. She talked about having lots of them with John Heisler, a friend she'd known most of her life. Heisler nearly proposed to her twice, but something inside stopped him, and he never bought a ring. "When she walked into the room," Heisler said, "the whole room came alive. "She has a cheerfulness and a confidence that there is nothing to fear."

That Saturday morning in 1991, Pennefather drove her Mazda 323 to the Monastery of the Poor Clares in Alexandria, Virginia. Fifteen cloistered nuns waited for her in two lines, their smiles radiant. She turned to her family. "I love you all," she said. Then the door closed, and Shelly Pennefather was gone.

The Poor Clares are one of the strictest religious orders in the world. They sleep on straw mattresses, and wake up every night at 12:30 am to pray, never resting more than four hours at a time. They are barefoot 23 hours of the day, except for an hour during which they are outside in the courtyard. Sister Rose Marie will never leave the monastery. She'll never call, email or text anyone. She gets two family visits per year, but converses through a see-through screen. She can write letters to her friends, but only if they write to her first. And once every 25 years, she can hug her family.

In early June 2019, to witness the 25th year anniversary of her solemn profession and the renewal of her vows are her loving family and beloved friends.

MARY JANE PENNEFATHER, 78 years old, is the matriarch of the family. She mows her own lawn and rises every morning to walk to church. When Shelly entered the monastery, she left behind a note. Mary Jane is the strongest person, but when she read the letter, she broke



Above: Coach Harry Perretta on the basketball court

She was forced to go into solitude where there was nobody else, just her and God.

Below: Shelly signed up with Nippon Express in Japan the place where her whole life would change.



down and cried. A cheerleader once, she belongs to a generation of Catholics who did not believe in drawing attention to themselves. She has a room full of religious statues and images, which the family calls the Blessed Mother room. Her husband, Mike, died in that room. He had skin cancer, which spread too far when doctors found it, but he went quickly, which Mary Jane considers a blessing. Sister Rose Marie couldn't go to her father's funeral back in 1998. But she wrote a letter that they read out loud, and her brother Dick says it was probably the most touching part of the service.

Growing up, Shelly was different. In the sixth grade, a teacher asked the class an ordinary question: What do you want to be when you grow up? The teacher wasn't prepared for Shelly's answer. "I'm going to be a saint," she said.

MIKE PENNEFATHER was an Air Force colonel. He took the family to Germany and Hawaii and New York, so Shelly had already seen a lot of the world by her 20s. Mike Pennefather taught all seven of his children how to shoot a basketball, and when he had finished with that, he taught other people's children how to do it, too. Shelly was born between two brothers, two basketball playmates. The elbows and charges she took made her unstoppable when she finally played against girls. At night time, Mary Jane would gather the whole family together to pray the rosary. It didn't matter if it was midnight; she waited until everyone was home. After the last prayer was said, each child gave Mary Jane and Mike a kiss goodnight.

COACH HARRY PERRETTA also prayed the rosary every day. Pennefather had no interest in the recruiting process. She hated the attention that it brought, and didn't like talking on the phone. Perretta talked to her about his devotion to the Blessed Mother Mary, and they connected. She committed to Villanova, the oldest Catholic University in Pennsylvania.

"She was a very lazy basketball

player at first. She didn't work hard on the court when she came here," Perretta said. "God gave you this gift," Perretta told her. "You're not really using it to the fullest extent."

Pennefather did have the most beautiful shooting touch in all of women's basketball. She scored 2,408 points, breaking Villanova's all-time record for women and men. That record still stands today.

Women's professional basketball overseas offered good money. She signed up with the Nippon Express in Japan, the place where her whole life would change. The pace in Japan was much slower. Away from her college teammates and the daily chaos of her large family, she felt homesick and alone in a faraway city. Her team started 0-5. If they finished at the bottom of the division, she would need to stay in Japan for another two months to play a series of round-robin games. She desperately wanted to go home, and vowed that if her team could finish in the top six, allowing her to go home rather than stay those two months, she would spend that time doing volunteer work.

They finished third. Pennefather returned to the U.S. and fulfilled her promise by working in a soup kitchen at the Missionary Sisters of Charity in Norristown, Pennsylvania.

The next season she felt out of place in Japan. She did everything she could to keep busy, reading books, learning Japanese, teaching English. But Pennefather still felt a deep emptiness.

"She was forced to go into solitude," said John Heisler, her childhood friend. "There was nobody else, just her and God."

