**News Compilation for Catholic Church News aired on Radio Maria**

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**Welcome to another weekly Catholic Church News on Radio Maria. I am Nigel Akuani and Rosemary Yambune with the news.**

**Our stories for the week:**

1. **Pope’s January prayer intention: Promotion of world peace**
2. **Celebrating the Great Protection of Mary**
3. **Bishop Ambrose Kiapseni laid to rest**
4. **Making Commitments, Celebrating Love, Living Faith**
5. **Warm Hearts reach out at Christmas**
6. **Virgil Narokobi Appointed Judge**

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**News Item 1 – Pope’s January prayer intention: Promotion of world peace**

Pope Francis on Thursday 2nd January released a video message accompanying his prayer intention for January 2020, which this month is "Promotion of World Peace".

In his prayer intention for the month of January, Pope Francis called for all Christians, followers of other religions, and all people of goodwill to promote together peace and justice in the world. He said, “In a divided and fragmented world, I want to invite all believers, and also those of good will, to reconciliation and fraternity. Our faith leads us to spread the values of peace and mutual understanding, of the common good.”

It has become the custom of Pope Francis to release a video message detailing his prayer intention for each month. The “Pope’s Video" initiative was developed to assist in the worldwide dissemination of monthly intentions of the Holy Father in relation to the challenges facing humanity.

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**News item 2 – Bishop Ambrose Kiapseni laid to rest**

Bishop Ambrose Kiapseni MSC, Bishop Emeritus of Kavieng, the longest serving Papua New Guinean Roman Catholic bishop was laid to rest on Saturday 28th December 2019.

Cardinal Sir John Ribat MSC, Archbishop of Port Moresby presided at the Requiem mass held at the Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Cathedral in Kavieng.  Archbishop Francesco Panfilo sdb of the Archdiocese of Rabaul and Bishop Rochus Josef Tatamai MSC, Bishop of Kavieng Diocese were concelebrants together with Fr Siby and Gianni OFM, Vicar Generals of Vanimo and Aitape Dioceses and several other priests from the three deaneries of Manus, Kavieng and Namatanai.  Despite the rain on the previous day, the Cathedral was packed to capacity.

Hon Sir Julius Chan, Governor of New Ireland Province, a long-time friend and colleague in the leadership of Bp Ambrose represented the Government together with several others.  Mr Robin Brown, First Secretary delivered the Governor's condolence message marking their long years and terms of collaboration throughout the State Church Partnership program in New Ireland Province.

Bp Rochus delivered the homily and conducted the burial rites at Kopkop the MSC centre cemetery while Abp Francesco did the final commendation at the cathedral. Fr Clement Taulam, Dean of Manus delivered the Eulogy that was prepared by Fr Gerard Savian MSC.  The Vicar General Fr Vincent Takin delivered the condolences messages from Cardinal Pietro Parolin on behalf of His Holiness Pope Francis and from Archbishop Kurian Mathew Vayalunkal, Apostolic Nuncio PNGSI as well as the message of condolence from Fernando Cardinal Filoni Prefect of the Congregation of the Evangelisation of Peoples.

The Diocesan Choir led the solemn liturgy and sang Bishop Ambrose Kiapseni's favourite Latin Mass, liturgical and eucharistic hymns. The entire eucharistic celebration captured the joyful Christmas as well as the Easter joy that Christ has Risen and lives forever.

Bishop Ambrose Kiapseni MSC was born on the 16thOctober 1945.  He was ordained a priest of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on the 7th January 1975. On 12th May 1991, he was ordained Bishop of Kavieng and resigned on the 22ndJune 2018, making him the longest serving Papua New Guinean Roman Catholic bishop. He passed away on the 20thDecember 2019.

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**News item 3 – Celebrating the Great Protection of Mary**

The Congregation of the Missionary Sisters, Alotau celebrated the feast of the Immaculate Conception on Saturday, 7th December at Alotau.  Bp Rolando C. Santos CM, Bishop of Alotau celebrated the Eucharist at which the sisters were joined by friends and benefactors.

The Eucharistic celebration was a thanksgiving to Mary for the 84 years of accompaniment since its foundation. Mary's unconditional response to the plan of salvation for humanity is the source of special inspiration for us. Mary, the first disciple unites and sustains the work of evangelization rooted in her heart. She is the source of inspiration for our mission to proclaim the Good News to the people today, particularly the marginalised, the children and women exposed to various types of violence.