JOHN HEISLER was a sort of mystery man. Pennefather's teammates would say that they thought Shelly would do one of two things in her life: marry this guy she spent summers with or become a nun.

Heisler met Pennefather in grade school on a base in Wiesbaden, Germany. He'd never met a girl like her, confident yet self-effacing; strong but kind enough to defend anyone who was being picked on. Heisler came from a large Catholic family, and at one point, the families prayed the rosary together. Heisler had three passions growing up: sports, comic books and stories about saints. He was fascinated by St. Francis of Assisi, who eventually helped St. Clare start an order called the Poor Clares. As he grew older,



Above: Sr Rose Marie reaches out to hug her mother after twenty five years.

"I'm entering the Poor Clares," she told him, "and this is our last time ... to spend time together."

Heisler's heart dropped. But in a way it freed him. John Heisler had nothing holding him back. Eight years later, he was ordained.

Heisler developed another interest: Shelly Pennefather. They'd spend their summers together white-water rafting and talking about anything. Despite their affection for each other, they were never intimate. Heisler went on to the Air Force Academy, and one morning he woke up plagued by one question: What if God has another plan for me? John Heisler was battling his own inner voice. One that told him he should become a priest.

In early 1991, during her third season in Japan, she called Heisler and asked him to meet her in Virginia so they could talk. "Well, I'm entering the Poor Clares," she told him, "and this is our last time ... to spend time together." Heisler's heart dropped. But in a way it freed him. John Heisler had nothing holding him back. Eight years later, he was ordained.

When Pennefather got back from Japan in 1991, she shared it with her friends. "I would never leave my family and my friends. But this is what I'm called to do. I know it. God is calling me. And I'm going to do it."

TIGHE, KAREN DALY and **KATHY MILLER** her Villanova class friends stayed together just like family. Perretta brokered a backdoor deal with the Poor Clares. He'd bring the sisters some much-needed supplies every summer in return for his own yearly visit with Sister Rose Marie. Often he brought along one or two of her old teammates. They would see her through the screen and hold their hands up to hers.

ON JUNE 9th 2019, Sister Rose Marie's celebrated her 25th Jubilee of profession. The bishop of Arlington, celebrated the mass and the people dressed in their Sunday suits and dresses scurried to find seats in the monastery's tiny chapel. Perretta's two sons, strapping young men, stood in the back and craned their necks to see the altar. They weren't even born when Pennefather left.

Shortly after the homily, two wooden doors opened and the whole chapel let out a silent gasp. There she was, 53 years old, standing before them, with no screen. Without even scanning the crowd, she immediately fixed her eyes on the pew where her mother sat. Her face lit up.

Sister Rose Marie renewed her vows. Then a procession line formed in front of her. Mary Jane was first. Sister Rose Marie held her hands out as her mother drew closer. The Pennefathers have never been a touchy-feely family, but when mother and daughter embraced, it seemed to last an eternity. Neither one wanted to let go.

"I'll be here at 103 if you can hang in there," Mary Jane told her daughter. "I'll try," Sister Rose Marie said.

She hugged nieces and nephews she had never touched before. She embraced siblings whose hair had turned from dark to grey. Perretta got his hug and so did her close friends. And in that receiving line stood Father John Heisler. He saw the woman he had known and loved for most of his life, and they gave each other a knowing smile and an embrace. "We made the right decision," she told him. "No regrets," he said.

The Pennefathers threw a jubilee reception at a Knights of Columbus hall. Mary Jane spent weeks making everything, the lasagna and chocolate cake and orange slush. If anyone is going to make it to 103, her children say, it's Mary Jane.

Sister Rose Marie's sacrifice was Mary Jane's sacrifice. Mary Jane keeps a box at the house that contains her daughter's hair. Mary Jane has her letter and recites one line, from memory. "I realize that I won't hear the laughter of my brothers and sisters anymore." Shelly's younger sister, Jean, also became a nun. She's not cloistered and can hug her family, use a cell phone and drive.

Mary Jane understands religious life. In her photo album she has an old picture of a young girl wearing a veil. "That's me," Mary Jane whispered. "I entered, too." She was 14 years old in the picture. The convent was vast, and 2 ½ hours away from her home in Louisiana. Nine months in, it dawned on her. *I shouldn't be here.* She went home, finished high school, went to college, met Mike and never looked back. She, too, has no regrets. "Well," she said, "look at the fruits of my life." 🌈

Pope's special Urbi et Orbi blessing:

God turns everything to our good

Courtesy – Vatican News
By Devin Watkins

Pope Francis at the Urbi et Orbi



Vatican City, Rome:

Pope Francis delivered an extraordinary blessing “To the City and to the World” on Saturday 28th at 3am, local time. He prayed for an end to the Covid-19 coronavirus pandemic. In his meditation, the Pope reflects on Jesus’ words to His disciples: “Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?”

Pope Francis held the special Urbi et Orbi on Friday from the steps of St. Peter's Basilica. Usually a colorful event reserved only for Christmas Day and Easter Sunday, this extraordinary blessing was held in keeping with the gravity of the current global situation, as more than half of the world's population is confined to their homes to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

Standing in a deserted St. Peter's Square with a steady rain falling, Pope Francis spoke to the world through all the means of modern communication: Facebook, YouTube, TV, and radio. He prayed for the world at this critical juncture in the presence of two iconic images: the ancient icon of Mary *Salus Populi Romani*— usually housed in the Basilica of St. Mary Major – and the miraculous crucifix kept in the church of San Marcello on the city's Via del Corso. Then followed the adoration of the Blessed Sacrament after which the Holy Father imparted his Apostolic Blessing, inviting everyone to receive the plenary indulgence.



TESTIMONY Pray for Italy

Atheist doctor finds God

Italy, 23rd March, 2020:

Dr. Julian Urban, a 38 year-old serving in a hospital in Lombardy, Italy shares his testimony.

Never in my darkest nightmares did I imagine that I would see and experience what has been going on in Italy in our hospital the past three weeks. The nightmare flows, and the river gets bigger and bigger. At first, a few patients came, then dozens, and then hundreds. Now, we are no longer doctors, but sorters who decide who should live and who should be sent home to die, though all these patients paid Italian health taxes throughout their lives.

Until two weeks ago, my colleagues and I were atheists. It was normal because we are doctors. We learned that science excludes the presence of God. I laughed at my parents going to church.

Nine days ago, a 75-year-old pastor was admitted into the hospital. He was a kind man. He had serious breathing problems. He had a Bible with him and impressed us by how he read it to the dying as he held their hand. We doctors were all tired, discouraged, psychologically and physically finished. When we had time, we listened to him.

We have reached our limits. We can do no more. People are dying every day. We are exhausted. We have two colleagues who have died, and others that have been infected. We realized that we needed to start asking God for help. We do this when we have a few free minutes. When we talk to each other, we cannot believe that, though we were once fierce atheists, we are now daily in search of peace, asking the Lord to help us continue so that we can take care of the sick.

Yesterday, the 75-year-old pastor died. Despite having had over 120 deaths here in 3 weeks, we were destroyed. He had managed, despite his condition and our difficulties, to bring us a PEACE that we no longer had hoped to find. The pastor went to the Lord, and soon we will follow him if matters continue like this.

I haven't been home for 6 days. I don't know when I ate last. I realize my worthlessness on this earth. I want to use my last breath to help others. I am happy to have returned to God while I am surrounded by the suffering and death of my fellow men. 🙏



Pilgrims journey to Holy Land

- Nigel Akuani

Mt Carmel, Bethlehem, the Mount of Olives, Jerusalem and Bethany beyond the Jordan. As their special visit to the Holy Land came to an end, the pilgrims felt a heightened sense of spirituality to bear witness to Christ by their life.

The Catholic Bishops Conference of Papua New Guinea and Solomon

Islands (CBC PNGSI) prepared and coordinated the trip.

"The pilgrimage was aimed at stimulating enthusiasm among laity in carrying out the mission of the Church," said Nyleptha Kenny. This was the first time for CBC PNGSI to arrange such a group travel to the Holy Land. 2020 is another year dedicated to the Laity. Another pilgrimage is intended to spiritually broaden the horizons of the laity. Requests for the next 20-28 February 2021 pilgrimage are already pouring in.

Port Moresby: Twenty-five Pilgrims from Papua New Guinea embarked on a 10-day journey to the Holy Land. The group consisting of 10 Priests and 15 Lay people came from the Southern, Momase and Highlands Regions of Papua New Guinea, and from the Solomon Islands. They left from Port Moresby to Israel on Friday, 21st February and returned on Sunday, 1st March.