In his homily, Bp Rolando C. Santos, CM., said, “God has prepared Mary.  He had a plan for her to be the Mother of God.  Mary was the mother of the Redeemer, loved singularly by God, belonged to Him right from the first instant of her life. Committing herself whole-heartedly to God's salvific will, she devoted herself totally, as the handmaid of the Lord, to the person and work of her Son”.  He also expressed his sincere thanks and appreciation for the committed service rendered in the Church and especially for our presence in the frontier areas of mission, particularly in the diocese of Alotau-Sideia.

The celebration’s end saw Bp Rolando bless the new vehicle given to assist the sisters in their missionary work of reaching the wounded humanity.

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**News Item 4 – Warm Hearts reach out at Christmas**

The joyful faces of patients, guardians, nurses and doctors were ample evidence that Christmas was truly celebrated in the maternity ward of Port Moresby General Hospital. This came after a warm visit was made by Religious Sisters and Catholic faithful from around the Archdiocese of Port Moresby on Tuesday 24th December.

According to Volunteer Chaplain, Sr Mary McCarthy PBVM, celebrations for the mothers and babies began with a sharing of the story of the birth of Jesus. The singing of Carols filled the air with wonder and awe as communities from the churches brought much joy with their singing and action songs.

She said that Christmas brought to us God’s great, his beloved Son, Jesus. She reminded everyone present that “Jesus came to us as a small and vulnerable baby, naked and totally dependent for every need. His mother, Mary, cared for her Child with a love that is steadfast even to the cross.”

Mothers from the Special Care Nursery, after morning feeds, left their sleeping infants in the care of nurses and came out of the ward to sit on the grass outside. They were invited to join in the singing and reflections on the Christmas Story.

Gifts were presented to each mother, accompanied by a very warm Christmas hug and happy cheering. A special visit was also made to the Post-natal ward to share the joy of the many mothers in this very large ward rejoicing in the birth of their babies.

Celebrations ended with the joyous singing of the hymn “We wish you a merry Christmas”.

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**News item 5 – Making Commitments, Celebrating Love, Living Faith**

The Sacrament of Marriage is a lasting commitment of a man and a woman to a lifelong partnership, established for the good of each other and for the procreation of marriage. It was a unique marriage of two young persons who do not have any children.

Cecilia Amala and Victor So-on, a young couple, celebrated the Sacrament of Marriage on 28th December 2019 at the chapel of Don Bosco, Gabutu. Fr Roger Miranda sdb was the main celebrant while Fr Shoji Mathew sdb and Fr Ambrose Pereira sdb concelebrated at the Eucharistic celebration. Present were parents, loved ones, family and friends. At a very lively and joyous celebration the young couple joyfully pronounced their vows before their parents, guardians, family and friends. The St Mary’s Cathedral choir led the congregation in harmonious singing.

Fr Roger in his address said that there were no perfect husbands, wives or families, but only a perfect God, under whose guidance and blessings could we strive to build a happy Catholic family.

He said that the Sacrament of Marriage was essential to unite the groom and bride as one with the blessings of God. He reminded the couple that despite the problems and challenges that lay ahead, with the Lords place and help in our lives, none could become a barrier.

The celebration of the Sacrament of Marriage for the young God-fearing couple was a very special event that ended with an enjoyable meal for family and friends.

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**News item 6 – Virgil Narokobi Appointed Judge**

President of the PNG Law Society and legal counsel to the Ombudsman Commission Dr Vergil Narokobi has been appointed as a judge of the National and Supreme Courts of PNG.

The appointment for 10-years was announced on Thursday 19th December by the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Justice, and Attorney-General Davis Steven.

Mr Steven welcomed and commanded Dr Narokobi for his willingness to make himself available for judicial appointment to serve the nation.

Dr Narokobi accepted the appointment thanking the Judicial and Legal Services Commission and the government for their confidence and also his immediate and extended family members for their support.

He said he would do his best to restore the confidence the JLSC and the minister had in him to be called to the bench, “I will be placed in a position now to determine the rights and interests of my fellow citizens, and I must do that carefully with a clear mind and with a clear conscience without fear, favour, malice or ill-will.”

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**Recapping our headlines for this week:**

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**This ends the Catholic Church news for this week, join us next week for more.**

**From all of us at Catholic Communications we wish you all an enjoyable week.**