Their pilgrimage took them to Mt. Nebo, Nazareth, the Sea of Galilee, Cana, the Mount of the Transfiguration,

Diocese of Kimbe farewells

Bp. William Fey

- Fr. John Balele and Fr. Benjamin Agea

Kimbe: A Thanksgiving Mass and farewell ceremony was held for his Lordship Emeritus Bishop William Fey OFM Cap who served as bishop for 10 years in the Diocese of Kimbe.

Held at the indoor gym of the Muthuvel stadium on Tuesday, 25th February, the celebration saw Catholic faithful from all nineteen parishes gather to farewell the Bishop who was the main presider at the Thanksgiving Eucharistic celebration. Concelebrating with him were the newly ordained bishop, Bp John Bosco Auram and priests, most of whom he had taught and ordained.

In his homily, Bp William praised the virtues of Saint Francis of Assisi and challenged the congregation to continue to uphold vigilantly the virtues of humility and piety. "Mi tenkim yupla olgeta, ba mi nonap

lustinging long yupela na ba mi pray long yupla wanwan (I thank you all, I will not forget you and I will be praying for each one of you)," said Bp Fey as he concluded the mass.



YEAR OF THE LAITY

2019 - Called to Holiness - 2021 - Sent to Serve

2020:
Holy and Formed for Mission

Present yourself to the Lord

- Fr. Yulianus Gunawan

Kiunga: Religious Sisters, Brothers and Priests gathered together to renew their vows at St. Gerard's Parish, Kiunga. It took place on the celebration of the Presentation of the Lord, 2nd February 2020 where 23 sisters, 6 brothers and 17 priests working in the Diocese of Daru-Kiunga renewed their vows.

At the Eucharistic celebration, Bishop Gilles Coté, SMM Bishop of Daru-Kiunga thanked the religious for their dedicated service and invited them to constantly present themselves to the Lord. "Mary, Joseph, Simeon and Anna were prayerful and faithful people. They had time to pray, sacrifice and even fast. They were blessed by God to recognise the Messiah who would save the world", said Bp Gilles. "You are called to present your life faithfully to God. God will then guide you to recognize God's presence."



After the homily all the religious, lighted candles held aloft, renewed their vows. They were then sent to share the peace of Christ with the faithful.

SOCOM Seminar on Environmental Issues

Fr. Ambrose Pereira sdb

Port Moresby: A one-week social communications (SOCOM) seminar for catholic media coordinators focused on environmental issues that was highlighted through the use of media.

Hosted by the Social Communications Commission of the Catholic Bishops Conference of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands, the program began on the 16th March and concluded on 20th March. 20 participants from the different dioceses of Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands spent a week in prayer, reflection, discussion and production. The theme of the seminar was: 'Keep it clean. Go Green!'



"Social Communications is about conveying a message that will bring about a positive change in the community", said Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb at the start of the program.

"Our productions should deal with the issues we face and connect with people at the grassroots level. The voices of people should ultimately bring about change in policy at the level of government", he said.

The participants are committed to:

- Animating the diocese to plant 5,000 trees in the diocese.
- Conducting media sessions for students, youth, diocesan staff in their dioceses.
- Producing a monthly newsletter for the diocese and
- Preparing a Media and Social Media policy for approval at the level of the diocese.

"I liked the fact that the seminar had a theme promoting awareness and creating inspiration to effect change through the use of the media," stated Fr John Balele, a participant from the Diocese of Kimbe.

Participants at the SOCOM Seminar

Panel Discussion on Seabed Mining - Nigel Akuani

Port Moresby: An informative panel discussion was dedicated to creating awareness of the harm caused by Deep-Sea Mining (DSM). Hosted by Caritas PNG, Catholic Bishops Conference Development Desk and the Alliance of Solwara Warriors, the panel was held on Friday 13th March.

The Panellists were Cardinal Sir John Ribat MSC, Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Port Moresby, Ms Marie Mondu, Development Secretary of CBC, Mr Peter Bosip, Director of Centre for Environmental Law and Community Rights, and Mr Jonathan Mesulam, spokesperson for the Alliance of Solwara Warriors (ASW).

Issues raised included lobbying for the cancellation of the "Solwara 1 Project" Mining Licence and all exploration licences of DSM in PNG, the Environmental, Economic, Legislative, Social and Cultural implications, and the current situation of Deep-Sea Mining in PNG.



Annual General Meeting of the Federation of Religious Sr Ancy John SCSA

Madang: The Federation of Religious (FOR) held its Annual General Meeting from February 3 to 8, at Alexishafen, Madang.

There were 42 participants from Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Fiji who attended the meeting. It had as its theme: "Melanesian Values and Consecrated Life".

The meeting was an occasion to celebrate diverse cultures and gifts amidst moving from being bi-cultural to being multi-cultural. Called to continually proclaim the gospel, the religious are committed to share a deeper love for Christ, building up charisms in a Melanesian culture, having the courage to reject forms of addictions and make efforts to keep charisms and missions vibrant. Issues of concern are formulated and presented to those concerned.

St John Bosco parish erected in the Diocese of Gizo

Bp Luciano Capelli

Gizo: St John Bosco Parish is the 8th parish to be established in the Diocese of Gizo at the provincial capital of Choiseul.

Serving these 8 parishes are 16 priests: 4 diocesans, 5 Dominicans, 3 Guanellians, 1 Incarnate Word, 1 missionary from Myanmar and 2 from the Bacolod Diocese. 2

Deacons are preparing for their priestly ordination. Three congregations of sisters FMA, OP, Visitation are helping us with the diocesan 15 schools and 35 Kindergartens. Isolation is a great issue, but it could be a blessing during this time of Coronavirus. Communications are now fast growing from 2-way radio communication, twice a day on our church frequency to mobile phones all in 12 years.

The growth of the population is about 3% per year and the people live of the produce of their gardens and of what the forest gives. The church helps the Government in providing Health and education services which are privileged places for proclaiming the 'Good News'. Groups of volunteers for 19 years helped us to put our structures back on their feet after the earthquake and tsunami of 2007. We await the coming of the SDB, the animating nucleus of the Salesian family, to bring the Charism of Don Bosco in our school founded and named after Don Bosco (Nila, Shortland Islands) since the beginning of the diocese by the Dominican Order. The opening of Grade 12 this year at Nila would hopefully prepare better youth to make a final option for their vocation in life and enrich their life, their families, the communities and the Church. A small College for technical instructors is very much appreciated by the whole country.



Youth Alive!

Spiritual insights by and for young people
Sharing on the Sunday Gospel

*One-minute:
Personal experience,
Reference to the Gospel
and an Invitation to Change.*

AN INITIATIVE BY:
CBC Social Communication
and PGS Communications



War Room

<http://www.kendrickbrotherscatalogue.com/warroom/>

War Room is a 2015 American Christian drama film directed by Alex Kendrick and written by himself and Stephen Kendrick. It is the Kendrick brothers' fifth film and their first through their subsidiary, Kendrick Brothers Productions.



WAR ROOM, a compelling drama with humour and heart that explores the power that prayer can have on marriages, parenting, careers, friendships, and every other area of our lives.

Tony and Elizabeth Jordan have it all - great jobs, a beautiful daughter, and their dream house. But appearances can be deceiving. Beneath the roof of the Jordan's mansion lies neatly made bed of misunderstandings, empty dinner tables, unfaithfulness and a divorce waiting to happen. Tony and Elizabeth Jordan's world is actually crumbling under the strain of a failing marriage. While Tony basks in his professional success and flirts with temptation, Elizabeth resigns herself to increasing bitterness. But their lives take an unexpected turn when Elizabeth meets her newest client, Miss Clara, and is challenged to establish a "war room" and a battle plan of prayer for her family. As Elizabeth tries to fight for her family, Tony's hidden struggles come to light. Tony must decide if he will make amends to his family and prove Miss Clara's wisdom that victories don't come by accident.

At this time when we are struggling to understand our response to COVID-19, **WAR ROOM** is a vivid reminder that prayer is a powerful weapon that will help us reflect on the honesty of our actions and bring us into respectful interaction with each other, our spouse, our loved ones and our elderly parents. The presence of God in our life helps us realise that we can tide through the struggles of life. It helps us realise that if we hold on to God we can ensure that joy and happiness is experienced by every member as we lovingly care for each one.

Questions for reflection and discussion:

1. What personal chord has been touched as you watched the film?
2. The Jordan family looks ideal on the surface, but the cracks surface. Share about your family.
3. Marriage is not easy and every married person needs to get down on their knees and pray. Comment.
4. In what way can you isolate yourself to deal with the devil in your life?
5. What does our situation of COVID-19 highlight as you spend time with your family and loved ones.





CARITAS PAPUA NEW GUINEA
The Justice, Peace, Relief & Development Agency
of the Catholic Bishops Conference of PNG-SI

LENTEN APPEAL 2020

'Holy and Formed for a Mission of Love and Charity'



For more information,
please contact the team at
Caritas PNG on **325 9577**